

# Expository Files



Jon W. Quinn, Warren E. Berkley - Editors

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Front Page

## *Pattern* *By Jon W. Quinn*

God established His Truth. We have it in the New Testament and it consists of both commands as well as examples of how to carry out His will and intention. God's truth remains the same whether people perceive it as the truth or not. In fact, the Lord Himself even said as He revealed it that a great apostasy would come (1 Tim 4). This would occur because men would lose the right attitude toward the unchangeable truth of God's word. When their hearts, or attitudes toward the revealed standard of God's authority changed, then their practices, and even their terminology changed. That is why "parties" and "divisions" came to exist. Not because there is a pattern, but rather because of man's cavalier attitude toward it.

To revere the Lord by looking into the pages of the New Covenant to try to find and apply the pattern is not sectarian or being a "partyist". I need not join some party or schism or group. My loyalty must be to Christ. But this loyalty does not express itself apart from loyalty to His Word. I may not even agree with all my brethren who approach the Scriptures with this same determination and respect on everything. But as they, too, out of loyalty to Jesus look to the pages of the New Testament to discover and put into practice the pattern, I can have fellowship and respect as I join with my fellow heirs of Christ's glory and promise in looking toward heaven and assisting one another in proving all things (Acts 17:11). As we do this together, we are not being "partyists" in any bad sense of the term at all.

If we are going to be careful not to join in with the "great apostasy" of 1 Tim 4, it will be necessary not to lose the perspective they lost that led to their falling away (as in the first paragraph above). We have wonderful instructions about the local church in the epistles. There are commands... do this... do not do this. We need to apply those commands to our local churches today. For example, 1 Cor 11 has some commands about the Lord's Supper; both the "do this" as well as "Do not do this" varieties. We should be careful to follow this teaching. But we also have, in the Book of Acts, examples of these churches being established. We have examples of what they were taught. We have examples of how they obeyed the commands of God. Again, taking our example of the Lord's Supper, we learn by example that early disciples partook of it on the first day of the week. Now we can conjecture why. We know the first day of the week was referred to as "the Lord's Day" so partaking of the "Lord's Supper" on that day fits. We could observe that it was on this day that the Lord rose from the grave. But what we know for sure is that this is what faithful disciples did in carrying out the commands of God. We know this. So what do we do with the inspired account of the examples of carrying out God's commands? Do we treat them as mere historical drama of questionable usefulness today? Or do we reverently seek to obey the Lord's commands using these examples as His illustration, or pattern, of carrying out His will?

I know what I choose to do, and it has nothing at all to do with being part of a party. Some may call me "legalist" or "traditionalist" or worse (it happens). I'll pray for the Lord to touch their hearts, but I'll not let their opposition, and sometimes malice, detract me from my goal. As long as the Lord Jesus calls me "blessed", that's alright with me.

***Waiting For The Lord***  
***(Isaiah 40:30,31)***  
***By Jon W. Quinn***

“Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.” (Isaiah 40:30,31).

There is much in the Book of Isaiah that is prophetic in nature. God used Isaiah to speak much concerning the coming of Jesus, which was yet seven centuries in the future. Much of Isaiah is quoted in the New testament showing how these words were fulfilled in Christ. Jesus read from Isaiah in His hometown synagogue and announced the ancient words were being fulfilled during His ministry. The Ethiopian treasurer was reading from Isaiah when Philip began from the Scripture and preached Jesus unto Him.

But note the concept of waiting for the Lord in Isaiah 40:31. This is descriptive of what ought to be the focus and mindset of every Christian.

### Patiently Waiting With Endurance

The New Testament often urges Christians to be patient or longsuffering. The idea is to have enduring faith even during difficult times.

A good example of this would be the coming persecution of Christians as well as the destruction of Jerusalem which Jesus warned His disciples about. There would be great loss, and most of His disciples would live to see it all transpire. Jesus encouraged them to endure and promised, "By your endurance you will gain your lives. (Luke 21:19). It is not likely that the life that they would gain was necessarily their physical life here, but rather life everlasting.

