NOW THAT

I'm A Christian—



Compiled and written by:

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With the hope that:

"The God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—1 Peter 5:10-11.

Second Printing
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THOMAS T SNEAD SR.

I, _____

BECAME A CHRISTIAN BY BEING BAPTIZED, UPON CONFESSION OF MY FAITH IN CHRIST, ON THE

6 DAY OF December, 1939

AT Ponca city oklahoma
(Name of place)

THE ONE WHO BAPTIZED ME, WAS,

Harold Von Crumbly
(Signature of the preacher here, if it can be obtained)

Now That I'm A Christian . . . .

I am a member of a great company, or brotherhood.

"The general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven."—Hebrews 12:23.

This company has been "called out" from the world to show God's goodness:

"But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."—I Peter 2:9-10.

And we are to be different from the world.

"For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works."—Titus 2:11-14.

Since this is true, I want to take my place worthily among this Brotherhood and to promote its good:

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Ephesians 4:1-3.

And to insure my own spiritual development.

"Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Ephesians 4:13-14.

In order to do this, I must study to know how to handle the Bible properly.

"Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."—II Timothy 2:15.

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."—Ephesians 6:17b.

To be sure of where I stand and in order to help others, I will review the steps I have taken which have given me the right to be called a Christian, and to be able to give a reason for my hope.

"Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear."—I Peter 3:15-16.

First, I heard the word of Christ:

"So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." —Romans 10:17.

Through preaching.

"For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."—I Corinthians 1:21.

From this preaching I learned that faith in God is necessary:

"Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."—Hebrews 11:6.

And faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Divine Son of God.

"Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me." —John 14:1.

"For ye are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus."—Galatians 3:26.

I came to that faith through a careful consideration of such thoughts as:

"The heavens declare the glory of God;

And the firmament showeth his handiwork."—Psalm 19:1.

"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name."—John 20:30-31.

"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:' and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount. And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."—II Peter 1:16-21.

Then I learned that faith must show itself in works, from:

"Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith."—James 2:24.

Therefore, I determined to change my manner of life, that is, I repented for I realized that I must leave the life of sin.

Jesus said: "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish."—Luke 13:3, 5.

Peter said: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."—Acts 3:19.

Paul said: "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts 17:30-31.

The first thing I did to show my desire to change, and to obey Christ's commands, was to confess my faith.

"Everyone therefore who shall *confess me* before men, him will I

also confess before my Father who is in heaven," said Jesus.—Matthew 10:32.

"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Romans 10:8-10.

From those scriptures I learned that it was Jesus whom I was to confess, that is, that I was to acknowledge His divinity. The New Testament teaches that one is to confess Jesus as Lord. There is no other verbal or public confession. However, that confession alone is not enough for I learned also:

"Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession."—Hebrews 4:14.

With that preparation I was baptized, to gain forgiveness of my sins:

"And Peter said unto them, 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins!' "—Acts 2:38.

And to begin a new life.

"We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life."—Romans 6:2-4.

That baptism put me into Christ.

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."—Galatians 3:27.

From those scriptures I learned that baptism is the act of faith which brings the forgiveness of sins; that it is a burial; and that one puts on Christ only by being baptized into Him. I found also that baptism is intended only for believers, that

is, only for persons who are old enough to have faith in Christ and to make confession of that faith. Jesus' last directions to his apostles teach all this.

The great commission we call those last words:

"And Jesus came unto them and spake unto them, saying 'All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' "—Matthew 28:18-20.

"And he said unto them, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.' "—Mark 16:15-16.

"And he said unto them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.' "—Luke 24:46-47.

What occurred when the apostles began preaching as Jesus had directed them to do is related in Acts 2:37-42:

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' And Peter said unto them, 'Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.' And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.' They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."

It should be noticed that they were not commanded to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, but to be baptized and the Holy Spirit would be given unto them. The Holy Spirit was a gift—not a command.

"Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the

Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."—Ephesians 5:18-19.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God."—Colossians 3:16.

In the first passage we are told to "be filled with the spirit"—in the other to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other. Therefore "Being filled with the spirit" is the same for us as letting Christ's word dwell in us. We receive the guidance of the spirit today by reading and following God's word, the Bible.

Those who obeyed the commands of Christ through the preaching of the apostles were called "Christians."

"And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."—Acts 11:26. "But if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."—I Peter 4:16.

Salvation is found only in his name.

"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."—Acts 4:12.

The very thing which made them Christians made them members of Christ's church, the Lord adding them to it.

"And the Lord added *to them* day by day those that were saved."—Acts 2:47b.

"And there arose on that day a great persecution *against the church* which was in Jerusalem."—Acts 8:1b.

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed *the church of the Lord* which he purchased with his own blood."—Acts 20:28.

"All the *churches of Christ* salute you."—Romans 16:16b.

"Unto the *church of God* which is at Corinth."—I Corinthians 1:2a.

"To the general assembly and *church of the firstborn* who are enrolled in heaven."—Hebrews 12:23a.

