

# LIVING ORACLES

*"...and he received living oracles to pass on to you" (Acts 7:38)*

## Miracles, Signs, Wonders, Divine Healing Versus Our Lord's Healing His People Today by S. H. Hall

That our God, always, in giving to man a revelation of his will, has attended that giving with signs, wonders, and unmistakable miracles, must be admitted. When he sent Moses to deliver Israel from their bondage in Egypt, through Moses he worked unmistakable miracles to prove to his people that Moses and Aaron were God sent, and that the instruction these two gave to Israel was from God. A study of Exodus, beginning with the first chapter and reading through the book, you get the whole story—the birth and preservation of Moses, God's appearing to him in the burning bush, and the signs performed before Pharaoh, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the law from smoking, trembling Sinai. And, as you study the story of Moses and Aaron with their signs and wonders performed, you will observe that Pharaoh's magicians worked some miracles also. Here let it be said that Satan works miracles—startling miracles. See Matthew 24:24 and Revelation 13:14.

Coming to the New Testament, the purpose of miracles is clearly declared. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). These miracles show that our Lord was undoubtedly sent of God. The confirming and all-comprehensive miracle was his resurrection from the dead. And a day was made, sanctified, and set apart, to be observed in memory of his resurrection—it is called "the Lord's day." (See Romans 1:1; Psalm 118:22-24; Acts 4:11-12; Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:23-25).

Not only did our Lord do signs and wonders to prove that he was from God, but he accompanied his apostles with the same kind of proof. In Mark 16:19-20, after giving them the great commission, it says: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat

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on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” And thus the gospel by Mark ends.

But let us read more: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?” (Heb. 2:3-4).

Christ “first began” to preach “the great salvation” when he gave the age-lasting and world-wide commission to his apostles. This began in the mountains of Galilee “after the baptism which John preached” (Acts 10:36-37). Matthew 28:16 to the close of the chapter is the commission as given by Matthew. Verse 16 shows it was in a mountain of Galilee, and Christ met his disciples by appointment. “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.” Too, when you read Luke’s account of the great commission, you learn they were to begin preaching under it in Jerusalem, but not until the Spirit came to guide them. (Luke

24:45-53). John 16:12-15 shows that the Holy Spirit, when He came, was to guide the apostles into all truth, take the teaching of Christ and give it unto them. From John 14:26 we learn that the Spirit was to bring to the apostles’ memory all things that Jesus had said unto them while here with them.

Yes, as the closing words of Mark’s gospel declares, “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” These are the men who “preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven” (I Pet. 1:12b). And every word of their preaching was confirmed by unmistakable miracles.

Now just a few words about the miracles, wonders, and signs performed by Christ and his apostles as compared with the so-called divine healers and miracle workers of today. I believe you really want to know, and you shall know the difference.

When Christ or his apostles did any healing when the multitudes were before them, every afflicted soul in the multitude was healed. Listen to this: (1) Matthew 12:15—“Great

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“Time is filled with swift transition—  
Naught of earth unmoved can stand—  
Build your hopes on things eternal,  
Hold to God’s unchanging hand.”

Malcolm L. Hill, Editor

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multitudes”; “He healed them all.” (2) Matthew 14:14—“Great multitude”—“moved with compassion”—“healed their sick.” (3) Luke 9:11—healed “them that had need of healing.” So there were no sick ones left unhealed. In verse 6 —“Healing every where.” (4) Now look at the apostles’ healing. In Acts 5:16 you have the multitude, and it says they “healed every one.” Think of it —“healed every one of them”; “healed them all”; “healed every where.” Is this what you see when you attend “the healing services” announced to take place on Tuesdays and Friday nights in revivals today by those who claim they have the same power that Christ and his disciples exercised? Now you know you see nothing of the kind. Then why be led off after the doctrine and commandments of men by these false claims?

Does not the Bible speak of “diviners” seeing a “lie” and telling “false dreams” (Zech. 10:2)? Does it not also tell of “the prophets thereof divining for money” (Mic. 3:11)? They call for a healing meeting to get a crowd. Then they take up all the collections they can first, then go through the farce of claiming to heal when they do

not heal. They make a few think they feel better. But what about the hundreds who know that not one thing was done for them? When did an afflicted person leave our Lord’s meeting or that of the apostles without being healed when they undertook to heal them? “Every one was healed”; “he healed them all.” And he healed “every where”, leaving no room for the faker to come among us and get behind a curtain or in a dark room and claim to heal.

