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The Scar Is Still There

By Eddy Gilpin

In conversing with a young man who recently returned from a California trip by bus, the author inquired about some of the people encountered by this traveler. There was a motley assortment of individuals with diverse backgrounds, varying lifestyles, and aimless destinations. However, there was one traveler in particular whose story is worth repeating because of the lesson involved.

As the bus was departing from San Francisco, this particular young man took a seat next to a young lady and they began to talk. During the course of their conversation religion was mentioned. The two began to speak of their religious backgrounds and affiliations. The young lady had once been a member of the "Church of Satan." She told him that during initiation ceremonies a permanent mark was placed upon each new member. She pulled up her sleeve to reveal a hideous scar that was her status symbol in that particular cult. In concluding the account the young man said: "I'm glad to say that she is no longer a member of that particular organization. But, the scar is still there."

In listening to this story and thinking of its implications, I began to realize how horrible this principle is - "the scar is still there."

How many are the alcoholics that no longer imbibe the spirits, yet nonetheless bear the mark of years of indulgence? Their lives have been shortened in quantity and cheapened in quality. Their families have likewise paid the price for many drunken stupors. Although many have severed the bond of alcoholic rule, the price continues to be paid - "the scar is still there."

Countless are the wasted minds and ruined lives devastated by drug abuse. Being a part of the "in crowd" has hastened many deaths and ravaged many

homes. The untold millions of dollars spend on restraint and rehabilitation could have been used for so much good if America's love for pseudo-happiness could only have been diverted. Although many transcend the tyranny of drug dependence, the danger is always around, much damage has already been done, the price is still being paid, and "the scar is still there."

The use of tobacco products in this country is a staggering phenomenon. Although warnings accompany each purchase, statistics envelope each user, and testimonies abound from terminal patients. America continues to puff, chew, and dip. The evidence continues to mount against this deadly habit. Many are the men who rise from tobacco-induced cancer surgery, only to reach for the cause of their suffering once again. However, there are many who have "kicked the habit." But the lasting effects are still prevalent - the shortness of breath, the quickened heart rate, the cancerous weapon which could detonate at any instant. "The scar is still there."

Innumerable are the abortions, ill-prepared and hastened marriages, and broken homes because of the immorality prevalent in today's society. The laws of God are today hidden as immoral practices come to the forefront of openness. The investigative light of the world grows ever more dim as the once seldom mentioned practices of yesteryear demand and obtain the spotlight of today's permissive society. Bitter will be the harvest when America reaps what her wantonness has sown. Although the world could possibly be healed, sad generations to follow shall look back with remorse as they discover that "the scar is still there."

Divorce and remarriage is another issue which must be faced and dealt with Biblically. God's law of "one man for one

woman for life" has been trodden under foot of men so much that it is almost a forgotten command in this nation. It is a fact of history that 19 of 22 civilizations collapsed when they reached the degree of moral degradation at which America now stands. Although the unprecedented ratio of one divorce for every two marriages might be improved in years to come, society has suffered greatly, the law of God has been maligned, precious souls have been lost - "the scar is still there."

The teaching of organic and/or theistic evolution as fact is another area for which man must answer to God. These damnable doctrines rob the Almighty of power, holiness, and honor. Such blatant contradiction of Holy Writ has left this nation with little respect for and even less adherence to the word of God. Such ungodliness by those who "drink iniquity like water" will not go unpunished (Gal. 6:7,8). The teachings and acceptance of evolution have made their marks on the world. Even if evolution could be blotted out of every textbook today, the damage has been done - "the scar is still there."

The \$10 billion a year business of pornography is but another wound from which this nation has suffered and will suffer repercussion. The affect of pornography in the role of violent crimes is within itself a tragedy which should warrant this country's attention. The images which pornographic material sear into the unguarded subconscious during the emotionally-heightened moments of indulgence are not soon forgotten. Such vulgar matter cheapens the God-given desires of man and wife, relegates marriage to the level of an option for the fulfilling of such desires, and defiles the purity and position of the divine "one flesh" concept and command. Although one's desire for and involvement in such godless practices may cease, his conscience has still been seared, his morals have already been effected, the wound has been made, and "the scar is still there."

Sin, in whatever ugly form it takes, always leaves a scar. Although the guilt can be removed through obedience to God, the consequences may still be felt. The Bible declares: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he

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FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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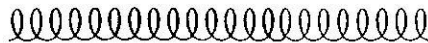
**Eddy Gilpin to Edit
"Fulton County
Gospel News"**

By Clovis Ragsdale

This issue of the paper is the first one to be printed by our new editor, Eddy Gilpin. He recently moved from Crossville, Tennessee to Mammoth Spring to work with the church at Mammoth.

Brother Gilpin is a native of Fayette, Alabama and a graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching. For the past four years he has worked with the Crossville Church of Christ in Crossville, Tennessee. His family consists of his wife Jeanny and their two sons, Kyle and Kirk.

