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'The Living Bible'

(Paraphrased)
(Written by request)

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

From the Nashville Tennessean of December 10, 1973, there is an article telling of the Baptists demonstrating in front of the Baptist Book Store in Nashville, Tenn., because the store was selling the so called "Living Bible." They called the book "vulgar" and a "paraphrase of Dr. Kenneth Taylor's theology." Yet so many members of the Lord's church are buying, reading and teaching from this book! Does this have a message for the Lord's people that we fail to heed? Some of the churches of Christ (the elders) forbid the teaching from this book in the classes of the church. Draw your own conclusions, but they have the right as "feeders" of the flock. It is indeed UNSAFE food! Don't stop here, make up your own mind! I have never tried to tell any one what to do, or read, but try to "tell it like it is" and then each must share his responsibility before God, so read on!

DO WE BELIEVE THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK?

If so, understand what he says! He states on the cover that he has not attempted to translate the Bible, but put it "into other words." "In other words, it is a one man commentary and a very poor one, full of error! Let us examine some of these.

LET THE BOOK SPEAK FOR ITSELF

Space will not permit the giving of the full verses and comparing them with what God really said. But if you have one of these books (I know you have a Bible), just read the book and compare it with the Bible if you are interested. Learn for yourself.

1--2 Tim. 4:1, Mr. Taylor has Jesus coming to "set up his kingdom" when he returns. This is contrary to the word of God!

2--John 3:8, he teaches that the giving of The Holy Spirit is left solely to God and man has nothing to do with it. Yet the

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The Choice That Christ Sets Before Men

Willard Collins

A Christian cannot be a neutral person in regard to right and wrong.

Jesus sets only two ways of life before men who live on this earth.

Every person who has reached the age of accountability is traveling in one of these two ways.

Jesus said, "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction and many are they that enter in thereby." (Matt. 7:13.)

There are only two kingdoms on this earth, the world and the church. (1 John 2:15 and Matt. 16:18.)

Each accountable person is a citizen in one of these two kingdoms. If one is not a citizen of the church and a follower of Christ, he has to be a citizen of the world and a disciple of Satan. There is no middle ground and there is no place for the neutral.

Christ and Paul taught that there are only two ways of life on earth; the way of the flesh or the way of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:12-24.)

THE INDIVIDUAL HAS THE POWER OF CHOICE

God so created man that each person has the power to make the choice of the way that he will travel. Of course, each person will face the consequences of his decision.

These two routes of life are not only ways that were found in Jerusalem and Palestine 2,000 years ago but these are ways that exist in Nashville, Tennessee; Dallas, Texas; and Los Angeles, California, and every other geographic location.

Jesus set before man the choice of the narrow and the wide way on earth, and he also described only two dwelling places for eternity.

It is one of the most sobering facts of life to realize that each person now alive must spend an eternity in one of only two areas, heaven or hell. (Matt. 25:31.)

The mercy of God has made possible the way of life which is Christ. However,

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Why I Attend Church Services Regularly

Members of the church will often ask, "Is it necessary for me to attend church services?" No intelligent person would ask, "Must I eat every time I am hungry?" There are obvious reasons for attending services faithfully. Regularity and spirituality are closely related. The soul as well as the body must be fed at regular intervals. The Christian who sings, "When the roll is called up yonder I'll be there," and is then absent from the services half the time needs to harmonize his practice with his singing. It is doubtful if one can be present there when one is consistently absent here.

I attend the church services regularly because Christ expects me to do so (Matthew 18:20). When I am absent, I am deprived of the blessing his presence imparts to me. If the apostles and the early Christians were living today, they would attend the services faithfully. Therefore, I am unable to condone in my life a practice which would have been unacceptable to them. (Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2)

I should not let the church down, because it is the church that holds me up. It is the church that rejoices when I rejoice and that weeps when I weep. It is the church that will pray for me when I am sick, comfort my loved ones when I am gone, and provide me with a decent Christian burial.

I support the services of the church because it is a sin not to do so (Hebrews 10:25.) My presence strengthens and encourages others (Hebrews 10:24). The services of the church keep me holy in heart, humble in life and grateful in spirit. My presence shows that I love the Lord (John 14:15).

Attending the services of the church makes me a better person, because at such services I associate with good people. Good people can always be found in God's house, and they are there because they are trying to become better. They realize they are not perfect.

My presence at the appointed times indicates my faithfulness to the Lord (Revelation 2:10). Someday I hope to hear him say, "Well done." He cannot say, "Well done" if I have not done well.

--Adair P. Chapman

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen
and James E. Henley.

Unique Operations of the Holy Spirit for Unique Times

1--Much of the prophecy of the Old Testament pertained to the coming of Christ in the flesh, the establishment of the church, the work of the church and salvation of man in general. This was a unique period in Biblical history, therefore when all of this was fulfilled the purpose of the Holy Spirit guiding these writers was finished.