But another thing we must think about when contrasting the so-called divine healer today with Christ and his apostles. When they performed a miracle, it was an undoubting miracle. Take the man healed at the beautiful gate in Jerusalem by Peter and John. (See Acts 3:2; 4:16, 22.) The man was 40 years old and had been a cripple from his mother’s womb. The enemy was staggered. They had to admit that “a notable miracle hath been performed.” Do you ever hear of a cure like this among the so-called divine healers of today? Besides this, the maimed were healed; that is, a man without a leg or arm, and the leg or arm was given back to him. Do you ever see anything like that? Then did not our Lord touch the leper, known to

be incurable, and were not such healed? When has anyone of our divine healers of today visited the lepers’ colony and healed even one of them?

There is no need of going further with this study. The good book declares that “all manner of sickness,” “all manner of disease” were cured by our Lord. See it again in Matthew 4:23. He “healed all that were oppressed of the devil” (Acts 10:38). It just will not do for you to allow yourselves to be influenced and led about with such groundless teaching as the modern divine healers lay claim to. Does not the Bible teach you that God’s revelation was made so complete “that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14)? And then in I John 4:1: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” And our Lord warns us: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matt. 7:15). Does not Paul warn us in II Corinthians 11:13-15 to

beware of “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” And have you read the solemn warning of Paul in Galatians 1:6-9? Let us read it right here: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him

God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 9-11).

To teach that such miracles, signs, and wonders performed by the apostles and our Lord are to be performed today is not the doctrine of Christ. It is another gospel, and we dare not listen to it. It would be well to study I Corinthians 12 and 13, both chapters together. The 12th chapter begins by Paul’s declaring that he does not want us to be ignorant of “spiritual gifts,” and then names quite a number of them. But the chapter closes by saying: “Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.” There is something more excellent than these miraculous gifts. The 13th chapter begins by telling us what it is. It is the reign of the law of love. Those of you who have only the King James version of the Bible will note that “charity” is the word used, but the correct translation is love. Charity today means the giving of our goods to feed the poor. In verse three you note that Paul says: “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor...and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing.” The man who gives all of his goods to feed the poor could be correctly called a

charitable man. But if love moves him not do to this, he is nothing. But read on in this chapter and you find that “when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part [the miraculous gifts] shall be done away.”

The things that were to abide are “faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love.” “That which is perfect” is the “perfect law of liberty” mentioned in James 1:25, the completed revelation preached by the Holy spirit sent down from heaven (I Pet. 1:12). It contains all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3). This gospel, thus revealed and confirmed by miracles, signs, and wonders, contains all the doctrine we should preach, and all the reproof and correction the world needs, and furnishes us completely unto every good work (II Tim. 3:16-17). Hence in II Timothy 4, the chapter that follows, reading verses 1-4, we are charged to preach the word, and not our visions and dreams (Jer. 23:28-32; Isa. 8:19-20).

**DOES OUR LORD HEAL HIS PEOPLE TODAY?**

I unhesitatingly answer the question above asked, *Yes*, most assuredly He does. But there is

quite a difference with healing today and in the days of Christ and His apostles. The healing then was done instanter—that is, immediately, without delay. He touched blind eyes, and they at once saw. He spake the word, and the sick were made well. Certainly you can have no trouble in seeing the kind of miracles performed by Christ and His apostles. Any kind of disease, any kind of physical infirmity was healed at once—the lepers, the man without a leg or an arm, people blind from birth, one born a cripple and now 40 years old.

Now, while such healing we have not now, for there is no reason for it, no new revelations to be confirmed, yet God blesses His people today in all of their troubles. He is with us all the time and causes every experience we have to bring a blessing to our souls. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). The “called according to his purpose” is His church. If you are a member of His church, you have this assurance. “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold

wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:10-11). When God purposed to send Christ to save us, He then and there purposed that Christ should build for Himself a church through which to operate and in which He blesses His people (Matt. 16:18-19). And in this church He blesses us “exceeding abundantly above all we think or ask.” “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, to him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end” (Eph. 3:20-21). This is what the church of Christ believes, the church I am happy to represent. Our Lord goes beyond our thoughts and our asking—exceeding abundantly so.

