

“There Shall Be One Flock”

--- *John 10:16*

An examination of current popular trends in light
of the truth taught in John 10:16.

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Introduction

There is a burden on my heart related to the truth that there is one flock; and I trust I may have grace to speak of it with a sense of my own failure in the matters discussed in these notes. The subject is the increasing trend, and its causes, of giving a special "place" to youth work in the light of that precious truth first announced by our Lord: "there shall be one flock" (John 10:16). This trend has been at work in Christendom for many years. More recently it has received a place among groups professedly gathered to the Lord's Name. Some brethren can testify to its spiritually disastrous results among such companies. Those gathered together unto the Lord's Name are not immune to these trends. Concern of brethren whose motives we would not question found expression in the practice of conducting some form of youth work that seems on the surface to comport with scripture; and some "blessing" could be pointed out. Recently such "youth work" has received great impetus. Some of us believe that what is now developing and showing itself is but the inevitable outcome of what was allowed earlier. Indeed, warnings were sounded in the past and were ignored or criticized as a lack of love for young people. Now youth work is manifesting its character more plainly - although sad to say many do not recognize its setting aside, practically, the truth of the one flock.

What I have observed in connection with youth work among the company of Christians out of which I was gathered to Christ's Name is this. After a certain progress has been made in youth work, the leadership begins to coerce all leadership to fall in line with the youth work methods. Those who resist are gradually defamed. As the youth leadership becomes more emboldened and militant with their success, they exhibit the fleshly characteristics of the youth with which they are occupied in their attacks on those who oppose such innovations. The youth and the youth leaders put tremendous pressure on all young Christians to attend their camps, seminars, meetings, etc. It becomes a form of persecution against those who for conscience sake do not attend. All in opposition to these innovations are regarded as odd, misfits, cranks and, of course, legal while the youth leaders are regarded as loving and having concern for "the young people".

Cited as an evidence of God's sanction of these methods is the "success" it brings. This is similar to the supporters of Billy Graham citing the "successes" as an evidence of God's sanction for his crusades (in spite of his linking in those crusades with modernists). So souls are saved, baptisms counted, and some become "candidates for the Lord's Table"! May God help us!!

Meanwhile, the rapid general decline is hidden from our eyes while we are lulled to sleep thinking all is well and we are experiencing great blessings of God. Those sounding an alarm are then said to be destroying their own usefulness (Jer. 18:18; 2 Cor. 5:10). There comes a time, however, in the development of these things when it is too late. We must discern the character of these things NOW, and refuse them.

Some believe it is timely to acquaint our brethren, who are willing to consider it, with the character of youth work (chapter 1), scripture misuse to justify it (chapter 2), causes that lead to it (chapter 3), and to what and where it leads. We feel we must look beyond "practice " and examine CAUSES as well. Unless we examine and judge CAUSES our state will remain unaffected, other than to pride ourselves on carrying out scriptural practice.

When a line of things taken up as a "work" becomes popular, those opposing it are frequently labeled as unloving. If, however, that line of "work" is unscriptural in its method, and contrary to scripture in its inherent thrust, it will be seen that 2 John 6 shows that those who refuse to acknowledge this line of "work" , and follow the Word in regard to their service, are showing love to the saints.

And now I beseech thee, lady, not as writing to thee a new commandment, but that which we have had from [the] beginning, that we should love one another. And this is love, that we should walk according to his commandments ... (2 John 5,6 JND trans.).

Evidence abounds in our day of a looseness, indifference and self-indulgence, so that the force of 2 John 6 is little understood. In the midst of such a state, ignorance of divine love is an understandable consequence. I trust the Lord will enable my reader to understand that the following pages are an expression of love to the Lord's dear people.

Is it not the tendency of our hearts, brethren, to hide from ourselves the true causes of our low state, sin, and chastening in order to avoid exposing the real issues before our souls and the God who lovingly chastens us? We thus avoid the soul-searching self-judgment and repentance that we need.

It is well to understand that this is the tendency of our hearts. In order to see how this happens, consider as an example the way mergers took place between various companies of brethren divided from those gathered together to the Lord's Name. These mergers were consummated on the basis that these various (divided) groups were none-the-less gathered (together?) to the Lord's Name. Merging on this basis they publicly repudiated the teaching that there can be but ONE expression of the one body, and that there is one place (see note 1), truth generally

received and acted on before the division took place from which these merged companies originated. These mergers were concluded in violation of truth and it was a method of covering over the real causes of division. (A synopsis of these mergers may be found in an exposure of F. E. Raven's Evil Teachings, R. A. Huebner, Present Truth Publishers). It avoided the retracing of wrongly taken steps. It avoided the application of divine principles:

1. The point of departure is the point of recovery.
2. A moral stream never rises above its source.
3. The passage of time does not change the character of a moral action.
4. Association with leaven leavens.

Whenever, WHENEVER divine principles are violated and given up in practice (if not in words), worldly motives, worldly thinking and worldly ways and practices replace the divine. Whenever the proper sense of our place in the dispensation is lost or forgotten, and whenever we ignore or violate its bearing on the character of our testimony, we can depend on it that worldliness in its various forms of conduct and thinking will ensnare us.

This, then, is one example of how real issues are suppressed and where such conduct leads. It is a dreadful example of violating truth and the resultant darkening of discernment. It perpetuates itself and leads on to ever deepening departure from the will of God expressed in the holy• scriptures. Oh, may God preserve us from our own tendencies!

We must consider OURSELVES. "Take heed to yourselves" (Luke 21:34). Sad to say, many do not seem to recognize either where we are or where we will end if there is not general repentance.

One of the underlying causes of our present state, brethren, is that we have failed to cultivate in our souls a goodly sense of just where we are in the history of the church. Some of J. N. Darby's most vocal critics denounce what they call "his doctrine of the ruin of the church". J. G. Bellett often mentioned that we were but "church-ruins" and that we must remember this. Think of the recovery of truth God granted in the second quarter of the 19th century and our shameful failure (and sin) in failing to maintain that truth! I press this because I am convinced we all need to judge before the Lord our own part in the ruin, and the state of the assembly. To merely change a defective practice will not suffice. The cause must be judged or our loving God will chasten us yet in other ways until we do so.

William Kelly once wrote that he had no sympathy with the man that could look at what the state of the church was at the beginning and look at its state now and not weep for the difference. When was the last time you and I wept about it? And when was the last time we wept about our added sin and shame in regard to the failure of not walking in the truth recovered in the second quarter of the 19th century? The youth work with which these notes deal but furthers the departure.