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Now, let us make these observations from what we have learned in the foregoing. Notice first of all that every principle and teaching is contained in a plain statement of scripture. The Bible, and the Bible alone is to be the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian. Everything that he does or teaches in the spiritual realm must find its authority in the Bible. There is no need to argue about a single item of faith, but only to cite scripture for everyone of them.

When one becomes a Christian he is not a member of some organization with a human name that is guided by a creed written by men. He is not in some "church" that exalts a particular ceremony, (as Baptist does baptism) or some type of church government, (as Congregational) or some systematic way of doing its work, (as Methodist) or some manner of life, (as Holiness) nor the member of it, (as Christian, for the church does not belong to the members, but is still Christ's church) but Christ is honored by following the practice of the New Testament writers in calling it simply the church of Christ! To do anything else is to give honor to some form or ceremony or system, rather than giving it where it belongs; to Christ.

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When I became a Christian I became a member of the Church of Christ:

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit."—I Corinthians 12:12-13.

"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."—Colossians 1:24.

A citizen of the kingdom of heaven:

"—to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing • • • who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the

kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins."—Colossians 1:10, 13-14.

A child in the family of God:

"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is."—I John 3:2.

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These are but different figures of speech used to describe the same thing; the church is the kingdom; the kingdom is the family of God; the family is the church; so that the Christian is a member of the church; he is a citizen of the kingdom, or he is a child in God's family. All mean the same thing.

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." —I Timothy 3:14.

When a Christian moves from the community where he has his membership in a particular congregation, he should look up the church in the new community immediately and should identify himself with that congregation so that he may help that group of Christians and may in turn receive their encouragement and help when it may be necessary. When Apollos left Ephesus to go into Achaia,

"The brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he helped them much that had believed through grace."—Acts 18:27.

Now That I'm A Christian . . . .

I am a member of the Church of Christ, and Paul's instructions to Timothy apply to me:

"Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." —II Timothy 2:15.

For it is these "Sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—II Timothy 3:15.

These scriptures are all I need, for:

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."—II Timothy 3:16-17.

Therefore I turn to a consideration of the Bible to know its divisions that I may

"Rightly divide" it, or "handle aright the word of truth."

The Bible has two main divisions:

The Old Testament and *The New Testament*

Which is divided into 39 "books." These may be grouped into five distinct classifications:

1) Law ..... 5 books
2) History .....12 books
3) Poetry ..... 5 books
4) Major Prophecies.. 5 books
5) Minor Prophecies..12 books

The Books of Law Are:

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

Which is divided into 27 "books." These may be grouped into five distinct classifications:

1) Biography ..... 4 books
2) History ..... 1 book
3) Paul's letters .....14 books
4) Other letters ..... 7 books
5) Prophecy ..... 1 book

The Books of Biography Are:

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

The Books of History Are:

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

The Books of Poetry Are:

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

The Books of Major Prophecy Are:

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

The Books of Minor Prophecy Are:

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

The Book of History Is:

Acts of the Apostles

Paul's Letters Are:

Romans
1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews (?)

The Other Letters Are:

James
1 Peter
2 Peter
1 John
2 John
3 John
Jude

The Book of Prophecy Is:

Revelation

A look into each of these groups will enable me to understand their relation to each other, for whom they were written, their purpose, and their contents and thus to be able to handle them aright—

The Books of Law—

The first five are called "Law" because in them we find a record of the giving of the Law of Moses, and that law itself. There is a great deal of history in these books also, but they are predominantly "Law" and therefore are given that name.

The "Book of Moses" we call them if we think in terms of their author, for Moses wrote them.

The Pentateuch, they are also called for they are really one work with five divisions: a five-volume work, by Moses.

GENESIS—

Contains a history of the beginnings of God's chosen people, with whom the books of history have to do. It begins at the creation of the world and carries the record through the account of the flood, through the lives of the great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to their going down into Egypt and to the death of Joseph.

EXODUS—

Begins its record with the situation of the Israelites at the birth of Moses, the account of his birth and training, his exile in Midian and his return to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. It tells of the leaving from Egypt, that is, the Exodus; the journey to Mt. Sinai, the encampment there, the receiving of the law through Moses, the laws themselves, the instructions for the building of the tabernacle. It ends with the Israelites still camped at the foot of Mt. Sinai.

LEVITICUS—

Contains the instructions for the guidance of the Levites in their handling of the tabernacle and the ceremonies centering therein, their feast days, etc. It is the "Priest's Handbook."

NUMBERS—

Goes forward with the history, giving regulations for marching through the wilderness, their reaching the Promised Land but being turned back for forty years wandering. It contains much data con-

cerning the number of people in the various tribes, their duties, etc., and is therefore sometimes called the "Census Report."

DEUTERONOMY—

Tells of their arrival at the Jordan, after forty years of wanderings, ready to enter the Promised Land. But Moses had been told that he could not go into the land. Therefore he called representatives of the tribes before him and recounts their history up to that time, repeats the law and emphasizes it with a great deal of prophecy as to what will be the dire fate of the people if they depart from God's law but the blessings that will be theirs if they remain faithful. It is a synopsis of "Moses' Speeches."

The Books of History—

JOSHUA—

Gives the record from the taking over of the command by Joshua, succeeding Moses, his conquest of the land and the settlement of the tribes in the Promised Land after vanquishing its original inhabitants.