We are also told that we need to endure if we are to receive the promises of God; "For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised." (Hebrews 10:36; cf. vss. 37-39). We are also told that it is with endurance that we are to run our race (Hebrews 12:1,2). We are reminded of the patience of Job and the rewards that followed (James 5:7-11). We must live patiently by faith until He comes again. His coming is an ever present possibility!

The patience of a Christian, however, is different from the patience of others: it is not as the world gives, but as the Lord gives. How is it different?

First, it is not "waiting something out," but "waiting for the Lord." We live with a wonderful anticipation of seeing Him and being exalted by Him and sharing His glory (1 John 3:1-3). Neither is the motive of our waiting bound to some standard of earthly success. Its purpose is not earthly

success, but to cause us to be faithful and pleasing to God rather than returning to our idols.

Patience is “waiting for the Lord.” By trusting the Lord, putting the future in his hands, expecting and anticipating God's tomorrow and continuing faithful, we continue in our commitment to Christ. And, we grow ever stronger.

### Opportunities To Wait For the Lord

When we are denied that which we want or think we need, it is time to “wait for the Lord”.

It is easy to become frustrated when things “don't go our way.” People sometimes allow themselves to become cynical about life and its prospects, but not people with living faith. To turn from the Lord during such times is a mistake. To turn to Him is far better.

We recall how Israel's hardships were multiplied when they complained in the wilderness and rebelled (Deuteronomy 8:2-5). They would ever serve as examples of what not to do when the day does not go quite right (1 Corinthians 10:1-12; Hebrews 3,4).

When we are afflicted and do not understand why, it is time to “wait for the Lord”. It is a fact of life. We may have to go through affliction and we may be perplexed as to why. Job is used as an example of one who did (James 5:11). He puzzled over extreme hardships that came his way. He simply could not come up with anything that even resembled a good reason as to why the things he had faced had occurred.

The Psalmist once wrote of almost falling away as he contemplated that the wicked seemed to be doing so well while he was afflicted (Psalm 73:1-3). He had wondered if his faith had been in vain (vss. 12-14). But he remembered the end result of the wicked and resolved therefore to be faithful (16-18; 25-28).

When we are doing good, it is time to “wait for the Lord”.

There is the patience needed in the evil day, but there is also that which was needed by Elijah on the mountain. “He said, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the

sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.'" (1 Kings 19:10). He had worked hard but had not seen the results he had desired from his good work. We need to persevere in doing good during such times. "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Galatians 6:9-10).

The rewards of "waiting for the Lord" are many, both now and especially in the world to come. "For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." (Galatians 6:8).

Are you waiting for the Lord? There is both strength and peace in this approach to life. That is good for now. But in the end, when the kingdom is delivered up to the Father, that is when our reaping will reach wonderful heights far beyond present expectations. Hardly a day will go by when you will not be called upon in some way to wait for the Lord. But in the final scheme of things, It will have been worth the wait.

"Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary." (Isaiah 40:30,31).

***The Living Redeemer***  
***(Job 19:23-27)***  
***By Jeffrey W. Hamilton***

When we find ourselves in difficult situations, most of us turn to our families to help extract us out of our tight spot. Such aid between family members is expected by God. "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (I Timothy 5:8). Friends are wonderful, but we lean on our families when adversity comes (Proverbs 17:17).

In the days of the Old Law, a kinsman had the duty of rescuing his family members from such difficulties as paying off debts, making ransom payments when captured in war, or avenging a relative's wrongful death. Land in Israel belonged to God who granted portions to various families. At times a person would become so poor that he would have to sell off the family land to meet his debts. When this happened, a relative was expected to buy the land back, so that it would remain in the family (Leviticus 25:23-25). If a man became so poor that he only had himself to sell, his relatives were expected to buy him back from his owner (Leviticus 25:47-49).

When a man was killed, a relative was selected to be the avenger of the murdered man's blood (Numbers 35:10-12, 15-19). The Hebrew word translated "avenger" is the same word that is translated "redeemer" in other passages. Instead of recovering family land or personal freedom for a relative, the avenger is recovering justice on behalf of his kin.

The whole concept of redemption is beautifully illustrated in the book of Ruth, especially in the fourth chapter when Boaz offers to purchase the family land owned by Naomi and marry Ruth to redeem the family.