I ask you to consider the matter before us in this paper: its causes, its character, and the manner in which attempts are made to justify it. May God grant us to evaluate all things according to divine principles and the maintenance of conduct and practice suitable to owning that we are indeed "church ruins"; and that in heart and conscience we be "outside the camp and "afar off" (Ex. 33:7), not bringing in its ways and methods, acknowledging and practicing the truth that there is one body and one flock.

In examining the subject of this paper I purpose to review the CHARACTER and magnitude of "youth work", what accompanies it, and that it is the development and outworking of worldliness that attends the state preceding and accompanying it. Some may wonder at my going into as much detail as I do regarding the extent to which "youth work" has developed in companies of Christians from whom we walk apart. The principles and motives upon which "youth work" is carried out are the same, wherever found. By observing what it has led to in "the camp" we can perceive what its tendency is, and we should remember that scripture characterizes an act by its tendency. (See Notes on First Corinthians by W. Kelly, chapter 8, verses 9 through 13.)

Subsequently, in chapter 2, I purpose to examine scripture references having a bearing on the principles involved, including scriptures alleged to support modern youth activities. Finally, in chapter 3, I purpose to examine in greater detail some of the CAUSES which have led to the "Youth Work" trend. May our gracious God and Father touch our hearts and consciences to own our failure and seek of Him a right way for ourselves and our little ones (Ezra 8:21).

Before concluding this introduction I would like to state that before I was gathered together to Christ's Name, for some years I was a counselor at a youth camp and also assisted in coordinating this endeavor, finally assuming the main coordinating responsibility. We had over 100 campers and staff. The time came when the Lord opened my eyes to the truth that there was one flock, and I withdrew from such activities, and later He opened my eyes to the meaning of the truth that there is one body. I mention this because I am acquainted with the exercises and motives of

those who desire to be helpful. Still, scripture must guide us in our activities, as well as our zeal.

"Communicating spiritual [things] by spiritual means"
(1 Cor. 2:13, JND trans.).

"But let each see how he builds upon it"
(1 Cor. 3:10, JND trans.).

* * * * *

Oh that we would heed this scripture:

"THERE SHALL BE ONE FLOCK" (John 10:16, JND trans.)

CHAPTER 1 - THE CHARACTER OF 'YOUTH WORK'

Often the starting point of such activities has a good sound to it, and good motives behind it. Many brethren are honestly concerned about the increasing lack of interest among "young people" about the truth committed to us, and remedies are being sought. But the root causes of the drift of things with the "young people" are overlooked, the symptoms are drugged, and sadly any who address themselves to the root are labeled as legal and unloving. "Holding our young people" becomes an objective in itself, and things appealing to them are introduced to supplement the divinely ordered activity. Even young people's conferences and experiments in "open ministry" have been attempted, showing where some are as to the understanding of the truth of the assembly which they profess. These activities become but a stepping stone to Christendom's youth camps, youth seminars, special music, and youth workers and counselors specially skilled in "ministry to the young people". In its full development we can expect to see persons commended to God for the work to which they are allegedly called: - "youth work".

Alarming? Indeed it is! Beyond reality? No, my beloved brethren, it has already happened in those merged companies we spoke of earlier. But it did not occur without protest and warning while in its infancy. (See Appendix I, quotation #8.)

The youth work we are considering sets up a group, by natural age and interests, the 'members' of which have a self-consciousness of, and identity with, this age group; a group not only unrecognized in scripture, but also contrary to the truth of the one flock and the family of God. I see implicit in this youth work, then, a thrust against the truths of the one flock and the family of God. "The Young People" is not a spiritual group within the flock and family.

The practice of this youth work lays the groundwork for the development of other groupings.

Scripture characterizes an act by its tendency (see Appendix 2). Because this is so, we do well to look then at the tendencies of youth work, and apply this principle.

The special youth work we will be reviewing

1. tends to fragment the one flock.
2. promotes a mixture of things spiritual with things natural, and imitates true spiritual activity and fellowship.

3. reinforces the worldliness it was supposed to cure, disguising that worldliness and youthful lusts as something Christian.
4. supplants the divine order of shepherding, ministry and responsibility.
5. introduces dangerous arguments in its defense.

While it is true that godly men may suppress, for a time, these forces and trends, it is a mistaken view to say that these tendencies are not necessarily implicit. They are constitutionally implicit by virtue of the character of the thing - the setting up of a group, by natural age and interests, the 'members' of which have a self-consciousness of, and identity with, this group.

The recognition of a group constituted on such an unscriptural basis has its implications and tendencies, which will, in due time, work itself out.

Having above stated the issue as briefly as possible in order to bring it into sharp focus, the rest of the chapter will expand this.

1. SPECIAL YOUTH WORK TENDS TO FRAGMENT THE ONE FLOCK.

It is an avowed principle of those most adept at youth work to make numerous groups out of Christian youth (see Appendix 1, quote #1). The very thought of such scriptural expressions as "knit together", "one body", "one flock", "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit", runs counter to the concept of dividing the one flock and the members of the one body according to age or any other attribute of the natural realm. In stating this, let it not be thought that I attribute MOTIVES of fragmentation to those engaged in such young people's activities. But the concept involved in special youth activities further expands into other unauthorized divisions of the flock into groups with their own NATURAL interests.

We also hear of Young Young-People's Meetings, Single Adult Seminars for those 25 to 39, Young Married Couples' Meetings, and Pilgrim Camps for Christians 45 and older (see Appendix I, quotes 1, 2 and 3). By fragmenting according to age groups, age-oriented goals and interests are best achieved.

Is it of no concern, beloved brethren, that the Word of God does not on a single occasion address "single adults between 25 and 39" or young people as an age group, or give grounds for meetings for such a group apart from the rest of the flock? Why does this fact not concern youth-work promoters? It is also of significance to me that "young people's meetings" are never mentioned in the writings or

periodicals of our brethren of last century! Of the many books of ministry we have from brethren such as J. N. Darby, W. Kelly, C. H. Mackintosh, Charles Stanley, F. G. Patterson, C. Wolston, W. Reid, W. T. Turpin, G. V. Wigram, E. Dennett, etc., many derive from lectures stenographically recorded. I am not aware that any of these lectures have ever been identified as an address to young people! Should we not conclude, in the absence of ANY evidence to the contrary, that these brethren knew nothing of such activities and that their introduction is an innovation of relatively recent occurrence?