But our Lord’s making us well when we are sick is not now like it was when He and His apostles were working miracles to confirm their teaching. We are now under the reign of the law of love already referred to. In the days of the apostles, disciples were left sick here and there just because there was no reason or necessity to make them well in a miraculous way. Paul states that he left

“Trophimus...at Miletum sick” (II Tim. 4:20). Epaphroditus was sick, nigh unto death, but he was not healed in a miraculous way. God spared him, made him well because he had a work for him to do (Phil. 2:15-27). All known remedies for such sickness were used, and the matter was left with God to sanctify them to the saving of the sick if God so willed. Hezekiah was sick unto death and prayed most earnestly, and God added 15 more years to his life. But he was not made well instantly. A poultice made of figs was laid on the boil by which he was afflicted, and he got well (II Kings 20:1-7).

When sickness comes to us or our loved ones, we should do all we know to do to meet the demands of the case. But we should never fail to put the case in the hands of our Lord and trust him, even more than we do our doctors, to make the loved one well if it is His will. We have a prayer list at Russell Street, including all of our sick, our aged, and our infirm. We know that in many instances cures have been made when all the doctors stated it could not be done. I could give example after example in my 53 years as minister, but it is needless. How far God intervened in these

cases is not for us to say, for we do not know. All such cures are progressive, not effected immediately or instantly, but in

the course of time the loved one gets well. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." So the book

declares, and so we believe and practice.

## Editorial: House Churches

by Malcolm L. Hill

We have been hearing about house churches for some time. What is meant by this term? The term house church is a misnomer. There is no such thing found in the Bible. There were whole congregations meeting in private homes (Rom. 16:5). Individual Christians may have met at times for Bible study but not as the whole congregation came together for worship on the Lord's day (I Cor. 11:17-20, 33).

Is it unscriptural for Christians to meet in a private home (house church) situation on Sunday night if the elders endorse such? No. But it may be unwise for them to endorse

such. It may not be expedient (I Cor. 10:23) or best. Some questions for us to consider:

1. Is the "house church" arrangement better than the whole church coming together for worship?
2. Some say the "house church" arrangement makes it easier for people to attend. Why so?
3. Some say we get to know each other better in the "house church" order. Why so? We can get to know each other in the assembly of the saints if we wish to and then visit in the home.

4. Are elders over the "house church" assembly? Can they see about the church better with this arrangement? It could be that "house churches" could develop into pus pockets within the body of Christ. Elders are to oversee in the best way they can.

What is wrong with God's way of assembling for worship and Bible study (Heb. 10:25)? There are so many new things that have developed within the body of Christ in the past 50 years. It makes the faithful say "What is next?"

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## Northern New England Lectures

by David Hill

At the peak season for “leaf peeping” October 9-11, 2009, Brother Kerry Duke and I had the good pleasure of being part of the Northern New England Lectures held each year at the Lakes Region Church of Christ in Tilton, New Hampshire.

Brother David Coombs and his good wife, Judy, help to plan, coordinate, and host this annual program each year. The Coombs have been long-time laborers in the Lord’s kingdom in Tilton and New England. This year they asked Brother Mac Deaver to coordinate the speakers and present a program on the Holy Spirit and providence of God.

The lectureship was well attended locally. The members of the congregation were very warm, attentive, and hospitable. Of the congregations I’ve had the opportunity to visit in the New England area, this is the best organized and most receptive of the gospel. The congregation is located on the main street in town, Mill Street, and they have a very nice, well-maintained building. The congregation is overseen by three fine elders, Robert Monts, David Coombs, and Robert Blouin. It is obvious that these

men have set their hearts for service to the Lord and for preserving New Testament Christianity. The worship was orderly; the respect and reverence in the assembly laudable. Each member seemed interested and expressed appreciation for the lessons delivered.

Several visitors travel their way every fall to enjoy the beautiful New England scenery. Some were present on the Sunday morning that I spoke and it was good to meet them including a couple from Springfield, Tennessee. It is always a commendable thing to see Christians who plan not only for their vacation, but also for their worship to Almighty God while on vacation. The first century Christians did that (Acts 20:6, 7). The vacationing visitors and the lectureship guests helped in attendance and encouraged the local brethren that number around 50.