JUDGES—

Gives the record of the Israelites after the settlement, during the next period of approximately four hundred fifty years, when their government was that of the Judges, through whom God spoke to the people. That is, it gives the records of the Judges through the thirteenth, Samson.

RUTH—

Is a rural romance, picturing the condition of the common people during the bloody period of the Judges. It introduces into the history the Moabitess, Ruth, the great-grandmother of their great king, David.

FIRST SAMUEL—

Continues the record through the judgeship of Eli and Samuel; Samuel being the fifteenth and last judge. The people called for a king and it was Samuel the last judge who became king-maker in appointing Saul, in obedience to God's directions, as the first king of the kingdom of Israel. The book takes the history to the death of Saul.

SECOND SAMUEL—

Takes the history of the accession of David and carries it through his reign. Although First and Second Samuel give the history through

the reigns of the first two kings, it is natural that the record should be in Samuel's books for they were associated with him.

FIRST KINGS—

Is a record of the various kings of Israel from the reign of Solomon to the death of Ahab, king of Israel.

SECOND KINGS—

Continues the record of the kings until, first Israel, then Judah have been captured and deported from their native lands into foreign captivity: the ten tribes of Israel never to return, but the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to be restored to their land.

FIRST CHRONICLES—

Repeats, or gives another account of the same portion of history that is covered in First Kings, and

SECOND CHRONICLES—

Is simply another account of the history which is found also in Second Kings.

EZRA—

Gives the history of the captive people in Babylon as they begin to return to Jerusalem and rebuild it after the 70 years of captivity.

NEHEMIAH—

Gives more history of this same Period of Restoration for Nehemiah and Ezra were contemporary, working together some of the time in the reconstruction of the ruined Jerusalem and a restoration of the religion of Jehovah.

ESTHER—

Provides a glimpse into what was happening to the Jews during their exile as found in the experiences of one of the Jewish maidens, Esther, who became queen of the Persian empire.

The Books of Poetry—

JOB—

Belongs to the patriarchal period in background and outlook. Job is thought to have been contemporary with Abraham, although the record of his experiences may have been put into its dramatic form

by Solomon. The problem of why the righteous must suffer is its theme.

PSALMS—

Is a collection of poems in blank verse, ranging in theme from adoration of Jehovah to ballads commemorating heroic events in the history of Israel. Most of them were written by David, but some are by other authors. They cover a long period of time; some having to do with David's shepherd days, others with experiences during the exile.

PROVERBS—

Is a collection of wise sayings written by Solomon. They begin with an eloquent tribute to wisdom, personified as a lady who calls all to consider what is best in life and go through many phases of life from domestic scenes to the market place.

ECCLESIASTES—

Is a sort of autobiography written by Solomon near the end of his career. He meditates over the meaning of life: finds that no physical or material pleasure of things gives permanent satisfaction. He had tried them all and knew what he was talking about. His conclusion is that all should remember their Creator in the days of their youth and to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man.

SONG OF SOLOMON—

Is believed by some to be a collection of fragments from many ancient love songs, woven together in such a way as to give a possible account of how Solomon had wooed a beautiful country maiden who would not be permanently estranged from her rustic lover even for the luxury of the king's palace. The older interpretations of the book make it to be an allegory of the relation between Christ and the church, but we can hardly believe that it is more than a collection of romantic verses of Solomon's writing or choosing, and has nothing to do with the church.

The Books of Major Prophecies—

We say "prophecies" rather than "prophets" for there are five of these books and only four prophets.

Every one of these prophecies, that is, the prophets who wrote them, can be placed in the history of Israel, which is covered by the twelve books of history. Each of these, and the minor prophecies, are to be

understood only by knowing in what period of history the prophet lived and what the condition of his people at the time he prophesied to them. Without a consideration of their places in history, with a knowledge of the conditions of those times, the prophecies become almost meaningless. A failure to place them properly has led to much confusion and misinterpretation of their prophetic messages. But to see them against their background, is to see deep meaning in their writings and to throw much light on the history which is given all too briefly in some of the books of history. Let us try to place each of them that we may not go astray in our attempt to get at their meaning.

ISAIAH—

Wrote during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, just at the time when the fall of Jerusalem was threatened before invaders from Assyria. He wrote before the exile, but looked beyond it to the coming of Christ and had more than any other prophet to say about Christ. He is therefore called the "Messianic Prophet."

JEREMIAH—

Did his work a little later than Isaiah; being most prominent at the time Jerusalem did fall, to the Chaldeans. He foresaw the defeat of Judah and its captivity. Seeing the impossibility of its holding out permanently against its besiegers he counselled surrender to save the city from complete destruction, but was branded a traitor for his pains.

LAMENTATIONS—

Is a series of laments over the destruction of Jerusalem, written by Jeremiah soon after Jerusalem fell, while it lay ruined and desolate.

EZEKIEL—

Contains the prophecies of Ezekiel, who did his prophesying while the Jews were in exile in Babylon.