It is important that every one understand the concept of redemption because each of us has gotten ourselves into deep trouble. We have all placed ourselves into a debt which we cannot repay. All of us have sinned (Romans 3:9-20, 23), and those sins have justly earned us the penalty of death (Romans 6:23). Who then can cover our debt? How can we extract ourselves from the bondage into which we have sold our souls (Romans 6:16, 19-21)? You see, the redemption of a man's soul is costly. "No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him – for the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease trying forever – that he should live on eternally, that he should not undergo decay." (Psalm 49:7-9).

Think about it. We have already sold our souls to the devil, so we cannot buy ourselves back. What else do we possess that we could possibly offer in exchange for our souls? Money and worldly possessions cannot follow us across the river of death (Psalm 49:16-17). Besides, all that is in the world already belongs to the Almighty Creator. Do you see the mess men get themselves into when they sell themselves into sin? But where we are powerless, God is able to redeem (Psalm 49:15).

Throughout the Scriptures God is described as our Father. His Son, Jesus, then is our elder brother. God made us in His blessed image (Genesis 1:26-27). As God is spirit, we too are spiritual beings (John 4:24; Psalm 100:3; Isaiah 64:8). As God is righteous, we too were made righteous, though we have squandered our inheritance. “Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes” (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

No relative would rescue someone who refused to acknowledge his relationship. Imagine rich uncle Harry coming to buy his nephew out of slavery only to be told by his nephew, “I refuse to have anything to do with you!” In a similar manner, Jesus expects us to be appreciative of His efforts on our behalf. “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38). Jesus expects us to acknowledge our relationship to Him before others (Matthew 10:32-33).

Still, our Father sent His Son to redeem us from slavery. “Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:3-5). Jesus was the only appropriate one to redeem mankind and the only appropriate method was by the giving of His own life (Hebrews 2:9-11). We sold ourselves into miserable slavery and our own brother bought us back from our master. What wondrous love is this that was shown to such wretched creatures!

But the price of our release was unimaginably high. “And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Peter 1:17-19). Yes, it was through the blood of Jesus that we have redemption (Ephesians 1:7-8). With His own life He redeemed us from our sins (Titus 2:11-14).

As awesome as this redemption is, we must not neglect to recognize that Jesus is also our avenger. Since the penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23), the one who leads men into sin is a murderer (John 8:44). Jesus' death gave Him the opportunity to destroy the destroyer. "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:14-15). Jesus destroyed death because He did not remain dead (II Timothy 1:9-10). He made a public spectacle out of Satan (Colossians 2:15) and thereby avenged our shameful death at the hands of a mass-murderer.

Job foresaw this wonder of a living redeemer. "Oh, that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! That they were engraved on a rock with an iron pen and lead, forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:23-27). Job was firmly persuaded that his Redeemer lives and that one day He would come to this earth. Job knew that he would see his Redeemer after his own death. The very thought of one day meeting his Redeemer made him faint.

Not only was Jesus given life, He is able to impart life to others (John 5:21-29). It is this fact, that we too will one day live with Jesus, that forms the very core of Christianity (I Corinthians 15:12-14, 20). It is not merely that a death was paid for our sins, but that the One who died was given eternal life, and He will give us eternal life with him one day. "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:54-58).

Let all give thanks to God for our Redeemer and our redemption!



***Maintenance***  
***Eccl. 10:18***  
***Warren E. Berkley***

The words of the preacher/writer show a sub-theme in Ecclesiastes ten: his observations about a land (nation) and the king (leader). This is developed in Eccl. 10:16-20. Part of that is this statement: “Because of laziness the building decays, and through idleness of hands the house leaks.” As applied by leaders and in nations, it is not wise to wait for problems to occur, then quickly put together some remedy. There needs to be a pro-active emphasis on prevention. One good step in that direction is the simple work of maintenance.

Among other things, I’ve always preached maintenance to my children. They were taught to clean their rooms, organize their belongings and keep their toys in working condition (for at least a week). Later, I trained them in the “old school” of car owners: change the oil every 3,000 miles or three months; follow the manufacturer’s maintenance schedule; rotate tires; have brakes checked regularly. The typical response was, “I can’t afford to do all of this maintenance.” My answer was, “you cannot afford not to maintain the vehicle.”