Besides Brother Duke and myself, Weylan Deaver, of Ft. Worth, Texas, Mac Deaver of Denton, Texas, Dick Sztanyo of Pelham, Alabama, and Glen Jobe of Schaumburg, Illinois, all participated on the program. It was good to be with these gospel

preachers and enjoy the fellowship we have in Christ. The subject matter was important in that as much as we possibly can, we need to understand how God works in the world and with His people. God is alive and well in the world today. His Spirit is working to the help and aid of the Christian (Heb. 4:16). To answer every detail of His working would be impossible for any man as God has only told us what He wants us to know (Deut. 29:29). No one on this program affirmed miraculous operation of the Spirit in the world today, nor did anyone imply such. But the encouragement from the Bible on God’s ability and willingness to help the Christian was very appreciated.

New England is a great mission area. There is still a high concentration of population in the northeastern United States, and most have neither heard a gospel sermon nor heard of the church of Christ. There is much work still to be done at home in this country. May God help us to see the need to carry the gospel at home and abroad to all the world.

## The Devil

by Malcolm L. Hill

1. He is called the accuser of our brethren (Rev. 12:10). Those who go about accusing people are of the devil.
2. The devil is the adversary or enemy of the righteous (I Pet. 5:8). Those who go about fighting righteous people are of the devil.

3. The devil is a liar (John 8:44). All who go about telling lies are of the devil.
4. The devil is a murderer (John 8:44). Those who uphold and go about upholding abortion are of the devil.
5. The devil is the ruler of darkness (Eph. 6:12). Those who live in darkness of the

world are children of the devil.  
The devil is the spirit that works disobedience in people (Eph. 2:2). All who disobey God are following the devil.

## Envy

by Malcolm L. Hill

Envy is a very powerful thing. In fact, it runs neck and neck with the power of love. But what is envy? Envy is hate. Envy does not want others to succeed. It is never happy at the good fortune of others. It often despises those in power and those who have been very successful in life. It rejoices when others fail. Envy is full of selfishness. It does not care for the truth. Envy will lie. It often is hypocritical. It hunts for faults and a way to condemn the

righteous. Envy will never confess nor give its true identity. It hides under many different shields. It often wants others to think it is really concerned with what is right. It hides under the shield of wanting to help. It wants to leave the impression that it is forever after what is just and fair. Envy never gives praise but condemns. It never helps in worthy causes and ever puts down those who are engaged in such. Envy loves malicious

gossip and is often lopsided. It loves to see others fall and fail. It never gives a good report.

How does envy enter into the being of a person? One is not born with envy. Envy is a disease of the soul and is the outgrowth of a lazy spirit and little or no self-esteem. It wishes to pull down and destroy instead of growing and building up. The Christian must guard against it forever (I Pet. 2:1-2).

## Is It Right for Bible Colleges to Receive Funds From Sinners?

by Malcolm L. Hill

If the Bible College cannot receive funds from sinners, then it cannot receive funds at all for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:10-11, 23). The only funds a Christian college could receive would be from little children and babies.

If it is wrong to receive funds from alien sinners, then the

church sins every Lord's day because when the collection basket is passed, alien sinners drop in their gifts as well as saints. Should the church practice closed contribution? Some churches have practiced closed communion in days gone by and some still do. Should the church of Christ refuse the

Lord's Supper to non-members of the church?

When the hearts of people are not right, they can come up with some very peculiar ideas. Christianity is not a foolish religion. The Captain of our salvation is not a fool nor is His testament foolish. Christians are a very balanced people with reasonable sense.

## The American Pulpit

It is not, however, the pulpit as a field for eloquence, that we are now anxious to consider it, but simply as a moral and religious power, occupying a most prominent place in the economy of Providence, and foremost among those instrumentalities that advance the welfare of the world. Taken in this connection, it is a divine institution for divine ends. It is a specific thing for a specific purpose. The decree of God has set it apart for a special work, and no man has any right to extend it beyond its limitations, or pervert it to extraneous objects. To unfold the distinctive doctrines of Christianity as they centre in Jesus Christ, the Lord and Redeemer of our nature; to convict man of his utter helplessness, and lead him to the source of all strength; to excite his slumbering conscience, and bring him to the cross as a lost and ruined sinner; to form within him the virtues of faith and holiness, and thus fit him for heaven, is its great mission. If the pulpit devote itself to this task, it will fulfill the aim for which it has been established. A minister of the gospel must feel that he is consecrated to a select vocation, and he must restrict himself to its duties if he