DANIEL—

Is another prophet of the Exile, who foretold many events through the interpretation of the dreams of the Chaldean king, Nebuchadnezzar, and interpreted the meaning of the hand writing on the wall which appeared to Belshazzar, as well as through more direct visions of the future.

The Books of Minor Prophecies—

If one is properly to understand the prophecies he must know during

what period of the history of the Jews they were written, as well as to know some other things, of course. Before we look at the minor prophecies, therefore, it is well to glance at the sweep of history which involved all the Old Testament writings. This can be done best by considering the outline of all the history contained in the Old Testament by dividing it into twelve very natural periods. These are:

	Old Testament Books covering these periods
I. Ante-Diluvian Period: From Creation to the Deluge—4004 B. C. (A traditional date) to 2348 B. C.	Genesis
II. Post-Diluvian Period: From the Deluge to the Call of Abraham —2348 B. C. to 1921 B. C.	Genesis
III. Patriarchal Period: From the Call of Abraham to the Descent into Egypt—1921-1706 B. C.	Genesis
IV. Egyptian Bondage: From the Descent into Egypt to the Exodus—1706-1491 B. C.	Exodus (Leviticus)
V. Wanderings: From the Exodus to the Crossing of the Jordan—1491-1451 B. C.	Exodus Numbers (Deuteronomy)
VI. Conquest: From the Crossing of the Jordan to the Settlement of the Tribes—1451-1400 B. C.	Joshua
VII. Judges: From the Settlement of the Tribes to the Establishment of the Kingdom—1400-1050 B. C.	Judges Ruth
VIII. The United Kingdom: From the Establishment of the Kingdom to the Division of the Kingdom—1050-931 B. C.	1 Samuel, 2 Samuel 1 Kings (Part 2 Kings) 1 Chron. (Part 2 Chron.)
IX. The Divided Kingdom: From the Division of the Kingdom to the Fall of Samaria—931-722 B. C.	2 Kings 2 Chronicles

X. Judah Alone: From the Fall of Samaria to the Fall of Jerusalem —722-586 B. C.	2 Kings 2 Chronicles
XI. Captivity, or Exile: From the Fall of Jerusalem to the Fall of Babylon—586-538 B. C.	Ezra, Nehemiah
XII. Restoration: From the Fall of Babylon to the Close of Nehemiah's Career—538-432 B. C.	and Esther

Now all the prophecies may all be located back in those periods of history, except that Malachi was probably written after the close of Nehemiah's career. This is the way they come with respect to their periods of history:

Period of History	*Prophets who lived and prophesied during that time (those whose books we have)*
Period of the Divided Kingdom	Isaiah Hosea Joel Amos Jonah Micah
Period of Judah Alone	Jeremiah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah
Period of Exile	Ezekiel Daniel Obadiah (Book of Lamentations)
Period of Restoration	Haggai Zechariah Malachi

With this before one he can understand better what was said in the second paragraph of the section "The Books of Major Prophecies." A careful reading should be given to the entire Old Testament so that one may learn for himself the contents of each of its books. It will

then become clear that it was all a preparation for the events recorded in the New Testament.

Of course, there are some differences of opinion among the scholars concerning the dates of a few of the minor prophets. While there are some who would make two or three changes in the above placing of them, there are other equally reputable scholars who will follow that arrangement.

The remarkable thing which this brings out is the very clear truth that the prophecies having to do with a restoration of the Jews to their native land and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, were all fulfilled in the return under Zerubbabel (who is told of in the book of Ezra) Ezra and Nehemiah. All those prophecies were uttered before that Restoration had been accomplished.

Continuing the study so that I may learn "rightly to divide" the word of truth, I proceed to a survey of the New Testament.

The New Testament—

The Books of Biography—

These are also called the Gospels or, better, The Gospel According to: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In these we find a record of the early life of Christ, except that John begins his record with a "Prologue" explaining that Christ was "in the beginning"; the creation. All that is known authentically of Christ's life on earth, his personal ministry, is contained in these Gospels. They tell us of him from the announcement by the angels that he should be born, through his teaching and working with the people until he was crucified, buried and risen from the dead, to his ascension just before which he gave the Apostles directions for their work, in the Great Commission, after he was gone.

The Book of History—

Is the Acts of the Apostles in which we read of how the Apostles waited in Jerusalem after the Ascension until the Day of Pentecost when the church was established, then they went as their Lord had commanded, preaching the Gospel to every creature. The book gives us the history of the church carrying out the Commission, in the conversion of individuals, in the establishment of congregations, their organization, to somewhere near the year 70 A. D.

Paul's Letters—

Are just what the title suggests, letters written by the Apostle Paul

to various individuals and congregations, containing instructions for the organization and the work of congregations and for Christian living.

The Non-Pauline Letters—

Are ones written by others than Paul, to individuals and congregations and contain much the same sort of instructions that Paul gave in his letters concerning the work of congregations and Christian living.

The Book of Prophecy—

Is Revelation written by the Apostle John. It is a record of the visions he had of things to come and carries us forward to the very end of time. It is highly figurative, containing many symbols which have been variously interpreted by different ones. Great care should be used in studying this book not to be warped by the interpretation of this remarkable book as one man sees it, refusing to learn what others have to say about it. It is often interpreted in such fashion as to make it appear that it teaches the theory which the interpreter wants it to teach. It should always be remembered that it must not be interpreted in such a way as to make it violate the plain teachings of other scriptures.