An absence of maintenance can kill a local church. While building maintenance ought to have a place, that’s not the kind of maintenance I’m writing about here. Maintenance in the local church must take the form of good oversight (1 Pet. 5:2), reverent order in worship (1 Cor. 14:40), discipline (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:14) and sound teaching (Titus 1:9, 2:1). When any of this work is slighted by idleness or corruption, “the building decays.”

Maintenance is crucial to the quality of marriage. Marriages do not automatically grow stronger over time. Both must be committed to the Lord and each other, then grow together in that commitment. Both must humbly admit their mistakes and seek forgiveness. Both must learn the patience of Christ and show the love He displayed. Both must refuse the destructive worldly influences, the temptations of the workplace, and the consuming career orientation that can gradually erode the relationship. A periodic marriage check-up may put you behind! Get up daily, honor your mate,

work on the relationship and seek God's help. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge," (Heb. 13:4). Fail in this and "the building decays."

Let each of us stand fast in the purpose of personal maintenance. Many become alienated from God gradually through years of simple neglect. Bible reading is left undone; prayer is only said in crisis; attendance becomes a Sunday morning ritual; we lose sight of the value of the gospel, and we let the world dominate who we are. Through lack of personal maintenance, we trample the Son of God underfoot, count the blood of the covenant unworthy and insult the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29). If you fear this could happen to you, get busy now before "the building decays." "For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come," (1 Tim. 4:8).

"Attention to the counsels and admonitions of God's Word cannot fail to be serviceable in delivering us from temptations to slothfulness." (D. Thomas, Pulpit Commentary, Prov. 10:18, Homilies).

### ***Spiritual Balance***

***Eccl. 3:1***

***Bill Moseley***

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccl. 3: 1). What this points up is the wisdom of proper balance in all things. We see balance in nature. If the rabbit population gets out of hand, the foxes will take care of it. When they kill too many rabbits, the foxes decrease. The earth is perfectly balanced, so much so that we can calculate eclipses and such like years in advance. But we also need "spiritual balance" in all things.

First, there is a need for doctrinal balance. This means giving the proper emphasis to all truths. The hobbyist is blind to all but his "pet themes," and puts undue stress on some particular doctrine that he has decided that he alone has the truth concerning. Some are carried away with "new doctrines," when they should be steadfastly contending for the "old paths." Such people fall for everything and stand for nothing.

Next, there should be balance between zeal and knowledge. That ardent

fervor may be a misdirected zeal. The inquisition demonstrates the harm done when fanatics get out of spiritual balance. The Pharisees are excellent examples of it. Churches may fall prey to this unbalanced situation, having the truth, but no zeal.

Third, our preaching needs to be balanced with our practice. Sound doctrine should produce sound living or we are out of balance. Sometimes we may be as the Pharisees, and "say and do not" (Matt. 23:3). If we preach "pure religion" then we need to be practicing it. The man we commonly call the "Good Samaritan" is an excellent example of a balanced life. He put the good principles of his life into practice while the priest and Levite (who knew all about the preaching) did nothing.

Finally, there is the need for balance between emotion and logic. There is a place for both of them in the life of the Christian. These may affect entire congregations. One might rely on emotion so much that they get "carried away" with all sorts of unscriptural things, because it makes us "feel good." On the other hand a person or congregation may make a specialty of cold, heartless, ritualistic logic. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost is an example of proper balance between emotion and logic. His logic was seen in his reasoning from the scriptures. The emotion is demonstrated by his hearers being "cut to the heart." There must be balance in these areas in persuading people to obey the gospel. The heart may not be converted if the teacher is overly emotional, and scaring people into obedience is not the way.