When we are not governed by the truth that "there shall be one flock" , who knows what we might do! It is not that the concept underlying youth work necessarily always ignores the "need of older Christians", while emphasizing youth activities: indeed, the "Pilgrim Camp" (see Appendix I, quotation #3) for older Christians demonstrates this. It is simply that they are not brought TOGETHER (a scriptural term), but each group provided for separately. I ask you if a 12-year-old Christian is not a heavenly pilgrim too? Once we divide up the flock of God, a camp, seminar, workshop, etc. will be generated for every 'group' and interest. These things are inherently subversive of the truth of "one flock". It is inherently divisive and foreign to God's Word. But, just as youth meetings and camps are not "lamb" meetings, (for a "lamb" may be 90 years old), so this Pilgrims ' Camp is not a "sheep" meeting. Spiritual sheep may be younger than 45. To obtain scripture sanction for this order of things, John 21 is pressed into service in spite of the fact that our Lord said earlier, "There shall be one flock" .

The foregoing false order of things gives rise to special channels of communications. Young People 's bulletins logically follow. This is an efficient way to appeal to and inform the "young people" about forthcoming events and issues. (See Appendix I, quote #4.) This may seem like a small matter, but it is just one more means of encouraging the young to think of themselves as a special class in the one flock.

Claiming that each age group has special needs which must be met by special group provisions is nothing less than "knowing one another after the flesh", the very thing the apostle Paul said he would not do (2 Cor. 5:16)! I fear that verses such as this one have lost their force in our souls.

2. SPECIAL YOUTH WORK PROMOTES MIXING THINGS SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL AND THUS IMITATES TRUE SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY AND FELLOWSHIP.

There is a difference between a social event and "a happy time of fellowship". Fellowship is communion in the things of God. 1 John 1 shows that Christian fellowship in God's family has to do with the new life within us. Communion in the things enjoyed by the divine nature is fellowship. A game of softball is a social event.

One gathered together to the Lord's Name wrote:

Finally, the principle of mixtures which I referred to as the third reason for being alarmed is one I am sure you are familiar with in scripture. It is an important principle, particularly in connection with HOW we do the work of the Lord. "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together" (Deut. 22:11). Why? Because wool produces natural warmth and sweat, whereas linen is that which pertains to the service of God. Mixing spiritual activity with a natural stimulant has ever been a snare to the people of God. How careful we must be to keep things in their proper place, unmixed. When we mix the Lord's things with natural pleasures (some of which are legitimate in themselves), we confound what God sees fit to separate.

Deut. 12:13-19 is very instructive. The burnt offering was to be offered only at the place where the Lord had placed His Name (vs. 13,14). But there was provision also for "eating flesh" in all their gates according to the blessing of the Lord. "Their gates" were their own domain, and such was not mixed with that which was divine in character.

A problem exists concerning attracting "young people" to a youth meeting, youth conference, camp, etc., the purpose of which is to further spiritual growth. Thus sports events, music festivals, bonfires, wiener roasts, hayrides, swimming, hikes, etc. may be used by promoters and organizers of youth activities to attract "young people" who would otherwise be indifferent to a purely spiritual activity.

Isn't that a fact?

This misuse of social events to so attract is what is meant by "mixing".

No, I am not decrying social activity among young Christians. You completely misunderstand the whole matter being presented if you come to such erroneous conclusions. Nor am I going to address the question of what might or might not be proper social activity in itself. That is not the point.

THE POINT IS THIS: When did it become a divine method of "communicating spiritual things by spiritual means " (1 Cor. 2:13, JND trans.) to utilize such like activities to induce "young people" to come to special meetings, seminars, youth conferences, camps, etc., held for the purpose of fostering their spiritual growth? - or to come to any other kind of spiritual activity? (Read Appendix 1, quotation 8.)

3. SPECIAL YOUTH WORK REINFORCES THE WORLDLINESS IT WAS SUPPOSED TO CURE, DISGUIISING THAT WORLDLINESS AND YOUTHFUL LUSTS AS SOMETHING "CHRISTIAN".

Some of the same worldly pursuits enjoyed by unsaved young people are made to appear "suitable" for Christians by minor modifications. The 'Christian' youth movement, as such, does not foster scriptural separation from the world, and then separation from evil unto the Lord, which is God's principle of unity. The 'Christian' youth movement fosters lightness, froth, groupings within the one flock, entertainments, mixtures, worldliness -and generates a popular leadership adept at fostering these things. True it is that some godly brethren begin certain activities with a desire to be helpful. But generations change, and the INHERENT FORCES in these 'Christian' youth activities begin to manifest themselves as restraint decreases and each generation adds more of the spirit of the age, "sanctifying" it with inapplicable scripture or some principle broadly, but misaptly, applied.

Carried to its ULTIMATE conclusion, ' Christian' young people's activities become a vehicle for "sanctifying" youthful lusts, from which we are told to flee (2 Tim. 2:22). But are not "youthful lusts" in 2 Tim, 2:22 gross evils of immorality? Not necessarily, though they might include that. In 2 Timothy 2 the youthful lusts include those 'innocent pleasures' which are especially subtle in their appeal to youth, and which are characterized by levity, fleshly lightness and vanity.

We read in advertisements, "YOUTH SINGS" and "sing peppy songs". "Who will give us flesh to eat?" cried the children of Israel when God's provision became unsatisfactory. And so a class of entertaining musicians and singers (see Appendix 1, quotation 5) arises to "meet the needs of the young"! We need not dwell on the lightness, froth or beat thus often introduced and how it engenders dissatisfaction with the sober and lofty worship of God in Spirit and in truth.

4. SPECIAL YOUTH WORK SUPPLANTS THE DIVINE ORDER OF SHEPHERDING, MINISTRY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

It is obvious to one who thinks about it that the youth movement must have leaders to perpetuate it. Therefore, sooner or later, workers must be trained and/or "called" for the work. Why deceive ourselves that this will not happen? IT IS THE INEVITABLE RESULT AS TIME GOES ON. If you have any doubt that this is an ultimate conclusion, please read Appendix 1, quotations #6 and #7. Special youth activities eventually generate a special leadership group and a special "full-time ministry to young people", things foreign to scripture and subversive of the truth that there is one flock. Let us face it before it is too late.

A Christian periodical characterizes the trend of which we speak by the following words:

YOUTH TODAY IS DEEMED TO BE A SEPARATE ORDER OF BEING; for whom there must be special attractions in order to draw them, special numbers to entertain them, special speakers that will appeal to them with fleshly lightness and vanity. There must be special "youth workers" adept at levity, banter and cajolery, to promote "youth meetings" and "youth groups". We feel the real requirement for the "youth worker" is that he or she be skillful in condoning "youthful lusts" while appearing to be against them.