From this survey of the New Testament it will be seen that in it alone one finds how one may become a Christian and how the church today is to be organized and function. In the Gospels we learn of Christ; in the Acts we learn how men and women became Christians under the teaching of the Apostles who were guided by the Holy Spirit: and in it and in the letters we learn how congregations and individual Christians are to work and live so as to be well-pleasing to the Master.

This revelation is complete and final. It is all in the New Testament. In the New Testament we find our instructions and guidance today for:

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the way of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." Timothy 3:16-17 and we are told:

"I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

Let us study it; every book and every chapter so that we may obey Paul's instructions to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Now That I'm A Christian . . . .

I am one of those "living stones" which make up the church, of which Peter writes in I Peter 2:5, 9:

"Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Therefore, I need to know something of the Church:

a) Its worship;

b) Its organization

c) Its work.

The importance of knowing about the church is seen when one learns that it is the institution through which God will save the world. Eph. 3:10-11. It is made up of the followers of Christ; those who have obeyed his commands. Acts 2:47 says:

"And the Lord *added to them* day by day those that were saved."

In Acts 8:1 those people whom the Lord added to the original group and that original group are referred to as the church:

"And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad—"

Thus it is seen that those who obeyed Peter's command to repent and be baptized were added by the Lord to His church. That there is only one church is seen from Ephesians 4:4-6:

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."

And, Colossians 1:18: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

To ask "which church?" is like asking which Christ one serves, for Christ is the head of the church.

There are not more churches described in the New Testament than there are Christs. Thus one needs to know the description of the church which Christ "purchased with his own blood," (Acts 20:28) so that he may not mistakenly, or ignorantly, be in the wrong one, or be doing the wrong things in Christ's church.

The first thing I will study in this connection is the worship in the Church,

For that is what most people see first about the church.

A. The worship in the church—

What is worship? From the scriptural viewpoint, worship is a condition of mind, expressed through certain outward activities, for the purpose of pleasing the Being who is worshipped.

How can one know what will please God in worship?

No one can possibly know what will please God except as God himself has revealed it to us!

In the New Testament the following five items of worship, and only these five items are revealed to us:

1) Singing:

"Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."—Ephesians 5:19.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God."—Colossians 3:16.

"Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to his name."—Hebrews 13:15.

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."—I Corinthians 14:15.

From these passages it is seen that the music which is in the worship is singing: it must be done in the same way that praying is done, with

the spirit and the understanding. It is to be the *fruit of lips;* in the same way that confession is made to his name. Should it be said that the singing is to be done to the accompaniment of an instrument, the scriptures would answer by saying, "Yes, and that instrument is described, namely, it is the heart." Just as no instrument could be used for making prayer, neither can any instrument be used to offer up a Christian's sacrifice of praise for that *praise* must be the "fruit of lips," even as when he *prays.*

2) Praying:

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."—Acts 2:42.

"Pray without ceasing." "Brethren pray for us."—I Thessalonians 5:15-25.

3) Teaching:

This may be either through, a) reading God's word and studying it, or in, b) preaching:

Read Ephesians 4:11-16.

4) The Communion:

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."—Acts 2:42.

"And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight." —Acts 20:7.

In this we see that they met on the first day of the week for the "breaking of bread," or the communion: also that Paul preached in that service and, by reading on to the 36th verse of the chapter we find them praying together. Hence these verses show an example of preaching, praying and communion.

See also I Corinthians 11:23-29.

5) The Contribution:

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come."—I Corinthians 16:1-2.

See also II Corinthians 9th chapter especially verses 6 and 7.

From these we learn that the giving is to be done on the first day of the week, which emphasizes incidentally, the meeting on the first day of the week, and that it is to be done:

i. As one has prospered, and

ii. As one has purposed in his heart, and

iii. It is to be done liberally and cheerfully.

The service of worship, or the communion service, is to be held upon the first day of the week.

True, it does not say "every" first day. Neither did the old law say "Remember *every* Sabbath day," but no one questions that *every* sabbath day was to be kept holy under Moses' law.

As often as it is the first day, that often must Christians meet for worship, if they are to follow the example of the early Christians who were taught by the Apostles. Jesus did not say "as seldom" as ye do this but "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. 11:26)

Our service should not be stingy but abundant and joyous.

In that service the Christian will, 1) sing, 2) pray, 3) teach, and learn, 4) commune and, 5) give of his substance.

The service of worship is to be attended by every Christian who is physically able to be present.

"Not forsaking our own assemblying together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh."—Hebrews 10:25.

B. The organization of the church—

Now that I'm a Christian I will attend the services of the church gladly and receive inspiration and encouragement from the studying of God's word: from the communion in which I am reminded of the sacrifice that Christ made for me; and in the association with my fellow Christians. But I want to look behind the scenes; I want to know what the New Testament teaches on the organization of the church.