Due to the ever increasing number of papers mailed, the task of editing has greatly increased. We feel that brother Gilpin is well qualified to meet the challenge of this good work.

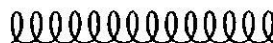


**Question and Answer
Column to Begin**

By Eddy Gilpin

Beginning with a future issue of the Fulton County Gospel News a new column will be added which will be devoted entirely to answering Biblical questions posed by our readers. We invite you to send questions to be placed in the column to: P.O. Box 251, Mammoth Spring, AR 72554. Please specify if your questions are not intended for publication. Otherwise, all queries received will be directed to that department.

While none of us associated with this publication claim to know everything about every subject, the admonition by Isaiah to "Come now, and let us reason together" (Is. 1:18) stands as a firm reminder to all that God's word is to be studied and applied. Questions asked will be answered according the Bible (I Pet. 4:11). If you have a question concerning the church which Jesus established, its terms of admission, worship or any other aspect of it, or some other Bible related question, please send it today. Be sure and look for the "Question and Answer Column" in an upcoming issue.



**What Our
Youth Really Need**

By Mark K. Lewis

There is much reason for concern today as to what our young people are being taught, and how they are being led. Are they really being rooted and grounded in the faith? Are they being taught the truth on the distinctive nature of the church, instrumental music, miracles, creation vs. evolution, authority of elders, the work and worship of the church -- and a host of other crucial issues that separate the body of Christ from religions of man? Beloved, just because we who are older in the faith may know the answers to these problems does not mean our youth automatically do! Only by *properly* training our young people can we guard against the tragedy of their loss. And entertainment and spiritual candy won't cut it! Let's look at four things today that our youth *really* need, things that I fear they aren't getting in many places.

Our youth need pure Bible teaching!

Though young people have special trials and temptations peculiar to their age, the answer is not entertainment and pabulum! The answer to overcoming sin is the same for everybody: "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer" (Psalms 17:4). Concerning the righteous man, the Psalmist says, "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide" (Psalms 37:31). How do we overcome sin and temptation? By hiding God's Word in our hearts (Psalms 119:11)! Our youth need to be taught the Bible so that they will be strengthened in faith (Romans 10:17), and mature as Christians (I Peter 2:1-2; II Peter 3:18), rather than be tossed about by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14) and destroyed (Hosea 4:6). "Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psalms 119:9). We must not be afraid to teach our youth strong Bible sermons. They need to hear these things to build a strong church for the future.

Our youth need to be taught to respect authority. A failure to respect authority is disastrous (Leviticus 10:1-2; II Samuel 6). God has placed authority in the home (Ephesians 6:1), in government (Romans 13:1-7), and in the church (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28), and failure to respect any of these is sinful. Even when we do not agree with the expedient decisions of those in authority, we must respect them and not rebel. One reason why ancient Israel went from "scarlet to the

The Scar Is Still There

(Continued from page one)

that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption ..." (Gal. 6:7,8). Paul declared that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This is a high price indeed for the low-esteem that the world places on the souls of men.

We must awaken to the detriment that beclouds this nation. America's love for the pleasures which last but for a season has blinded her from the source of true happiness. We must begin to heal the wounds which sin has made. Through determination, time, and a return to the word of God, we can truly be "one nation under God." Without such efforts the wounds will persist and the scars will ever be there.

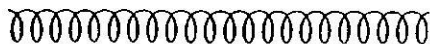


Watch your thoughts
For they become words.

Watch your words
For they become habits.

Watch your habits
For they become character.

Watch your character
For it becomes your destiny!



Love's secret is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such little ones.

F.W. Faber

dunghill" (Lamentations 4:5) is that "the faces of elders were not honored" (Lamentations 5:12). Our youth need to be taught to respect those in authority, even when they disagree with them.

Our youth need to be taught to consider the consequences of their actions. Being able to look ahead, and to understand the value of Bible study, properly chosen friends, selecting a Christian mate, and so forth, is true wisdom. Paul tells us that "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Moses' comment in Deuteronomy 32:29 is priceless: "Oh, that they were wise, that they would understand this, that they would consider the latter end." Our youth need to be drilled to look ahead, think ahead, plan ahead -- "If I do this, what will be the result?" We will otherwise one day look back and ask ourselves, "What reward did I get from those things of which I am now ashamed?" (Romans 6:21). The attitude of "Well, I'll do what I want to when I want to do it and nobody is going to stop me" will lead straight to the pig-pen (Luke 15:16). In Ecclesiastes 11:9 Solomon says; in essence: "Go ahead, youth, enjoy yourselves. Live it up. Follow your heart and whatever your eyes see that you want, go after it." But then comes the punch line: "But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment." Learning to consider the results is something we all need to do. But, prayerfully, many of our youth will learn it while yet young.

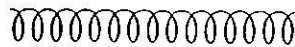
Our youth need a good example from parents and older Christians. Paul wrote, "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Romans 14:7). Christian parents are spiritual criminals when they smoke, drink, curse, lie, dress immodestly, etc., in front of their children. These parents many think such is having no effect upon their children, but they couldn't be more wrong. Parents are to raise their children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4), and a large part of that is setting the proper example.