Sad to say, levity and joking in preaching is not confined to these youth activities. Sometimes it appears in ministry of the Word elsewhere. A (dead) joke in ministry of the Word is a dead fly in the ointment of the apothecary (Eccl. 10:1). There is death in what was to minister life; and God says that the OINTMENT sends out a stinking smell. Lightness and jokes change the character of ministry so that it emits a stink, the stink of death. How solemn this is!

We have heard of youth workers who have no children of their own BY CHOICE, as if God has left Christians such a choice (1 Tim. 5:14). What an incongruity this is! - an example of flagrant disobedience to God on the part of those seeking to foster the spiritual welfare of the children of others.

We do not say, or imply, that all who engage in youth work are real "youth workers". Indeed not. We are speaking of the characteristics inherent in this line of things. And certainly youth work opens up a line of things for some whose 'contribution' is (happily) hindered when the pure and simple order of God's Word is carried out. In

proportion as we transgress the will of God, man 's will and man's work have a place.

Some who promote special youth work say that parents are not providing spiritual guidance to the "young people", and these efforts are meant to provide this. In chapter 3 of these notes we shall comment on this symptom, but rather than trying to palliate the symptom with these methods, the causes will be examined. Should not the causes be addressed and corrected? Is not this God' s way (Prov. 28:13)? Why do we choose another way? Our choice of another way adds but another symptom. This will, in the end, completely compound the problem. At any rate, there is also a tendency in this system to undermine parental authority. Of course there are godly brethren involved who would not do this. We are not discussing individuals, but the character and tendency of the system. Parental authority is undermined by "the loose" pooh-poohing the exercises of parents seeking separation from evil unto the Lord. The "youth leaders" described above are popular and gain an undue influence.

Additionally, a great amount of youthful flesh gathers at these activities and some godly young Christians who have a desire for separation from evil unto the Lord have testified to the negative pull they experienced at some of these activities.

The substitution of these activities for the divine ways results also in those godly young Christians who do not participate in such things coming under criticism. Things go so far in applying pressure to attend, that even Heb. 10:25 has been ignorantly applied. Really, these things are pushed as vigorously, and assumed to be as scriptural, as Christendom pushes the clergy system and insists it is scriptural, and those who oppose it are deemed to be

We shall enlarge upon shepherding in the first section of Part 3.

5. SPECIAL YOUTH WORK INTRODUCES DANGEROUS ARGUMENTS IN ITS DEFENSE.

A common argument proffered to justify youth work is that "the Lord has blessed it". This line of reasoning was used by A. N. Groves who some Open Brethren claim was the 'founder of the Brethren'. Read his words and see how this argument works:

Yet as to our liberty in Christ to worship with any congregation under heaven where He manifests Himself to bless and to save, can there be in any Christian mind a doubt? If my Lord should say to me in any congregation of the almost "unnumbered sections of the

Church," What dost thou here? I would reply, "Seeing Thou wert here to save and sanctify, I felt it safe to be with Thee." If He again said, as perhaps, He may among most of us, "Didst thou not see abomination here, an admixture of that which was unscriptural, and the absence of that which was scriptural, and in some points error, at least in your judgment?" my answer would be, "Yea, Lord, but I dared not call that place unholy where Thou wert present to bless. ..."

And why say that Billy Graham has been wrong in linking with modernists in his gospel campaigns? The Lord has blessed it in the salvation of souls. But see 2 John 9, 10.

Another argument (that leads to disaster) in favor of special youth work is that godly men engage in it. That better men than real "youth workers" start, and link with, what is inherently wrong no more justifies a venture than the linking of Jehoshaphat with Ahab to retake Ramoth-Gilead (a city of refuge). The objective sounded fair, but the project produced ultimate disaster (2 Chron. 18). Just think of some brethren who went with F. E. Raven.

In Chapter 2 we shall consider in detail the scriptures that have been used to support these special youth works and trust to show that numbers of these portions are in reality against such things; and also other scriptures.

CONCLUSION

Now that you have read these things along with all the quotations in Appendix 1, can you not see that these things in practice set aside the truth of the one flock?

Where did these things start? Surely not from a direction to do so in God's Word. They start from "young people's meetings" under the control of godly older brethren, who sensed a need and sought to meet that need by holding "young people's meetings". It was a mistake to seek to meet the need by this method. And what so many failed to see, and still fail to see, (as I failed to see when once engaged in these special youth activities,) is that the things we have been reviewing are the logical and inevitable development from that starting point - which is, a violation of the truth that there is one flock.

CHAPTER 2 - WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

In addressing disorder at Corinth with regard to appropriate head covering for sisters, the apostle says, "... Does not even nature itself teach you that man, if he have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? " (1 Cor. 11:14, JND trans.). The apostle appeals to the realm of NATURE for a LESSON in spiritual things. We can learn a great deal about God's mind for care and feeding from the way of shepherding in Biblical times.

LAMBS, SHEEP, FEEDING AND SHEPHERDING

Man's rude hand is getting into everything. He poisons and devitalizes almost everything. We see, too, how in more industrialized countries animals are raised in ways that differ in many respects from the methods of the ancients. I suppose sheep are among the most mentioned animals, if not the most, in God's Word. Lessons concerning lambs, sheep, feeding and shepherding are very often drawn in scripture. It seems to me, then, that it would be helpful to understand the background of these lessons. The following information is taken from *Bible Animals*, by J. G. Wood, which shows us the way of shepherding in Biblical times.

One of the noticeable things is that the flock was constantly on the move. The shepherd had to find sufficient and good pasture and an adequate water supply. Hence places like this were in demand and sometimes they were the occasion of battles for we ought to appreciate the fact that Bible lands are hot and they had no pumps as we know them. So streams and wells played a great part in determining where the shepherd led the sheep and so we notice the connection of water and pasture made in the scriptures. Besides the two important functions of finding pasture and water for the sheep, we know that another was the defense of sheep, as we see in David, for example. The Lord Jesus gave Himself for the sheep.

The shepherds in ancient times, and some of them today in less industrialized countries, knew the sheep by name and they came to him when called (John 10:3-5). He walked before them, led them, and they followed him.

The necessary movements of the flock made demands upon the shepherd. That which was sick or had something wrong with it called for extra attention. Besides all of this care there was another work that had to do with little additions to the flock.