2--Guiding the writers of the New Testament, was also a unique work of the Holy Spirit. But when he had guided them into all truth and this was recorded; he does not do this today. God's word is available to us and we are commanded to study for ourselves. This word will also judge us, John 14:26; 16:13; 12:48.

3--Jesus was conceived in the flesh by the Holy Spirit, but no other child was so conceived. He alone, had the Holy Spirit without measure. Neither is necessary today. This too was unique.

4--Both parents of John the baptizer were filled with the Holy Spirit, but this too was not repeated.

5--John the baptizer was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. His birth and work were both unique and only he was assigned to be the harbinger of Christ, therefore it was not necessary to repeat this. He was unique.

6--The baptism of the apostles, with the Holy Spirit, was unique. There were only twelve of these and they had no successors, nor are any needed. They needed to speak in languages which they had not learned, a message which they had not been taught, for there was no New Testament. They needed to perform miracles to confirm the word, and the ability to give others special gifts also. This was all done that we might have the Gospel of Christ and it confirmed today. This is God's power, and only power, to save man! This was unique.

7--Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This is the only family to ever receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This was necessary to prove to the Jews that they should preach the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles and that the Gentiles were acceptable to God on the same terms as the Jews. This was accomplished and therefore not necessary to repeat it.

8--The nine gifts of the Holy Spirit which were given to various men in various congregations, that they might preach the word and confirm it when the apostles were not present, were also unique. The word was preached and confirmed. We have it today in all the power necessary to save and guide christians. We will be cursed if we change this word of God's, therefore this work was accomplished and does not need repeating. God is no

respector of persons today, so all people receive the same treatment before God. 9--The prophecies of the Old Testament; the conception of Christ, his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension; were all to give us Christ's will, the New Testament, that man might be saved. The birth and life of John the baptizer; the baptism of the apostles, as well as the special gifts, were all to give us the confirmed will of Christ, that we might be saved.

10--Most of the Old Testament prophecies, pertained to the Israelites and the coming of Christ and the establishment of His church, which was purchased by Christ's blood at his death. All of these were means and methods of bringing the sacrifice of Christ and his will, the New Testament, into the hearts of all men. When the objective was accomplished (the New Testament complete), the means and methods no longer apply! No special gifts of the Holy Spirit today. In a miraculous way, that is. They are not needed!

Glynn V. Purdy

The Choice that Christ (cont.)

the mercy of God has never promised to save a person who does not make the correct decisions in life. The individual must decide to accept Christ and travel the narrow way.

There are two ways on earth, two divisions in judgment, and two eternal dwelling places.

Jesus said, "Enter ye in by the narrow gate." (Matt. 7:13.)

When one builds a new house he must move into the house in order to enjoy it. A man who purchases a new car must get into the car in order to ride and enjoy it. Likewise, a person who receives blessings from Christ must "enter" Christ.

The Ethiopian eunuch made his choice many hundreds of years ago when he as a believer in the things the evangelist taught he said, "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:37.)

When one obeys God by being baptized, like the eunuch, he enters Christ; "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.)

Each reader should pause and ask the personal question, "Am I in Christ or out of Christ?"

God gave Christ that man might enter Christ, walk after Christ and live with Christ in eternity. However, the individual must make the decision.

Christ sets two gates and two destinies before man. Each person has the choice in regard to the gate and the destiny.

Gospel Meeting

The Church of Christ which meets at Viola, Arkansas will have a series of Gospel meetings May the 13th through the 19th. Dennis McCarty, speaker.

The Other Man's Burden

Many of the men and women who move about us every day are carrying heavy burdens hidden within their hearts-- troubles, sorrow, disappointment of one kind or another . . . and we, with unseeing eyes are often impatient of them, now understanding their cares, not knowing their burdens.

Often we misjudge those whose circumstances we do not know. Those whom we meet in an impersonal way in places of business and on city streets and in all the crowded ways of life may seem to us at times to be impolite, to be inattentive to us.

And not knowing what cares are troubling them, we may ignore their aching hearts and fail to see the tears that lie close to the surface--and so the world seems thoughtless because it does not understand.

But the longer we live, the more we come to know that every man's problems are important to him, and that judgment must be withheld where knowledge is not sufficient to understand the hearts and thoughts and feelings of our fellows.

And the person who doesn't respond pleasantly, or serve us attentively, or who seems to be sullen, may be suffering from physical ailment, a troubled conscience, or even the loss of a loved one, or a disappointment.

Before we judge, we need to know!
Think about it . . .

Grant Me Success Today

*"O Lord, God . . . grant me
success today" (Genesis 24: 12)*

You look the girls over one by one. Your son will marry one of them, but which one? To a great extent, the future of your boy, temporally and spiritually, depends upon this most important choice.