Let us learn to get our spiritual things in balance - whatever they may be. We will then be more effective workers for God, and you will then really know what Christianity is all about! – From [www.taylorschurch.com](http://www.taylorschurch.com)

***Origins of Suffering***  
***Topic Page***  
***By Jon W. Quinn***

Some say, "God works only through the word today." I do not think that is a right answer. Now, it is true that God reveals His will for our lives only

through the word. For example, we know God's will concerning the question "What must I do to be saved?" only by searching out the Scriptural answer He has provided for us. But God also works in other ways. He works providentially, and we can accept that truth without destroying the truth about how we are saved by obeying God's word (2 Peter 1:3,4).

God will use providence to provide us with correction and encouragement to do right in addition to His word. Nothing He provides will contradict His revealed word (i.e. He will not provide us with salvation contrary to how His revealed word says we are saved).

If we accept the idea that God works only in and through the Word, it will destroy the plain teachings of the Word itself about chastening. Anytime we accept a concept that forces us to ignore plain teachings in the Bible, something is seriously wrong. (i.e. Paul's difficulty with pride; God allowed Satan to "buffet" Paul to help keep Paul's pride from getting out of hand (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Here, it is plain that God was working His purpose and even using Satan to accomplish it for Paul's benefit.

Something else just here on the other side of the issue; not all suffering or unpleasant event is the chastening of God for sin. One of the main teachings of the book of Job is that not all pain is punishment for sin. We need to be like the Bereans. Listen, and search. Let God's Word be the standard, not "I think, I believe, I feel, I've heard, Others teach, We've always taught..." etc. Paul suffered. We all do. Why? For different reasons. Sometimes for several reasons at once, and not always as a direct result of personal sin, but sometimes suffering is a consequence of sin. And it is not always the chastening of God, but sometimes it is.

### **The Curse on Sin - Genesis 3:16-19**

Human suffering began because of sin. (Genesis 3:16-19). Corruption set in, and things that promoted the original harmonious and pleasant existence was changed. There was an increase of the pain of childbirth and hard labor became necessary to eke out an existence. We now experience birth defects and sickness; our bodies wear out and finally death. We must labor to survive. (Romans 8:20-22).

The result of being in this fallen universe is that we suffer with it. There is no escape. Christianity does change the world from darkness back to light, but rather transforms us into lights in a dark world; the salt of the

earth to help slow the corruption process. We are in the same dying world as others. However, we are on a mission to show others how to escape this corruption. Jesus did not ask the Father to take us out of the world, but to protect us from the evil one. (John 17:15)

### **We May Suffer From Our Own Foolishness**

Many times people are in need because of no fault of our own, but at other times it's through our own willful idleness (Proverbs 19:15). It is much better to let such a one learn not to be idle than to feed him and allow him to continue to be, but not everyone evidently agrees with that.

How many times have we heard the excuse made for a young person in trouble, "Oh, he got to running with the wrong crowd; he's a good boy" Well, there may be some truth to that; "He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm." (Proverbs 13:20). But still, the harm is suffered through making a foolish decision about who to "hang out with." Even in the worst inner cities, there have been stand outs who refused to join a gang and worked and studied hard and became successful. They deserve credit. They did not simply choose the "easy" way, which, when all is said and done, is really the most difficult way of all.

### **We May Suffer Because of an Accident**

What happens when the fastest runner in a race steps in a hole and twists an ankle? Someone else wins (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Sometimes, suffering results from bad timing, being in the wrong place at the wrong time. This verse says so! Bad luck.

### **We Can Suffer Because We Love Others**

We experience empathy when we care so much for others that we suffer when they are suffering. Brethren are to have this characteristic toward one another. We can suffer because of our love for them. (Jeremiah 9:1 - suffering of a nation; cf. 9:1; 14:17; 22:10).

Jesus had compassion. Note His suffering at Jerusalem's destiny with destruction (Matthew 23:37-38) See also Paul (2 Corinthians 2:4; Philippians 3:18).

### **We Can Suffer Because of the Sin of Others**

One of the most vivid and awful examples of this was first prophesied by Jeremiah and fulfilled when wicked King Herod ordered the execution of

innocent babies in a bid to kill Jesus (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:18). Today, we think of terrorism around the world and of the thousands of innocent people suffering such cruelty.