In the beginning, (Acts 11:15); in the city of Jerusalem; on the day of Pentecost in the year that Jesus was raised from the dead: there were the Apostles who had been with Jesus during his personal ministry. They were waiting in Jerusalem, with the 120 other disciples as they had been instructed to do, until they should receive further instructions. (Read Acts 1).

Then there came upon them the power which had been promised and "Peter, standing up with the eleven," preached to the people, telling them the meaning of the strange things they were witnessing. His audience were cut to the heart when they realized the enormity of their sin for "God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye have crucified." (Read Acts 2).

"Then they that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls."—Acts 2:41.

Thus, very simply, the church began. It was that group of people in Jerusalem who recognized the divinity of Christ and wanted to be forgiven of their sins that they might become disciples of the Lord. They received forgiveness of their sins by turning away from their former manner of life and by being baptized. Those who did that were added to the little group of Christ's followers who were already there, those mentioned in Acts 1. At this point they are not even referred to as a church; those who obeyed the Lord that day, through Peter's preaching, were not thinking in terms of "joining a church," but only of receiving forgiveness of their sins and in becoming disciples of the Lord. And the group is referred to in Luke's history simply as "them," and a little later as "disciples." (See following references.)

But the group of disciples grew rapidly until it became a large number of followers of Christ. (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:1; 6:7). When the great persecution came upon them, after the stoning of Stephen, they were scattered and are then referred to as "the church." (Acts 8:1).

The first need for some sort of organization, in addition to the leadership and teaching of the Apostles themselves, arose in Jerusalem. The Grecian disciples complained that their widows were being neglected in the daily ministration. (Acts 6:1ff.) To administer the work seven men were selected from among the disciples and were placed in charge of the work. Those seven men are not called deacons in the text but they are often referred to as the "deacons" of the Jerusalem church.

Further growth and development led sometime later to the appointing of elders. By the time of the meeting in Jerusalem which is recorded in Acts 15, we see elders there. Notice verses 2, 4, 6, 22, 23. They are taking a prominent part, along with the Apostles, in the work of the church. But—they did not have a secret meeting from which others of the church were excluded; it's expressly stated that the church was there with the Apostles and elders: verses 4 and 22.

Paul's famous speech to the elders of the church of Ephesus is found

in Acts 20, from which chapter several important principles are learned.

The qualifications for elders and deacons are found in I Timothy 3 and in Titus 1, as well as in scattered passages elsewhere which emphasize various duties and characteristics of the elders.

In these passages, cited above, we have before us the picture of the organization of the church in the New Testament. There were the congregations of "disciples" or "brethren" (I Cor. 1:10, 26; Acts 15: 33-36) who were called "Christians," first at Antioch, (Acts 11:26) and sometimes referred to as "saints," as in Ephesians 1:1.

In these congregations there were elders and deacons: the elders having the oversight of the congregation; (I Peter 5:1-3) and the deacons ministering to it as its servants.

Each congregation had its plurality of elders and was independent of all other congregations. There is no hint in the New Testament that any congregation, nor any bishop in it, had any control whatsoever of any other congregation. There was absolute independence of congregations; each taking care of its own affairs under the supervision of its own elders, with the service of its deacons.

These men who had the oversight of the congregation are called "elders," indicating that they should be elderly men who were experienced; they were called "bishops," indicating their responsibility as overseers; they were called "pastors," to signify their duty of feeding the flock; they were called "presbyters," when their duty as officials was under consideration. All these names are applied to the same group of men; each title conveying a different characteristic or duty of these men.

Observe from the above facts, these important considerations:

1) the bishops were in the plural over one congregation: not a number of congregations under one bishop;
2) the pastors of a church were its elders; not the preacher or evangelist;
3) there was no hierarchy, that is, no graduated system of officials in the church as a chief elder over the other elders, or a bishop over them. There are only the elders and deacons who have authority and responsibility only within their own home congregations; they are answerable to the only head of the church which is Christ!

Further Important Considerations:

From the foregoing it is seen what the New Testament church is in

its organization and worship. It is of the utmost simplicity!

The question is raised: must we adhere to that pattern strictly? May we not change the worship to meet modern needs; or alter organization to make the church more efficient in a changed world? After all, you know, we are in a different age from that in which the church was born!

There are those who are not content with doing only what they find revealed, but want to fix up the church and its worship to suit themselves or to make it more efficient, as they think it would be. This problem with its various views and differences in emphasis resolves into two distinct philosophies or views.

The first is: We may do anything in the religious realm which is not specifically forbidden in the scriptures.

The second is: We may do only what we find authority for in the Bible. That authority is to be by: a) direct command; b) approved example, or; c) a necessary inference.

Now—which road shall we take? If we adopt the view that we may do what is not forbidden. then we will propagate all sorts of teachings and practices, for there are almost as many different views and preferences as there are people. *That is exactly what has happened!* The denominational world has acted on the principle that we are free to do what we want to do so long as a particular practise is not specifically condemned. That has resulted in the tragic divisions there are among professed Christians today—that is what has produced the curse of denominationalism!

The other procedure; that we will do only what we find authority for. would effectually prevent all division. If we did only what we have authority for, we would all be doing the same things and teaching the same doctrines. We must do this if we follow Paul's pleading:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."—I Corinthians 1:10.