Customs were a little different long ago, but the concern was the same. Abraham had a father's interest in Isaac. He was determined to help his son find the right wife. So Abraham called his oldest and most trusted servant, Eliezer, to his side and said, "Go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac."

Eliezer was filled with trepidation. How will he find such a woman? Will she be willing to come back with him? Will Abraham be pleased? And another small question: Will Isaac like her?

Early the next day the servant departed with ten of his master's camels and all sorts of choice gifts. At the end of his travels he came to Mesopotamia, and to the city of Nahor. So far, so good. But what now? First, he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well. It was evening and he knew that the women would soon be there to draw water. And then Eliezer prayed, "O Lord, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today, and show steadfast love to my master Abraham."

And line after line the beautiful story unfolds. The fair maiden, Rebekah, came to the well to draw water and unknowingly fetched a husband. So Isaac and Rebekah became husband and wife.

But wait! I'm impressed with the action of the servant. He would not dare attempt to carry out his responsibilities without the help of God. Prayer came naturally and without hesitation. "Grant me success today," he said. And he found it! Are we as wise?

A. C. Dixon has written: "When we rely on organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do . . . but when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do."

JOHN GIPSON
Little Rock, Arkansas

There's Power In Youth...

Mrs. Felix O. Davis

The young people were meeting together to practice for a High School play in Julie's home when their conversation turned to Alan who would be home from college and preach the following Sunday. Susie said that the sermon would be on the subject, "How Modernism enters the Church."

"The movie and bad TV pictures are one kind of sinful modernism, Roy stated. "They show vulgar pictures, encourage divorce, immodest dress, cursing murder, adultery, robbery, dancing, drinking, gambling, illicit dating among the married, and late car riding. These are wrong for christians to take part in," he observed.

"The modern dance is wrong for it encourages free love making and girls are in the arms of men who are not good for friends. The rough crowd of young folks are the ones who go to these places," Susie remarked.

"I think wearing shorts is sinful Julie, for God said for women to be dressed in modest apparel." Bonnie said.

"Drinking beer and whiskey is an evil to avoid. That which intoxicates is dangerous to the mind, as taught in Proverbs, 'Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.'" Roy quoted from Proverbs 20:1.

"Taking the name of God in vain is sin too. 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.'"

Nova asked them to teach her how to become a christian. They took their Bibles and read aloud to her

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). Then one must believe, "Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. (Jno. 8:24). "We must repent. 'I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'" (Luke 13:3).

"Then confess Christ: 'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.'" (Matt. 10:32). "Then one must be baptized, they taught her. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,'" (Mark 16:16).

The following Sunday Nova confessed Christ and was baptized. The young people were happy because they had helped teach Nova how to be saved.

Note: Jno. 8:24 reads slightly different in King James Version. These exact words are in one of the other books Matt., Luke, or Mark.

The Imperfect Law of Moses

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second," Heb. 8:7. Should we read into this, that God made a mistake when he gave the law of Moses? Does it mean that he gave a law to do something that it was unable to accomplish? Does it mean that God was unable to give a law to accomplish the design which he had in his own mind? The answer to all three questions and any other similar ones, is NO! The law was perfect for, and accomplished ALL, which God intended it to accomplish! It did not solve all man's needs, including the salvation of his soul (as the Gospel of Christ, the "perfect law of liberty," James 1:25), but it did the job for which it was given. The Hebrew writer is simply saying that if the law of Moses could have made man complete, saved his soul without the death of Christ, then God would not have allowed Christ to die for the Gospel of Christ to save man. The law of Moses was given for one purpose and accomplished that purpose; the Gospel of Christ, or the law of Christ, is given for another purpose and will accomplish that purpose! The law of Moses was a "schoolmaster" to bring the Israelite to Christ, this it accomplished, Gal. 2:23-25.

THE LAW OF MOSES

1-It was given ONLY to the descendants of Jacob (Israel) and was never intended for any one else, Deut. 5:1-3.

2-It was God's covenant to Israel (including the ten commandments Deut. 4:13) and was only to be temporary, Jer. 31:31-34.

3-It was only to last until the "seed came to whom the promise was made," Gal. 3:16. This "seed" to whom the promise was made was "Christ", Gen. 22:17-18; Gal. 3:16.

4-The reason the law of Moses was not "faultless" was that it was dependent on the blood of animals which could not forgive sins, Heb. 10:1-4. Only the blood of Christ can forgive sins, I Peter 1:18-19.

5-Christ died for those under the law of Moses the same as he died for us, Heb. 9:15. Yet they will be judged by the law if they died under the law.

6-Christ died and nailed the law to the cross, or fulfilled it as it was only to last until he died, Col. 1:14.

7-Today we are under no part of the law of Moses, but are under the law of Christ, the New Testament, Matt. 17:1-5, Gal. 2:23-25.