Owing to the continual moving of the sheep, the shepherd had very hard work during the lambing time, and was obliged to carry in his arms the young lambs which were too feeble to accompany their

parents, and to keep close to him those sheep who were expected soon to become mothers. At that time of year the shepherd might constantly be seen at the head of his flock, carrying one to two lambs in his arms, accompanied by their mothers.

In allusion to this fact Isaiah writes: "His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arms and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young" (or, "that give suck," according to the marginal reading). Here we have presented at once before us the good shepherd who is no hireling, but owns the sheep; and who therefore has "his reward with him, and his work before him;" who bears the tender lambs in his arms, or lays them in the folds of his mantle, and so carries them in his bosom, and leads by his side their yet feeble mothers. -J.G.Wood, *Bible Animals*, London: Longmans, 1883, p.156.

By way of confirmation, the following is taken from *The International Bible Encyclopedia*, vol.4, p.2764, article, "Shepherd".

... (Isa.40:11) is a picture drawn from pastoral life of Jah's care over His children. A strong sympathy for the helpless animals, though sometimes misdirected, is a marked characteristic of the people of Bible lands. The birth of offspring in a flock often occurs far off on the mountain side. The shepherd solicitously guards the mother during her helpless moments and picks up the lamb and carries it to the fold. For the few days, until it is able to walk, he may carry it in his arms or in the loose folds of his coat above his girdle.

I have heard of modern sheep-raising practices, wherein lambs are segregated for some time, being cited in defense of Christian youth meetings.

1. "There shall be one flock" should have alerted us to the error of citing modern, non-biblical times and industrial methods.
2. Sheep-raising practice in Biblical times did not involve segregating sheep or setting up special programs for a class of sheep.
3. Christian young people's meetings are not lamb meetings anyway, since lambs in God's flock may be any physical age, just as with the children in God's family (i.e., in reference to fathers and young men - 1 John 2).

Isaiah 40:11 refers to ewes giving suck. If Isaiah 40:10-11 gives support to special Christian youth meetings (which are not lamb meetings, obviously), does it also give support for special meetings for what might

be represented by ewes giving suck? Once we allow our imagination to work we can justify anything.

The fact is that Isaiah 40:10-11, Psalm 78:70-71, Zechariah 11:16, Psalm 23:1-2, 1 Chronicles 4:39,40, Ezekiel 34:13-14, etc., give no sanction to the notion of setting up special meetings for part of the flock - and then the special meetings contended for are not even lamb meetings. They are Christian youth meetings. One must come to these scriptures seeking justification for a practice to see such a justification there.

We learn from some of these passages that some in the flock need special attention and care. That is not the issue. In Zechariah 11:16, which describes the Antichrist, we learn about shepherding that he will not do:

1. Visit those that are about to perish.
2. Seek that which has strayed away.
3. Heal that which is wounded.
4. Feed that which is sound.

Does anyone contend for special meetings for special groups for items 1 - 3? Item 4 is no authorization or support for lamb meetings (which would not be Christian young people's meetings anyway). We condemn the organizing in Christendom on the one hand, and then proceed to set up more 'efficient' methods of ministry where we think we should.

There are three ways in which we are fed insofar as the voice is considered. Firstly, we are fed in the assembly where the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, is in the midst. Secondly, we are also part of the family of God and get fed in meetings which are not of assembly character (Acts 19:9-10; Acts 11:26; Acts 18:11). Thirdly, we might be fed during visitation (Zechariah 11:16). Some scriptures, as John 21:15,17, are applicable in each case.

Scripture has furnished God's people with types of ministry and feeding sufficient for their needs without resorting to that which violates the scripture: -"there shall be one flock". Christian youth work is inherently divisive in tendency. How much better to apprehend from scripture that it is so, than learn it after it has worked its way to results we had not anticipated would be the natural end of the practice! If we abide by apostolic practice we shall not regret it.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES

Moses

In Deuteronomy 31:10-13 (JND trans.) we read,

And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, at the set time of the year of release, at the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel cometh to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he will choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their ears. Gather the people together, the men, and the women, and the children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and take heed to do all the words of this law; and that their children who do not know it may hear it and learn, that they may fear Jehovah your God, as long as ye live in the land, whereunto ye pass over the Jordan to possess it.

2 Chronicles 20:13

In 2 Chronicles 20:13 (JND trans.) we read,

And all Judah stood before Jehovah, with their little ones, their wives, and their sons.

Ezra

When Ezra and those with him would go to Jerusalem, we read, And I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before God, to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance (Ezra 8:21).

Nehemiah

Nehemiah 8 gives us a grand picture. All came before the water gate, which typifies the Word of God, "both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding" (vv.2,3). Commenting on this, Ed. Dennett wrote,

In verses 2 and 3 we have the account of the assembly for the purpose of hearing the Word. The congregation was composed of "men and women, and all that could hear with understanding;" that is, we judge, all the children who were old enough to comprehend what was read. There was, therefore, no division into classes, no teaching apart of men, women or children, but all were together as forming the congregation of the Lord. Thus gathered, Ezra read out of the book of the law, "from the morning until midday" - probably not less than six hours; "and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law."

The passages we have just read certainly do support Ed. Dennett's statements. Why attempt to deduce the opposite from passages in the Old Testament which speak of sheep? It is evident that the Old Testament passages concerning sheep are being forced in an effort to provide

scripture support for Christian youth meetings, camps, etc. Those passages give no warrant for such and they are in harmony with the above passages which are consistent with the whole flock moving together. Nehemiah 8 is part of what we need for recovery from our present state. Andrew Miller in *Meditations on the Song of Solomon*, on Song of Solomon 1:8, "Feed thy kids beside the shepherds' booths," has some wholesome words that bear on this subject. We have been sliding down in spite of the increase in youth projects. More of these is not the answer to our spiritual state.

David's New Cart

The new cart, or at least the principle in it, has a voice for us today (1Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4). We meet it for the first time in 1 Samuel 6, which should be read at this point. The Philistines returned the ark of Israel in a NEW CART (1 Sam. 6:7), pulled by two cows which had sucking calves.

Nature would cause the cows to return to their young, and so the Philistines reasoned that if the cows went to Israel, contrary to nature, it would manifest that God was behind the Philistines' calamities. The Philistine is the offspring of Mizraim, who is Egypt. The Philistine is a "wanderer", for that is the meaning of the name. He came into the land of the inheritance not by the way of the Red Sea and Jordan, as Israel did. Abraham, who first met them, was no wanderer, but a pilgrim and a stranger. The Philistine typifies those who claim the inheritance for themselves. They are the original fabricators of the NEW CART.