### **We May Suffer in Order to Provide a Testimony**

God sometimes uses the suffering, but continued faithfulness of His people to send a message to the world. When Christians suffer but refuse to yield their faith, they are giving firsthand authentication of a fact; that their faith in God is real and does not depend on outside favorable circumstances. It is our good attitude during bad times that impresses others, and we must be ready to give the glory to God (1 Peter 3:14-15).

### **Our Suffering May be a Test of Our Faith**

Really, all suffering does test our faith, but some may be allowed specifically for that purpose (1 Peter 1:5-7). Job's suffering was a test. Job passed; Satan flunked. We may suffer from persecution as a direct result of our faith. (1 Peter 4:16). Jesus said it would sometimes be this way (John 15:17-21). We must refuse to be intimidated and continue to let our lights shine (Matthew 5:10-12).

### **We May Suffer So We Might Grow Spiritually**

Triumph over adversity makes one stronger. The proof of faith to oneself, the gift you are able to make to Christ, the growth in one's own dedication; all make for a spiritually stronger disciple (Romans 5:3,4; James 1:2-4).

Furthermore, we become more closely identified with Christ who suffered for us (Romans 8:28,29). God is much more concerned about your character than your comfort, though He is concerned about both. Sometimes, suffering reminds us of important matters that we may tend to lose sight of in times of ease (Hebrews 12:10,11).

But that is not the end of the story. The end will come when we are delivered from this realm. In heaven, there will be no more tears.

## ***Plan of Salvation*** ***By Jon W. Quinn***

Plan #1

Announced by the apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to new believers in Christ who asked what they must do:

"Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."  
(ACTS 2:38)

Plan #2

On the back page of a tract, sinners were urged to pray this prayer to be saved. This prayer is not found in the Bible; nor were alien sinners commanded to pray for their forgiveness.

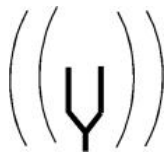
The Sinner's Prayer:

"O' Lord, I accept that I am a sinner and that Jesus died for my sins. I now accept Him into my heart as Lord and Savior asking for your mercy and forgiveness in His name. Amen."

The editors of Expository Files are happy with plan #1 and thankful to the God of all grace for it. We cannot recommend Plan #2 at all, but will change our minds when this prayer can be shown to us in the Bible.

## *Tuning To The Standard* *Warren E. Berkley*

I was a musician for several years. In Junior High School and High School I enjoyed some achievement playing a trumpet. I played in the Fort Smith Symphony for two seasons, then served in the Army Band for about three years. In those days, musicians would tune with a device called a tuning fork (the predecessor of the pitch pipe and the new digital devices). The conductor of the orchestra or band would strike the tuning fork with his hand, and let a clarinet player or violin player tune to that standard. Once the musician tuned his instrument to the tuning fork, the rest of us would listen to that note and tune our instruments accordingly. Today, if you attend an orchestral performance (and you get there a little early), you may hear the piano player striking a



note like “C,” and all the musicians listening, then tuning to that note (up or down).

In this process, do you realize the tuning fork was the standard of authority and therefore unity.

Can you imagine the unmusical results if the conductor said to his musicians: “For tonight’s performance, we will not be using a tuning fork. It will be our purpose to illustrate the beauty of individuality and diversity. You find your own “C” according to your own desires, or tune to a neighbor if you like. We do not want anyone to be stifled or limited by the authority of a single standard. We will perform tonight without tuning to a standard.” What do you think the performance would sound like? What would the reviews say?

But why not take it further (this suppression of authority and exaltation of individualism)? The conductor says, “each one of you can play your favorite piece; ready, 1, 2, 3 ...”

But you know what, the very presence of a conductor requires submission to leadership. Fire the conductor. Let the musicians show up whenever they want to, play whatever instrument they want, whatever piece they like, in tune or out of tune; and let them start and finish whenever they desire. Let individualism prevail and authority die.

What has happened? You have nothing left of any musical value. No authority, just unattractive chaos that nobody would want to hear. It would sound awful!

Yet this is exactly what we observe in modern religion today. There is resistance to Bible authority, praise for human plurality, unity in diversity and the growing deception that this is what God wants!

“We ought to obey God rather than men,” (Acts 5:29).