accomplish the work committed to his care. Outside the pulpit there are departments of moral and religious effort open to his exertions, and into these broad fields he may enter whenever the spirit of his sacred ministry may accompany him. There are such scenes of labor, and they are perfectly sympathetic with his office. But even here a wise caution is necessary. Generally they are the mere incidents of his work. A minister magnifies his office by earnest devotion to it, and, if faithful to its supreme claims, he will find its immediate duties altogether sufficient to exhaust his time and his strength. Let him keep within his own appointed sphere, and he will find that he can do more just there to rectify the errors of public opinion, to awaken the spirit of moral and Christian philanthropy, to educate the sentiments of mankind and promote the progress of society, than in all other ways. It should, therefore, be his constant and prayerful effort to make the pulpit a mighty power, so that it may create and sustain every kind of secondary agency in the world.

For nothing is more certain than if the pulpit supports its true character and answers its

peculiar ends, every other beneficent institution will flourish. The first and main thing is to keep the pulpit in its right place and at its right work. Other instrumentalities will take its tone and diffuse its spirit. No truth is more clearly defined in the New Testament, none more fully illustrated and confirmed in all history, than that the pulpit is God's chosen means to communicate religious thought and impulse to the world. To it we must look for the life of all divine benevolence; it is the fountain, and all other agencies are but reservoirs.

It is just here that the American pulpit is exposed to its greatest danger. Our national mind is so intensely active; our interest in philanthropic and reformatory schemes is so deep and earnest; our susceptibility to moral excitements is so quick and lively, that the pulpit is easily diverted from its peculiar work. The demands of the age are pressing upon it, and from every quarter there are invitations that solicit its assistance. No one can indiscriminately condemn these calls. But there are many of them that cannot profitably occupy its zeal, and others there are that, under a false guise, delude the ministry into

The American Pulpit, *continued*

pernicious paths. The present tendency of the ministry to engage in literary and scientific pursuits—to be known as amateurs in art—to cultivate the fashionable elegancies of intellect, may not be so directly injurious as some other evils, and yet it is easy to see that they are acting as counter-excitements to the specific business of ministerial life. Literature affords them a most interesting and refreshing exercise, and, within due bounds, ought to enlist their attention. And yet, such are the impulses of our day, no small proportion of ministerial time and ability are consumed in this sort of wasting service. Any diversion from their exclusive office is deplorable, but especially those forms of popular effort which lead them off into ambitious ways and stimulate the less spiritual instincts, are to be deeply lamented. A minister needs a large and liberal intercourse with the world, and his social sympathies require full gratification, but his intellect is sacred to his divine vocation. Such intellectual sacredness is the primary element of his morality. It is the emphasis of his official vow. It is the badge

of his high position. And hence he cannot, without detriment, allow himself to use his mind habitually and earnestly in other relations, without impairing his own intellectual tone and dissipating that strength which ought to be reserved for the mighty warfare between sin and holiness.

Every man of religious observation knows that the gospel is not generally preached in this country as it was 30 years since. It has not that single-sightedness, that clear and unmistakable directness, that distinct and definite purpose, which once characterized its exhibitions. We miss much of the preaching spirit and manner that our fathers employed with signal success. A generation of preachers is rapidly crowding our pulpits who fight no more with the single weapon of the gospel—they must furnish themselves with sundry small arms, and flourish short swords of earthly steel. One calls the champions of “Natural Vestiges of Creation” into the field, and enjoys the luxury of an unresisting fight. Another leaps full-armed into a museum of Megatheria and ancient Fossils, and scatters bones right and left in terrible dismay. A third is

profound in Ontology; a fourth spices his sermons with Fichte, Carlyle, and Strauss; a fifth honors the Bible by taking a text, and supplies the rest from the Westminster Review. The variety of such discourses is beyond classification. And it must be confessed that the rampant innovators have been quite successful in their achievements. They have caught, in some instances, the popular ear, and carried the popular voice. But they have mistaken rashness for strength, novelty for freshness, and popularity for usefulness. The nakedness of the soul is not laid bare by such ministrations, nor are these frolicsome pages that wait in the court of intellect, the attending ushers that lead you into the royal presence of truth.