Remember the principle that we cannot know what will please God except as God himself has revealed it to us. Then we are to do, not what will please ourselves, but what will please Him. He has shown us in His word what will please Him, and if anyone wants God's approval on his work he must do it in the way God has told us to do it.

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."—II Corinthians 10:17-18.

And—our service should please God, not ourselves:

"Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may *offer service well-pleasing to God* with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire."—Hebrews 12:28-29.

We do not need a creed, or confession of faith, or manual, or any other help to supplement the Bible, or to describe how we shall set up the organization of it, or conduct its worship. The scriptures themselves are sufficient for all purposes:

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."—II Timothy 3:16-17.

We are not to go beyond what is written:

"—that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other." —I Corinthians 4:6.

The most emphatic prohibition against going beyond what is written is found in II John, verses 9-11:

"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting; for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."

I should not allow myself to be drawn away from what is revealed by any desire for ostentatious show, or by entertainment, or by the belief that God's simple plan needs improvement. I should rather watch and be afraid of falling into the very sort of thing which is prevalent in the religious world today, the condition which Paul was afraid might come about:

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ."—II Corinthians 11:3.

It should be my sincerest desire always to "*speak where the scriptures speak and to be silent where the scriptures are silent!*"

C. The work of the church—

Now that we have studied something of the worship of the church and its organization, the question very naturally arises; organized for what? The church is under the oversight of the elders who are to see that no false doctrine is taught to the members and that no unauthorized practise be carried on in its worship.

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departure grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them."—Acts 20:28-30.

See also Titus 1:7-10; I Peter 5:1-9.

But is the church only to care for its members; is it only to perpetuate itself as a "society of the contented"? Emphatically, NO! Christ:

"Gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, *zealous of good works.*"—Titus 2:14.

The scriptures are given:

"That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely *unto every good work.*"—II Timothy 3:17.

The church is the only institution through which God may make known to the world His purpose for humanity:

"—to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Ephesians 3:10-11.

Its first work, and its last work, and its work at all time is to

"Preach the word: be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."—II Timothy 4:2.

See also II Timothy 3:1-4; Matthew 28:19-20; I Thessalonians 1:6-8.

No church is really a loyal church unless it is interested in preaching in its own community and beyond as it has opportunity. Remember the work that Paul and Barnabas did through Asia Minor, as they were sent out by the church at Antioch, and later Paul and Silas and

others went into Eastern Europe and finally as far as Rome. For a church to be of the New Testament type it must be missionary-minded; it must be actually doing evangelistic work, with its "home forces" in its own community and nearby communities; and in sending or helping to send men who will carry the "Good News" of salvation to all the world. As a Christian I must be doing my part so that the local church, of which I am a member, my home congregation, may be doing its proper work.

But that is not all—Too many act as though preaching from the pulpit on Sunday mornings is all that a congregation need be interested in. Not only the "preacher" but every individual Christian should be influencing all his associates aright and trying to induce them to be Christians. In the early days of the church there was no special class who did the preaching for pay, relieving all the other members from such responsibility.

"And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the Apostles . . . They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word."—Acts 8:1-4.

There is no such distinction in the New Testament as the "clergy" and the "laity." It knows no such thing as lay members, for every Christian has a work to do in the church which is limited only by his ability. Each one must be trying to lead others to become Christians.

True, there were those who could do the public preaching better than others and they were to be the public preachers, such as Paul and Timothy and Titus and Apollos and others. There are some who can teach classes better than others, and such are recognized in Ephesians 4:11-14, but each one is to do what he can in whatever place he finds himself.

The work of preaching, however, is not all that a church is to do.

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith."—Galatians 6:10.

"Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."—James 1:27.

"And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea; which also they

did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul."—Acts 11:29-30.

See also Romans 12:4-13; Galatians 6:1-10; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 6:17-19; and others.

We may summarize the work of the church by saying that it is, first of all to preach the Gospel. While that is being done, each member must be living a life of purity and godliness, helping his neighbors as he has opportunity in any way that he may be of help; and that the whole body of Christians, the church in a particular place, doing as a body many things which could not be accomplished by the members individually.

Now That I'm A Christian . . .

I want to know how I should conduct myself in my various personal relationships and activities. I have reviewed the steps by which I became a Christian: I have surveyed the divisions of the Bible so that I have an understanding of how it is to be handled, both to comprehend it and for my guidance: I have studied the church as a group of Christians in a community.

Now, I need to study further to find instructions and guidance for my private and individual affairs. Here are just a few high lights, covering broad principles, which will serve as a beginning for a more thorough study through the years.

I have learned already that to have faith in God and Christ is not enough. In addition to the other passages on the subject which I have considered, this is emphasized by Peter in II Peter 1:3-11.

Here are qualities which should be found in all my living: 1) all my activities should be VIRTUOUS; 2) I should always be striving for more KNOWLEDGE; 3) I must develop SELF-CONTROL; 4) I must learn PATIENCE; 5) GODLINESS should be my goal; 6) BROTHERLY KINDNESS must be shown to all; 7) and over it all a spirit of LOVE. (Read I Corinthians 13). Not all these qualities can be put on over night; it may take a long time to attain great improvement, but the Christian life is likened to a race; to a battle; to growth. Therefore, I should be trying to grow day by day into the likeness of my Master until, after some years all who know me may see the sincerity and reality of my Christianity.