Seventy-seven years passed between this event and the ascension of David to the throne of Judah. How long it was after his reign began that he assayed to bring up the ark, I do not know. As a godly man and a great leader he experienced a felt need and had a sense of the failure which came in. The very man to whom all Israel looked became the instrument used by the enemy to introduce harm amongst them. The way some say that such and such must be good, because brother So-and-So started it or condones it, would seem to rule out the possibility that a man like David could make a mistake. But the error is with those who reason thus. God's Word must be our guide and not such suppositions.

David, a godly servant, had, then, a right purpose of heart and a right work before him. But instead of seeking God after the due order (1 Chron. 15:13), he "consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, with every prince." The scripture says, "in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14). Well, David had a large consultation. What was wrong? He had the wrong multitude of

counselors. They were the dynamic, leadership type organizers. But the secret of the Lord was not with them.

Finally, David called in the priests and the Levites. It would seem to be that David called in the priests and Levites to cooperate rather than to seek their advice. How often we, like David, make our plans and after our minds are made up, THEN we ask the Lord to bless it.

Malachi 2:7 indicates that the priest's lips should keep knowledge. Perhaps none of them called David's attention to the error of his way. How true is the word, "The fear of man bringeth a snare"! In any event, David consulted, but he sought counsel from the wrong source and the advice received was wrong advice and not advice after a godly sort. It seems strange if not one of the priests finally consulted knew God's order for carrying the ark. Perhaps the fear of man closed their mouths. We have but to look at our own hearts to see what power that fear can have upon us, especially if very respected men are engaged in something contrary to the Word.

At any rate, we do not read of any good advice given to David; and their going along with it only lent the sanction of their persons and positions to the new cart. Sad to say, that also reflects our hearts, for we are prone to not only be silent, where "advice" (Prov. 11:14) is needed, but go with the project, perhaps with the thought of doing good. But this is like the principle of doing evil that good may come (Rom. 3:8). "Let every man take heed HOW he buildeth thereupon" (1 Cor. 3:10). Let us "know HOW one ought to conduct oneself in God's house" (1 Tim. 3:15, JND trans.).

The thing was right in the eyes of all the people (1 Chron. 13:4), but the popularity of the thing was no guarantee that it was approved of God (cf. Deut. 12:28). If only one voice had sounded a warning, that one voice would have been right and all Israel minus one would have been wrong.

So they carried the ark of God on the thing that the Philistines invented. It all looked so suitable, so sanctioned, so popular, and attended with much well sounding fanfare. Then the dumb beasts, i.e. nature, pulling the invention of men, stumbled; and one error leads to another. Uzza put forth his hand to steady the ark of God, of Jehovah, who sitteth between the cherubim, whose name is placed there (1 Chron. 13:9,10). What was wrong? Nature was at work and God blew on it that we might learn (1 Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4). It was nature that thought of the new cart; it was nature that pulled the cart; and it was nature that sought to steady the ark of God. Uzza died and David called the place Perez-Uzza. This has a meaning: Perez-Uzza means "breach of strength". We are warranted thus to consider "Ahio." Ahio means "brotherly" and Uzza means "strength".

Israel sought to alleviate the felt need by brotherly-strength, not the arm of God. Abinadab means "my father is a liberal giver". A steward may be liberal with what is his own, but not with his master's rights and goods. There was a liberal element at work in all of this.

This causes David to say, "HOW shall I bring up the ark of God to me?" He didn't know what to do and he was "indignant". It appears that after some time (1 Chron. 15:14) David discovered the true method for carrying out his godly purpose (1 Chron. 15:2; Deut. 10:8) and confesses that they had "sought Him not after the DUE ORDER" (1 Chron. 15:13, JND trans.).

Another has said:

Why did he say this now, though careless before? He had found this instruction as to the HOW of undertaking this good work in Deuteronomy 10:8. Note carefully this instruction, for it was given by the Lord, not exactly as a distinct commandment, but rather as a provision by the way as they were journeying along toward Canaan. Thus it became a permanent method instituted by the Lord Himself.

Is not this the spirit in which much of the New Testament is written? We do not have so much a "thus saith the Lord" but rather divine principles to be acted upon in grace by the spiritual man of God having a single eye for His honor and glory. The carnal and careless easily escape by the much worn expression, "we have no scripture against this or that," implying that we are at liberty to do the best we think. This may satisfy many, but can never satisfy one who wished to do His will in every detail that concerns Him. The latter would keep not only direct commandments but also inferences of His will comprising what is called "My Word" in John 8:31; 14:23 (New Translation, and comparing with 14:21, where we have more distinct commandments mentioned); Rev.3:8.

We are living in times of declension and failure. On discovering that failure, we are often tempted to resort to devices of our own to correct the lack. Perhaps we feel the lack of the Spirit's working in our midst and so would resort to appointing speakers to fill in the gap. This would only cover up our state and cause us to lose the sense of our emptiness or backslidden state. It is an attempt to recover the blessing without returning by confession to the point of departure. Abraham must return to the place where he set up the altar originally, before he had wandered into Egypt in famine time (Gen. 12:8,10; 13:1-4).

Does not the case of David have a voice to us in our day? Do you think you can find support in John 21 for Christian young people's meetings

and cite, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad," but are unable to accept drawing this application from David's new cart because the ark represents Christ?

Let us now examine the New Testament scriptures alleged to support special youth meetings, camps, etc.

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE GUIDANCE

Introduction

We have seen that the Old Testament does not support the idea of Christian young people's meetings, camps and conferences; no, not even lamb meetings, which would have to include lambs in God's flock of any physical age. A true lambs' meeting is not what is really wanted, yet most justification for Christian youth meetings, camps, etc., assumes the equivalence. Something special (not merely care) has to be set up for Christian YOUTH, as such, and if godly concern to be scriptural is (rightly) at work, those fostering such activities appeal to scripture for support. Let us examine the New Testament scriptures that have been used to support (not merely concern, interest and care, but) Christian youth meetings, camps, conferences, etc.