Amidst the dangers that now threaten the decline of ministerial usefulness, let us think of those ancient days when Christianity went forth, fresh and free, to subdue the nations of the earth. Not then did it seek an alliance with any attractive worldliness. Not then did it covet the testimonials of philosophy and art to seal its pretensions. The magnificent possessions of Croesus, the famous Pericles, the renown of

The American Pulpit, *continued*

Cleopatra, the achievements of Caesar—what were they to a religion that preached poverty of spirit, self-denial, tribulations, and death as the badge of discipleship and the preparation for immortal rewards? It then relied on God’s presence. It was content to speak in God’s name. It was satisfied with God’s approbation. The strength of man could not help it. The ancestral honors of Judea availed nothing in its behalf; and the pride of Grecian wisdom was humbled beneath its scorn. The mighty eagle that had swept the world gave not a single feather to the champions of the

cross. The friends of Christianity then felt that it was competent to create its own nobility, in the persons of regenerated men and women, and in this trust it conquered. The same law yet stands. Christianity is a divine witness to each generation, and it must rule in God’s right. Authority may offer its aid, but it will retire from its presence, rebuked for its follies and abashed by its crimes. Intellect may come and report, through Newton, its triumphs in the far heavens; through Cook, its explorations of the sea; through Davy, the discoveries of chemistry; through Humboldt,

the harmonies of a vast Cosmos. It may sing the great oratorio of the world’s sadness in the strains of Milton, or inspire a loftier eloquence than has yet entranced the world. But these all are insignificant compared with the doctrine of Christ crucified as the wisdom and power of God. It is this doctrine that lifts up the humblest struggle to the height of a grand warfare. Out from fishers’ huts and rude forest homes this doctrine brings the chosen men whose battle-ax cleaves the heart of the world.

—*Millennial Harbinger*, June 1856

## For What Can the Church Contribution Be Used?

by Malcolm L. Hill

In the 1940s and 1950s the churches of Christ held a very restrictive view on the use of the church contribution. But has this ever changed in the passing of time! Please consider this list and quote Bible for your answer.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can the church contribution be used to buy real estate?</li> <li>2. Can the church contribution be used to build a church house?</li> <li>3. Can the church contribution be used to buy fertilizer for the church building lawn?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Can the church contribution be used to build and maintain a preacher’s house?</li> <li>5. Can the church contribution be used to buy air-conditioners for the minister’s home and the church house?</li> <li>6. Can the church contribution be used to build restrooms in the church house?</li> <li>7. Can the church contribution be used to purchase water fountains?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Can the church contribution be used to support orphan homes and homes for the aged among churches of Christ?</li> <li>9. Can the church contribution be used to help the worthy poor?</li> <li>10. Can the church contribution be used to buy a pulpit and church pews?</li> <li>11. Can the church contribution be used to give the preacher a bonus at Christmas time?</li> </ol> |
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For What Can the Church Contribution Be Used? *continued*

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| <p>12. Can the church contribution be used to pay for the preacher to go on vacation?</p> <p>13. Can the church contribution be used to help people whose house has burned up?</p> <p>14. Can the church contribution be used to buy a stove for the preacher's house?</p> <p>15. Can the church contribution be used to buy a stove for the church house kitchen?</p> <p>16. Can the church contribution be used to buy flowers for the dead?</p> <p>17. Can the church contribution be used to pay for a casket to bury the dead?</p> <p>18. Can the church contribution be used to pay for water to flush the commodes in the church house?</p> <p>19. Can the church contribution be used to pay for repairing the church house furnace?</p> | <p>20. Can the church contribution be used to pay for locks to go on church house doors?</p> <p>21. Can the church contribution be used to buy the preacher a new suit of clothes?</p> <p>22. Can the church contribution be used to build a kitchen in the church building?</p> <p>23. Can the church contribution be used to buy toilet tissue for the restrooms in the church house?</p> <p>24. Can the church contribution be used to buy waste cans for the church building?</p> <p>25. Can the church contribution be used to pave the parking lot at the church building?</p> <p>26. Can the church contribution be used to buy a church van?</p> <p>27. Can the church contribution be used to pay the church building janitor?</p> | <p>28. Can the church contribution be used to purchase a vacuum cleaner?</p> <p>29. Can the church contribution be used to pay for padded pews?</p> <p>30. Can the church contribution be used to buy a public address system?</p> <p>31. Can the church contribution be used to pay for telephone service at the church building?</p> <p>32. Can the church contribution be used to build a family life center (gym)?</p> <p>33. Can the church contribution be used to purchase ice for a church picnic?</p> <p>On and on this list could go. Just where do we stop using the church contribution?</p> |
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