-THE SERVICE OF GOD-Rom. 9:4

Most people believe that the church began at Pentecost or at some time during the Acts period of time. Contrary to Scripture. most of them believe that Gentiles were among those added to the church at Pentecost.

The first preaching to Gentiles was at the house of Cornelius. It was there that Peter used the keys of the kingdom to open it to the Gentiles. This was about 8 years after Pentecost. We have Peter's own words for it that he was the first to preach to the Gentiles. Acts 15:7.

Now in all the New Testament we have no record that a Gentile at any time during the Acts period took part in the service of God. Cornelius and Peter were saved by the same salvation, but Peter could go into the temple and Cornelius could not. During Acts there was a wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, not only the literal one in the temple, but also in the matter of race, ordinances, and the service of God. In position, it was the Jew first. In Rom. 9:4 it is made plain that to the Jews pertained the service of God.

As a graffed in branch, the Gentile was not expected to bear fruit. Wild olives would be fit for nothing anyhow. The purpose of the wild olive branch was to provoke Israel into bearing fruit. God's dealing was still with the Jew first. If He blessed the Gentile, it was with the express purpose of bringing greater blessing to Israel.

If the church did begin at Pentecost or at any time during Acts, then what about all these Gentile ministers, teachers, and other officers who take part in the service of God? Are not they out of place?

Some claim that the church began about Acts 13. But if that is true and Romans TRUTH FOR TODAY, how can they have teachers, pastors, and evangelists who are Gentiles? Are they consistant?

-THE CHURCH-Eph. 4:11

During His earthly ministry our Lord chose 12 apostles. These were to carry on the ministry of proclaiming the kingdom after the Lord's death. They were to occupy till He came again. Then He would have things prepared and would receive them unto Himself. He would place them on 12 thrones so that in the kingdom they might rule over the 12 tribes of Israel.

At Pentecost the 12 received power for this commission. Peter had been given the keys to the kingdom. To all was given power to bind and to loose. had power of judgement, not only as to good and evil spirits, but even judgement of life and death over men. An example of that was the case of Annanias and Sapphira. power of healing was connected with the gospel of the kingdom. Since the work was to be done in haste and the Lord would return soon, they were given power to speak in different languages. The Lord's soon return did not give time for men to go to school to learn the languages.

The assembly of which these 12 were the heads was called the church of God. It began with the calling of the 12 and ended at the pronouncement of Paul at Acts 28: 28. This church was not the same as the church in the wilderness as found in Acts 7:38. It followed that church.

Peter made the first use of the keys on the day of Pentecost. He there opened the doors of the kingdom to the Jews. About 8 years later he used them again. This time he opened the doors of the kingdom to the Gentiles.

Since the time covered by the Acts, the kingdom has not been offered to anybody. A new church is being offered. It is the Mystery of the Ephesian and Colossian epistles. The leaders of this church were chosen by the ascended Lord. They were prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Do you appreciate this truth?

-THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN-Rev. 2:9

It seems that about every time the moon changes a new sect pops up which claims to be the 144,000 of the Revelation. Furthermore they always claim that they, the 144, 000, are the only ones who WILL BE saved.

The first big error of this kind of teaching is that they make salvation a thing of the future instead of the present. Now is the day of salvation. A person is either saved or lost right now. needs no future judgement to reveal whether he is lost or saved. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. It is as simple as that.

The second big error is in attaching salvation to the sealing of the 144,000. It says nothing about salvation in connection with group. The reason is that they are from among a people who are heirs of salvation. It is simply a sealof a special group from among a saved people. The sealing is for a special work or witness and protects them against death for the time of that witness. That will be at the end of the tribualtion.

But the greatest error of all is that these claimnants never realize monly called the rapture. that these sealed ones are Jews. From each tribe is sealed 12,000. . Each tribe is named. Not a single Gentile has any part whatsoever in this group. Even the of Jewish descent, if a man were not circumcised on the eighth day, he would be cut off from all Israel. He could not be eligible for this sealing.

If you claim to be of this number, to which tribe do you belong? You must have the proof and fulfill for it is used in connection with the requirements of the law.

The Lord has a word for them who fulness of Christ. To have the make false claims of being Jews. He says in Rev. 2:9, "I know the clasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan."