We could present more Scriptures, but these are enough to prove that the law of

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OBEDIENCE - WHAT IS INVOLVED?

Paul Matthews

As the Bible student knows, the Lord has called upon men for different actions at various times in the past, but the noun "obedience" and its cognate, the verb "obey" will well describe any act, be it Abram's leaving Ur of the Chaldees, Noah's building the ark or the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Since the Hebrew writer said Jesus "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him," it behooves us to inquire into the meaning of the word.

"Obey" is defined by Webster as executing the commands or following the guidance of another. So when one does as he is bidden by another, he is obedient. There are two areas of authority—human and divine. It is at this point our first distinction must be made.

Obedience to human authority demands only physical compliance. The motive and the attitude do not enter and may never be determined. For instance, the government demands that one pay income tax. He does not have to like it, he could criticize and threaten not to pay, but as long as he has the amount owed in the mail by April 15 nothing else is required by the government. But it is far different in obeying God. Before one's obedience is acceptable to God we insist the following must be present.

1. The action must come from a willing, submissive heart. (Rom. 6:17) reads, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." Obedience to God cannot be forced by legislative action, judicial decision or executive decree. One might be forced to conform outwardly, but obedience must come from the heart.

2. It must be accompanied by the proper motive. In holding men responsible for their conduct many times motive is the determining factor. After an automobile accident that has claimed lives, a driver may be charged with either voluntary or involuntary manslaughter, or exonerated due to its being unavoidable. The difference is motive. One cannot please God if he is active primarily for personal aggrandizement in the political, social or business realms. One cannot become a Christian merely to please his family or stop their insistence. The motive must always be a desire to find favor with God. Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8) is a good example of one's heart being wrong.

3. It takes a certain amount of information and that information must be correct. One does not have to know

his complete Christian duty before he starts, because many duties may be learned later, as eating the supper, how to sing and pray, as well as moral duties. But one cannot be converted and ten years later learn God's law of conversion. We know of no duty but that involves some information before such can be performed. Paul's baptizing the Ephesian who had been baptized by Appollos is offered as proof. (Acts 19: 1-5.)

4. Obedience demands that one act upon his knowledge, James said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22.) A willing heart, a pure motive and proper teaching, though necessary prerequisites, will not avail unless one does his duty.

In our judgment in no act of obedience can these factors be ignored.

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THE IMPERFECT LAW (CONT.)

Moses did ALL God intended it to do and did it well. God gave two promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18-19). The law of Moses was given to expedite the fleshly promise (many descendants through Isaac); the New Testament, Law of Christ, was given to expedite the second promise, in Christ all nations would be blessed!

GOD DOES ALL THINGS WELL

So you see it is only a matter of understanding what God says on any matter. When God gives a law, it will accomplish for man, ALL that God intended it to accomplish, if man will OBEY THE LAW GIVEN! God never intended the law of Moses, on its own merit, to forgive the sins of man through animal blood! Neither did God intend for man under the law of Christ, "the perfect law of liberty," to turn again to the dead law of Moses and seek forgiveness of his sins! Why will man turn to the law of Moses, which is no longer valid, to seek forgiveness of his sins, when it was not intended for that purpose and could not deliver when it was valid?

Glynn V. Purdy

"THE LIVING BIBLE" (Cont.)

Holy Spirit is promised to those who obey God!

3-I Cor. 13:10, when God speaks of the complete Bible, he gives reference to the individual becoming "perfect and complete."

4-I Pet. 3:21, he teaches that one is saved BEFORE baptism.

5-Romans 7:3, he teaches that one becomes a christian and is then baptized.

6-Romans 1:17, he teaches that we are right with God when we place our faith and trust in Jesus.

7-John 1:23, 13; Romans 3:28; 7:3, he teaches that man is saved by faith only. God says this is not true, James 2:24. Who is right?

8-Some of the book is too vulgar to mention the scriptures for location.

9-Some of the more chummy statements are found in I Kings 20:11. "Don't count your chickens before they hatch." Gen. 6:4, he has "evil beings from the spirit world were sexually involved with human women . . .".

Psalms 51:5, teaches that man is "born a sinner." He goes to the comic strip (which is an improvement) for "whitewashed pigpen", Acts 23:3. In Rom. 4:12, he has Abraham finding favor with God "by faith alone." God says this is not true, James 2:21-23. Whom shall we believe? Then there is "Barney the preacher," Acts 4:36. There is "a sneaky fellow", "Wine, women and song", "having started the ball rolling", "phonies", "be rough on you" and many other "goodies" if you are interested.

This book, like any other commentary coming from the denominational world (or our own brethern for that matter) is safe so long as we accept it as a commentary and use it as such. To call it a bible is a misnomer and dangerous to the teacher and the hearer. Let us be wise and "understand" the word of the Lord!

THINK ABOUT IT!

Glynn V. Purdy

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