John 21:15-18

Peter is instructed to feed the lambs, shepherd the sheep and feed the sheep. The following points should be weighed:

1. It is incorrect to say that the passage "singles out the young from the rest" and then attach to the word "young" the meaning "Christian young people". Sheep lambs are physically young, BUT LAMBS IN GOD'S FLOCK MAY BE ANY PHYSICAL AGE."
2. And if it did authorize "lamb" meetings, it authorizes "sheep meetings. For those who can see nothing but physical age in these things, here is justification for camps, seminars, etc., for those 45 and up, cited earlier in this paper.
3. What we learn from this scripture, among other things, is that lambs and sheep have their needs that the shepherd should seek to meet. How to do this we learn elsewhere.
4. The passage does not say "shepherd my lambs". Why not? The passage supposes that THE LAMBS are with the sheep, where they belong, and it is sufficient to say "shepherd my sheep". Our Shepherd had already said in chapter 10, "There shall be one flock," and He did not set about to undo that here.

These considerations show us that the appeal to John 21 for authorization for Christian young people's meetings, etc., is not only groundless, but point 4 shows it to be contrary to the passage.

1 John 2:13-20

This passage is used to support Christian young people's meetings in the following way. The children, young men and fathers in the family of God each received a word from John. Therefore, special meetings may be convened to put the appropriate exhortation before "the young" and this is a scriptural procedure. The following points should be weighed:

1. It is an error to treat the word "the young" as equivalent to the "children" in God's family. In a human family we generally think of children as physically young, but in God's family those designated 'children' in 1 John 2:13-20 may be any physical age. The same error is made here as in point 1 above under John 21:15-18. In fact, making this error is fundamental to "youth work" and finding some alleged scripture support for it.
2. And if it authorizes "children meetings" of children in the family of God (1 John 2:13,20), it also authorizes "young men meetings" and "father meetings", meetings to put the appropriate word before them. Why are not such meetings held periodically and/or at conferences? Or, camps for them? And why would not some be called to full time service to "young men" in God's family; and others to full time service to "fathers" in God's family? Of course, the passage authorizes no such things and no one is anxious to get that out of the passage. Nor does it support Christian young people's meetings to put the appropriate word before them.

John did not address the epistle to babes any more than he addressed it to fathers or young men. But in the epistle he has some words for each. So in the meetings for which we have precept or practice in the Word, we ought to keep in mind the varied ministry needed. Not that every man is able for every ministry; but if there is exercise in general on the part of those who minister, the total ministry will have something for all in the family of God. It is evident, too, that ministry for all stages of growth in the family of God is adequately and sufficiently provided for in the assembly meetings, the addresses, and visitation noted and provided for in the Word of God, as well as the written ministry (the water that Boaz's young men have drawn - Ruth 2). Failure in this is not justification for introducing new things.

1 Corinthians 3:1,2

The Word of God recognizes ministry for the babes. In 1 Cor. 3:1 Paul says that he had to speak to them as babes in Christ. But the epistle is addressed to the assembly of God at Corinth, not to babes, nor Christian young people (which is not the same thing as babes). 1 Cor. 3:1 then is no ground for young people's meetings, camps, seminars, etc. We ought to learn from this the apostolic method of ministry and care. He did not write an epistle to babes though he had to speak to them as babes in the epistle because they were fleshly. The Corinthians were a case of stunted growth, too. We shall now look at those who had a second childhood (Heb. 5).

Hebrews 5:12-14

The believing Israelites are called in Galatians 6 "the Israel of God". These are the objects of the epistle to the Hebrews, though unbelievers that might be among them are warned concerning apostasy. We may note the following about them:

1. They had REGRESSED from previous growth: "are become such as have need of milk" (v. 12).
2. These regressed Hebrew Christians received appropriate instruction culminating in being told to go outside the camp (chap. 13).
3. The writer (Paul, no doubt) did not address the epistle to babes (just as with Corinth). Babes include both Hebrew and Gentile Christians. However, he met the need. These babes included, no doubt, many Christians who were physically old.

Titus 2 and 1 Timothy 5:1,2

In Titus 2 we find that Titus is exhorted to speak of things that become sound doctrine. We have already seen that the scripture speaks of assembly meetings, meetings under the responsibility of a brother, and visitation. In all these provided avenues of service could Titus carry out the apostle's exhortation.

We learn from Titus 2 that there are words for elder men (v.2), elder women (v.3), younger men (v.6). (This seems to be related to physical ages.) Then he has something for bondmen (v.9). Surely no one will draw from this special meetings for different age groups or for bondmen, just as no one would, I hope, draw out of it justification for special meetings to be held for young women by older women (v.3,4). 411 of this applies to 1 Tim. 5:1,2. These instructions to Titus are to be carried out in accordance with the scripture provisions for teaching and shepherding.

I want to repeat this especially in connection with meetings that Titus might hold on his own responsibility. I do not find it agreeable to the

principles, practice or tenor of the New Testament to suppose that Titus held a bondmen's meeting or an older sisters' meeting or young people's meeting. Individual responsibility is a fact in ministry, but it is no justification for such procedures.

Paul and Barnabas

I think all would acknowledge that there are meetings which are not assembly meetings. These meetings are the responsibility of a brother. For example, Paul taught the disciples - note well the class of persons for two years in the school of Tyrannus. Acts 11:26 gives us another case. Not only did Barnabas and Paul gather together in the assembly, but they also taught a large crowd. Note well, again, whom they taught. If we stay within the apostolic methods, will we be wrong? Surely not.

Well, they taught a large crowd. It would seem that these two men labored together in teaching in meetings that were under their responsibility. It was what we might call an understood or "stated ministry". No doubt this crowd was composed of persons of all physical ages. They were evidently new converts and therefore babes regardless of age. BABES is a stage of growth, not a question of physical age, although in practice many babes might be young in age; however, 1 Cor. 3:1,2 and Heb. 5:12,13 show that this is not necessarily so. A young people's meeting connotes physical age -irrespective of how many old persons, or even fathers in the family of God, are present. It equates babes with age.

At any rate, the point is that Paul and Barnabas did not set up special meetings for babes when they held meetings. Paul taught "disciples" for two years and Barnabas and Paul taught a large crowd. There is nothing in these two examples of an understood, or stated, ministry from which to draw the idea of special meetings for babes. Indeed, we draw the opposite from it.

Passages of scripture show us that the Lord's servants have individual responsibilities. See Matt. 25:14-30 and other passages. I'm sure all would agree that this in itself is not a good reason to allow just ANYTHING. So the point is that young people's meetings, camps, seminars, etc., do not fall within the sphere called the servant's individual responsibility, for he must act within the "how" (1 Cor. 3:10; 1 Chron. 13:12). The point is not that there is no such thing as individual responsibility, but that Christian young people's meetings are contrary to the way of service which God has provided for the path of Christian service, testimony, and growth.