The Word of God is our measuring stick by which we can try each and every doctrine. Let us be faithful in using it.

-THE FOURTH DIMENSION-Eph. 3:18,19

The fourth dimension has been a topic of discussion at various times among men of science, but to most of us it is something vague and indefinite. We are not much interested. The same thing seems to be true of the deeper things of the Word of God. Most Christians can take a milk diet, but little meat.

When God made promise to Abrahem, just two dimensions were mentioned - the length and the breadth of the land. In the Old Testament there was no further hope given to mankind. Resurrection and a return to the promised land was all that was revealed.

But when we read in Hebrews, in chapter 11, we find that God and Abraham had a little secret between them which involved another dimension. It was the New Jerusalem. The length and the breadth and the height of it were equal. This was a better hope that was held out to spiritual Israel, both of the Old and New Testaments. In resurrection, earthly Israel hoped only for a terrestial body. Spiritual Israel hoped for a celestial body. This better resurrection was also an earlier resurrection and is com-

But now we have four dimensions.

 Breadth. In love, God has included the FAR OFF as well as the NIGH. This includes the ALIEN and the STRANGER as well as the JEW.

2. Length. This extends from before the OVERTHROW thru the AGES TO COME.

3. Depth and Height. From the lowest depths of DEATH IN TRESPASSES AND SINS to FAR ABOVE ALL HEAVENS.

4. Fulness. This is a dimension the word MENSURE. The BCDY is the fulness of Christ is to measure up to the stature of Christ. Christ is the fulness of God.

Since these things are in the realm of the Spirit, most folks try to go back and live in a former dispensation. One must be spiritually minded to understand the things of the Spirit. Judge thyself.

-MARRIAGE-

Quite often the question comes up about marriage relationship. Some, who have read 1 Cor. 7, seem to get the idea that there is some- are so because of circumstances. thing sinful about the marriage relationship. What does the context say?

In verse 26 we note the words, "for the present distress." In verse 29 we find the expression, "the time is short." In verse 31 the apostle says, "for the fashion of this world passeth away." These it may be the wrong one. may give a little hint as to what is in the background of the advice given.

In the first place, we can be sure that the church which began with the choosing of the 12 will go thru the tribualtion. Even tho Israel has been set aside and the kingdom postponed, the time will come when these things will be fulfilled. In speaking of the coming of the great tribulation in Matt. 24:15, the Lord was speaking directly to the 12 and He addressed them as, "Ye." The present Mystery had not yet been revealed and the Lord was speaking as the in they could not answer the simplest a short time the tribualtion would begin. So He said, "When ye see.." They would be there.

Paul also expected the tribulation which would end with the coming of the Lord. It would be unfortunate if this time of trouble would be inconvenient for those with child or nursing small chil-In view of these things, Paul gave instructions for the be-Mavior of married folks as well as discouraging the unmarried from making that step at that time.

The kingdom was postponed. Paul no longer looked for the coming of ithe Lord. Instead, he hoped for an earlier resurrection from among the dead, (Phil. 3:11). Then he approved marriages, (1 Tim. 5:14). You can readily see that unless we rightly divide the Word of truth, we can fall into error. Also withright division, the Scriptures items, how much more on the great Let us always seek TRUTH FOR TODAY. thyself approved unto God.

-LEARNING TO READ-

One of the best aids to Bible study is the ability to read well. Most people are illiterate. They had no opportunity to learn. The rest are illiterate from choice. Any school teacher knows what I am talking about. We have thousands of people about us who think they can read, but can get no ideas from the printed page. Or if they do get an idea from the written word,

You have probably seen many who could glibly say the words as they looked at the book or paper, even if the words had several syllables, yet if they closed the book, they could not give you any idea of what was on the page. That is what I mean by illiteracy by choice. person has never trained himself to read for ideas. Such a person can read a book and think about something else or listen to the radio. In school I have had pupils tell me how many times they had read the lesson, and they probably that they had fulfilled all requirements; but questions about the subject matter.

Many people are well-read when it comes to the Bible. They may read it faithfully every day. Some will get little if any information from it. Others may read something into it and then read it right back out should begin on a Sabbath. It also again and think that the Scriptures said so-and-so. But the thot was in the head all the time and not in the Bible.