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," Peter says in II Peter 3:18.

There are several passages in which specific sins are listed. These things are inherently sinful everywhere, in every age. For example:

Galatians 5:16-21, "The works of the flesh" are: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, factions, divisions, parties (margin, heresies), envyings, drunkenness, revellings.

I Corinthians 5:11; 6:9: fornication, covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, extortion, theft.

Colossians 3:5-9: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness (which is idolatry), anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking, lying.

II Timothy 3:1-5: love of self; love of money, boasting, haughtiness, railing, disobedience to parents, unthankfulness, unholiness, without natural affection, implacableness, slander, lack of self-control, fierceness, no love for good, treachery, head-strongness, being puffed up, loving pleasure rather than loving God, holding a form of godliness but denying its power.

Revelation 22:15: sorcery, fornication, murder, idolatry, lying. These are sufficient to show the things which are universally wrong. A careful study should be given these to see that I do not allow any of them to creep into my thinking and living. If the meaning of any of these words is not understood, time should be taken to look them up in a dictionary so that I may know their meaning and avoid them.

It is highly important to know that such things as lying, disobedience to parents, speaking evil and envying are among the things which will keep one out of the kingdom of heaven. Some things which are lightly passed over in our modern life cannot be tolerated in the life of a Christian. Notice how prominent in these lists are drunkenness, fornication and railing!

Far-reaching in its application is Paul's instruction to the Thessalonians; I Thessalonians 5:22—"Abstain from every form of evil."

Let us turn now from considering these negative things; things which are to be left out, to study some of the things which must be grown into my life. Here, one may be disappointed at first in not finding definitely named or listed a lot of things which bother us today.

Broadly speaking, however, the New Testament is not a book of rules. It is a book of principles. One will not find, for example, that "A Christian may not play bridge, but he may play dominoes." Remember that the New Testament is a book written for all time; for all men in all conditions, in all countries and in all succeeding ages. Therefore, it cannot list certain things which are peculiar to one country in one age, for that would be meaningless to other peoples in other centuries. For example, if "honky-tonks" had been condemned by name, what would the people of the first century have known about that? Or if

going to moving picture shows on Sunday had been listed among the things not to do, it would have been meaningless before moving pictures were invented and in places where they have not yet gone.

The wisdom of the book is seen in that it has not dealt in specific items that are transitory, but it has dealt in principles which the Christian must understand and from those principles he must chart his course in any community in any social or economic order; such as the principles of honesty and sobriety and brotherly kindness and helpfulness.

Let us take as the first step in formulating the principles by which we shall shape our living:

"For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."—Titus 2:11-12.

Soberly, concerns one's duty to himself; not to abuse his body.

"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye."—I Corinthians 3:16-17.

Righteously, concerns one's duties toward his neighbor.

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith."—Galatians 6:10.

Godly, has to do with one's duties toward God.

See Hebrews 10:26-31; 12:28-29.

Further on the positive approach let us study carefully the following passages:

I John 2:12-17.
Romans 14:15-17, 21.
Ephesians 4:17-24.
Philippians 2:12-18; 4:4-9.

"Wherefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."—II Corinthians 5:17.

"For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Galatians 6:15.

As a new creature, then, "the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness and truth."—Ephesians 4:24.

I must live:

Soberly, righteously, godly. Titus 2:12.

Be careful that I do not cause someone to be offended by what I do, even though the thing is not wrong as I see it: Romans 14:21.

Without complaining, but being blameless and harmless.—Philippians 2:14-15.

Growing in virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.—II Peter 1:5-8.

For the "fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control."—Galatians 5: 22-23.

"Speaking truth in love"—Ephesians 4:15; working at something honorable that I may have something with which to help others:—Ephesians 4:28.

Being kind and forgiving, Ephesians 4:32; "giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Ephesians 5:20.

Many other passages in the epistles have to do with this subject. Indeed, the burden of all the epistles may be said to be instructions for Christian living. They may be summed up by Philippians 2:27.

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ," that I may be among "them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life."—Romans 2:7.

". . . having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."—I Peter 2:4.

From these one gets the impression that the Christian life in daily association with other people, is a disposition of mind and heart; it is an attitude toward life and one's fellows; it is a matter of spirituality, having the same spirit that motivated Christ:

"But if any man hath not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."—Romans 8:9b.

One further suggestion: every business deal or professional practise should be measured by the above standards and every activity of social or recreational character should be judged by the following tests:

1) Is the practise questionable in your own mind?

2) Does it destroy your identity as a Christian?
3) Does it have a weakening influence on others?
4) Is it destructive of your body?
5) Does it conflict with your duty as a Christian?
6) Does it cultivate inordinate fleshly appetite?
7) Does it bring YOU under weakening influence and association?
8) Does it bring upon you an unequal yoke and place you at a disadvantage in serving the Lord?

For:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."—I John 2:15-17.