I saw tomorrow look at me
From little children's eyes.
And thought how carefully we would teach
If we were really wise.

We need more parents like Abraham who God said "will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord" (Genesis 18:19). We need more fathers like Joshua who declared that he and his house would serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). We need more mothers like Hannah, who said concerning her son, "I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life" (I Samuel

1:11). And we need fewer parents like Eli, whose "sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (II Samuel 3:13); or like Aaron, whose filippant attitude toward God's laws rubbed off on his sons (see Exodus 32:24; Leviticus 10:1-2). When we have mothers like Lois and Eunice, we will have sons like Timothy (II Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15).

Children, with their implicit, unconditional trust in their parents, will learn early to love the things mom and dad love, and hate the things mom and dad hate. Thus, when Christian parents show that their first love is God and his Word, likely the children will learn to love spiritual thing, too. But if we show, even subconsciously that we are more interested in the world and earthly junk than the Lord's cause, don't be surprised if the children grow up the same way. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Our youth need the proper example in *life style and attitude* from older Christians.



CONTRIBUTIONS

CHURCHES

| | |
|--|---------|
| Agnos Church of Christ | \$15.00 |
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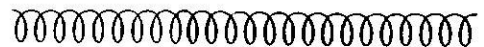
Before You Quit

By Dub McClish

Quitters never win and winners never quit! Show me a man or woman who is a real achiever and I will show you someone who has refused to quit when the hurdles were high and the head winds were strong. The "easy" way to "overcome" problems is to drop out. It is also the wrong way. The only time we should be willing to quit is when we are doing something wrong.

There is no way to estimate how many battles have been lost, how many inventions have failed to materialize, how many marriages have dissolved and how many athletic records have gone unshattered because someone quit. We must await eternity to learn how many souls will be lost, how many good works died and how many spiritual victories failed because a brother or sister quit a post of service. God's word teaches by example and precept that God takes no pleasure in quitters. What if Noah had grown weary before he finished the Ark and quit? What if Moses had let the problems of leading Israel through a barren wilderness get him down so that he threw up his hands and quit in dismay? What if Jesus had quit when His own brothers rejected Him, when His best disciples displayed sinful ambition, when one of His twelve betrayed Him for money and when another denied he even knew Him? What if He had quit when the attacks from His enemies became increasingly harsh, till it was apparent they would not stop till He was dead? What if Paul had quit when the Jews rejected his preaching and followed him about, stirring up more opposition? What if he had quit in utter discouragement in one of the many prison cells he occupied?

So you're tired of being taken for granted? You've been at the same task now for several years in the church and you're tired? Somebody mistreated you, you say? The new has worn off of the visitation program and it turned out to be hard work so you are going to drop out? Before you quit, remember: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). Also, reflect on Paul's encouragement "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). There is truly a crying need in the kingdom for people who will work till death, if necessary, to finish their task!



SEX:

The Christian's Perspective

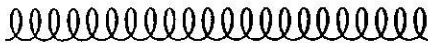
By Shawn D. Mathis

The sexual standard of the world is opposed to the sexual standard for the Christian. The world has set the pace with immoral acts. The Bible sets the pace for the Christian. The Christian is to "abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

The world has formed a viewpoint on sex which is repulsive to the sincere Christian. The sexual perspective of the world is different from the sexual perspective of the Christian. Take time to look around the world in which we live. Notice the exploitation of sex in this latter part of the twentieth century. The topic of sex is no longer a "hush-hush" topic. The sin is now open. People are not ashamed of their actions before others. Television exploits the human body, especially the female body, through commercials and movies. Magazines promote pornography. Prostitution is plentiful on the streets. People wear immodest apparel that excites lust in the beholder.

The Bible offers illustrations in regard to sexual sins. There are occasions of sexual misconduct in the Bible. The Bible portrays the good and the bad as it is. Some of the sexual sins mentioned in the Bible include adultery (Leviticus 18:20), bestiality (Leviticus 18:23; 20:15-16), sodomy (Genesis 13:13; 19:5-7; Deuteronomy 23:17), whoredom (Leviticus 19:29; Numbers 25:1), seduction (Ezekiel 13:10), prostitution (Leviticus 19:29), harlotry (Genesis 38:24; 1 Corinthians 6:15-16), fornication (Ezekiel 16:26; Matthew 15:18-19), incest (2 Samuel 13; Genesis 19:33; Ezekiel 22:11), and rape (Deuteronomy 22:25-29). Examine the sins in the days of the Bible. The sins present today are the same sins that the people were part of in the ancient times.

Christians must keep the proper attitude toward sex. Sex was designed to be enjoyed within the bonds of marriage. The Christian perspective of sex is important. We must make a choice. Will you choose the world view of sex or the Bible view of sex?



The eyes of Jehovah are in every place,
Keeping watch upon the evil and the good.


THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

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