How many think Christ sweat blood in Gethsemane? There is no such statement in the Word. How many think a great wind filled the house But the tribulation was put off. at Pentecost? Look it up. How many think Elijah went to heaven in a chariot of fire? Be careful now. How many think Moses and Elijah appeared in person at the transfiguration? Read carefully. How many think the wise men found the Lord in a stable? Better be sure about this one.

If we can slip on these little will seem to contradict each other. themes of the Bible? Study to show

- VHAT THOU THINKEST-Acts 28:22

When the apostle Paul arrived at Rome, the elders of Israel said to him, "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest." So often we have the same experience as Paul. Feople will come and ask, "What do you think about it?" or "What is your opinion of this matter?"

Paul did not tell these folks what HE THOT. Rather, he plainly told them WHAT GOD SAID. That should always be our ground. What we may think has no bearing on truth. It is what God has said that counts.

I know we have many people who play the game of follow-the-leader. They have more regard for the opinions of GREAT BUBLE TEACHERS than they have for what God has said. If they are misled, they have no just cause for complaint. In fact, they deserve to be fooled by false doctrines.

These are the folks, who, as soon as they hear a new thing, be-take themselves immediately to the preacher and say, "Now what do you think....?" If he says that this here thing is heresy and dangerous, they believe him and have no more to do with that teaching.

Now we have a sure measuring stick by which to measure every teaching. That stick is the Word of God. We should search and see. We should try the things that differ. We should prove all things. Just suppose that some great Bible teacher should tell you that a great precious gem of truth was early a chunk of dirt and you believed him. You might miss the greatest treasure of a life time.

No matter how great an authority a man may be, his wisdom is only toolishness in the sight of God.
The wisdom is always open to chaltenge. There is no dispute about that God has said.

We must ever study to show ourselves approved unto God. We must keep the attitude that we may alled every man to be a liar, but that God is always true. Let us frind great treasure in His Word.

-ABSENT FROM THE BODY-2 Cor. 5:8

Just a week ago a man asked me about this passage. He wanted to know whether a man was instantly with the Lord after death or was there a period of waiting. I opened my Bible to the passage in question and showed him some notes in the margin which I had made some time ago. This question must be answered by looking at the context.

In the first three chapters
Paul speaks of his ministry and
troubles that beset him. At the
beginning of the 4th chapter he
maintains a hopeful attitude in
spite of all difficulties. Twice
he makes a negative statement and
once a positive statement. Let us
examine these by an outline;

- 1. WE FAINT NOT. 4:1.
 THE REASON: We shall be raised up, (4:14). Can this be anything but the resurrection of the body?
- 2. WE FAINT NOT. 4:16.
 THE REASON: We have a building of God....clothed upon,
 (5:1-4). This again is the resurrection of the body.
- 3. WE ARE ALWAYS CONFIDENT. 5:6
 THE REASON: Absent from the body, present with the Lord, (5:8).

Twice the apostle made it plain that the hope of seeing the Lord can take place only in resurrection. Is it necessary to repeat these details the third time? If he was to go immediately into the presence of the Lord at death, then what hope is there in the resurrection? Instead of taking one verse out and considering it alone, we should take the whole context.

This is a good example of how many do take a verse out of its context and by implication and twisting make it teach most anything desired.

If we want to know where the dead are, then we must study all that the Word says about that subject before we dare to come to a conclusion. Just an idea with a string of proof texts can never prove anything. Search and see.

-PARAPHRASE OF COL. 2-This I say, that Christ Himself is the mystery of God and therefore you need no visionary intruding into the secret things of God. Full assurance comes from the recognition of the fulness of Christ, and moreover, in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If this be true, you can be proof against the enticing words of those who would otherwise beguile you. Beware lset any man carry you off, as plunder, by vain deceitful philosophy, which is according to the traditions of men, and the rudiments of the world, but which is not according to Christ. You hear from these philosophers much about attaining unto the pleroma (fulness) by means of ascetic practices, but I tell you that in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and this is vitally connecited with the purpose of the ages, and the church of the One Body. Out of His fulness we all may draw, and ye are already complete (or filled to the full) in Him, Who, in His capacity as the incorporation of the fulness, is not only the Head over all things to the church, but is Head also of all principality and power.

Coming now to the matter in hand, all this ill-treatment of the body is valueless. Something more terrible than anything we can ever accomplish was required to annul the body of the flesh, the old man, (nothing less), indeed, than the cross of Christ and His triumphant resurrection.

In Whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ (the practical and experimental side of which is developed in 3:5-14). Christ has put off the body of the flesh; you now, in the strength of your new position in Him, put off the old man with his deeds, having been buried with Him in His baptism of suffering and death on the cross, wherein also ye have been raised with Him, thru faith in the working of God Who

raised Him from the dead. And you being dead to your trespasses and to the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses: having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, and contrary to us, removing it from the midst, nailing it as a concelled bond to His cross. Here the true circumcision took place, where He, and we in Him, put off the body, and then and there He made a public show of principalities and powers, leading them in triumph by that very cross which at first, seemed the very symbol of all that was weak and futile.

If this is your assured position "in Christ" and "with Christ" surely you will not allow any man to judge you over such things as meat, or drink, feasts or Sabbaths, for these are but shadows of good things to come; you have the substance already in Christ. Now all this impinges upon the question of your perfecting. No man can rob you of your membership in the Body of Christ, but he may distract you that you may fail in the race and so be cheated of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Let the peace of God be the umpire in your hearts, and not the fantastic speculations of these visionaries who, in self-willed defiance of the truth, pretend to humility and angel worship, intrude into secret things veiled by God from our eyes, and all the time are failing in the one thing that matters, failing to hold the Head. Seeing that ye are members of His Body, your only means of growth is by vital contact with the Head and with one another, for just as the body is ministered to by joints and ligaments, nerves and arteries, drawing all, finally from the Head that controls every function of the body, so it is with the mystical body of Christ. Introspection is harmful and is destructive of all true progress in grace.

It is not a matter of argument, however; it is not a matter of philosophy, tradition, or the ele-

ments of the world; it resolves itself into the simple issue, Did you die with Christ from the rudiments of the world? If so, being dead to these things, why are you submitting yourselves to ordinances such as touch not, taste not, mandle not, things which as they are used, pass away? These things are merely the commands and doctrines of men. The whole thing is the form without the power: a show of wisdom, but really selfimposed systems of worship that cannot prove acceptable. The Father must be worshipped in Spirit and truth by the true circumcision, who have no confidence in the flesh this issue. Hope you like it.

All this harsh treatment of the body and enforced humility is vain. |day afternoon class to 8 CST on It does not render the honor that the body of the redeemed should have, and, by the fact that it attempts that which Christ alone can accomplish, really ministers to the 4 miles south of Atwood. We are satisfying of the flesh, in spite of all protestation to the contrary.

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-TRUTH FOR TODAY-

I do not know the source of the above paraphrase, but have had it in my notebook for some time.

Cot behind and so am making this a dcuble issue. Hope to be able to catch up now.

The family is well.

the North Winona Church of the

Brethren. A nice attentive group of people out there.

Mr. Francis Smith and family spent a few days with us last month. They are from Lambertville, Mich.

Sunday, July 24th and the following Sunday, July 31st, I spent with the Gospel Fellowship of Muskegon, Mich. Mr. Moore of Pierceton took me the first trip and I drove the old Dodge alone on the I always enjoy the fine folks next. of Muskegon.

We need a name. Gene, our largest registered Brown Swiss had a calf. We are proud of it. It is a heifer.

Greetings to the new readers of

Notice that we changed the Sun-Tuesday night. That gives me time to get home from the broadcast. The place is 6 miles west of Warsaw on the Harrison Center Rd., or studying Genesis and Acts at present.

Please keep up the correspondence. It supplies me with ideas, questions, and topics for my paper and classes. I know I get a little slow in replying, but maybe I can make it to catch up.

Put out alfalfa last week. Have Sudan grass hay to make this week.

Address your mail to; Oscar M. Baker, R 2, Warsaw, Ind. To call by I spoke the evening of July 3 at phone, just call for Atwood 394.

Come over any time and see us.

TRUTH FOR TODAY :/o Oscar M. Baker R 2, Warsaw, Ind. U. S. A.

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