Obviously, the fact that an assembly expresses fellowship with a brother engaged in such work does not make an unscriptural thing scriptural.

Peter

Peter, who was told to "feed my lambs", "shepherd my sheep" and "feed my sheep" says to his fellow-elders among the sojourners of the dispersion, "shepherd the flock of God which is among you" (1 Peter 5:2). He has a word for the younger (1 Peter 5:5), for wives (1 Peter 3:1), and husbands (1 Peter 3:7), and servants (1 Peter 2:18). We are well able to do this also without setting up meetings and camps for special classes . for ministry. And so the Lord's servants went about exhorting, confirming and strengthening the brethren (Acts 15:32; Acts 15:40,41; Acts 18:23; Acts 20:2; Acts 14:22. See also Romans 1:11; 2 Peter 1:12,13 and Acts 28:30,31.)

Let us now consider the causes of the conditions which the youth works being examined are supposed to help. Perhaps if we look the causes in the face, our God will grant grace to own it and seek of Him a right way for ourselves and for our little ones (Ezra 8:21).

CONCLUSION

If indeed, then, these scriptures, as well as the scripture comments on shepherding and sheep, do not support these kinds. of youth works, what is the support?

I see two possibilities:

1. Trying some other scriptures to find support.
2. Using analogies. For example:

(a) It may be said that the paper merely points out some abuses of something good in itself. For example, the abuse noted in 1 Cor. 14 does not show that that meeting in itself is unscriptural.

The error in such 'analogies ' is that they assume what needs to be first proven as scriptural. The 'analogy' refers to something that is clearly scriptural, and makes a 'parallel' to it with the youth items, assuming the scripturalness of the youth items which have not been proven to be scriptural. That is, this procedure assumes as true the very point to be shown not a valid procedure.

(b) An appeal to certain practices or events of last century, having the sanction of godly men, and utilizing that for support of these youth items. Appendix 3 deals with this.

We have examined the scriptures alleged to support special youth works. We have found that they do not support such activities; rather, these scriptures are in reality against such activities. We have seen that these special youth meetings are not in reality lamb meetings, children (in the

family of God) meetings, or babe meetings. These scripture terms apply to a broad range of ages. A hearty bowing to the scripture, "There shall be one flock," will help us greatly.

CHAPTER 3 - "... IS THERE NOT A CAUSE? ..."

INTRODUCTION

An oft repeated reason for needing young people's meetings, camps, etc., is to provide the young with something they can relate to. This, it is felt, is needed because young people do not have the appetite for spiritual things and so a "harmless " substitute is provided. Youth workers saying this are indirectly stating that the young people lack spiritual desires and would drift away were there not something to "hold them" while they "catch their spiritual breath"! By condoning such reasoning we can avoid the pain of "looking the CAUSES of such lack of spirituality and such drifting away, in the face".

The subject of CAUSES leads us to consider at least three spheres which have a direct influence on young Christians (as well as on all of us) with regard to our spiritual state. Taking up such topics is not done in a critical spirit, but with a sense of our own failure. Let not our failure, however, be a hindrance to owning and confessing our mutual guilt and failure as parents, as shepherds in the assembly, and in discharge of gift as faithful stewards. Let us consider briefly the subjects of the home, rule and shepherding in the assembly, and the ministry of the Word; and look at a few of our unjudged sins that give rise to the state for which Christian young people's meetings, camps, etc. are proposed as a remedy, or at least a help.

THE HOME AND FAMILY LIFE

Three things are common to home life and assembly life,

1. Need for a model
2. Training
3. Correction

The Need for Models

The blessed Lord Himself is presented to us as the perfect model by Peter,

"...leaving you a model that ye should follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21, JND trans.).

The apostle Paul was a model Christian follower of the Lord Jesus.

"Be my imitators, even as I also [am] of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, JND trans.). Cp. also 1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thes. 1:6; 1 Thes. 3:7,9.

Leaders are exhorted to be examples to the flock. For those who minister the Word,

"... be a model of the believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, JND trans.).

And for overseers,

"Shepherd the flock of God which [is] among you, exercising oversight, not by necessity, but willingly; not for base gain, but readily; not as lording it over your possessions, but being models for the flock" (1 Peter 5:2,3, JND trans.).

Parental models are needed in the home. The following scriptures clearly indicate what the parental model should be like.

Wives, [submit yourselves] to your own husbands, as to the Lord, for a husband is the head of the wife, as also the Christ [is] head of the assembly. He [is] Saviour of the body. But even as the assembly is subjected to the Christ, so also wives to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives, even as the Christ also loved the assembly, and has delivered himself up for it, in order that he might sanctify it, purifying [it] by the washing of water by [the] word, that he might present the assembly to himself glorious, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things; but that it might be holy and blameless. So ought men also to love their own wives as their own bodies: he that loves his own wife loves himself. For no one has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as also the Christ the assembly (Eph. 5:22-29, JND trans.).

I will therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up pious hands, without wrath or reasoning. In like manner also that the women in decent deportment and dress adorn themselves with modesty and discretion, not with plaited [hair] and gold, or pearls, or costly clothing, but, what becomes women making profession of the fear of God, by good works. Let a woman learn in quietness in all subjection; but I do not suffer a woman to teach nor to exercise authority over man, but to be in quietness; for Adam was formed first, then Eve (1 Tim. 2:8-13, JND trans.).

Likewise, wives, [be] subject to your own husbands, that, even if any are disobedient to the word, they may be gained without [the] word by the conversation of the wives, having witnessed your pure conversation [carried out] in fear; whose adorning let it not be that outward one of tressing of hair, and wearing gold, or putting on apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible [ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price. For thus also the holy women who have hoped in God heretofore adorned themselves, being subject to their own husbands; as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose children ye have

become, doing good, and not fearing with any kind of consternation. [Ye] husbands likewise, dwell with [them] according to knowledge, as with a weaker, [even] the female, vessel, giving [them] honour, as also fellow-heirs of [the] grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 3:1-7, JND trans.).

What lovely models for the children to observe when these scriptures are obeyed! While they are growing and developing in such an atmosphere of obedience to God's Word, love expressed and submission displayed, they constantly have before them examples of practical Christianity in which God delights. And thus our prayers for their salvation and blessing are not hindered by our setting an example of self-will and disobedience before them.

We certainly allow that God graciously may overrule our self-will, but we must ever remember that it is written that what we sow we reap (Gal. 6:7). Would it not be presumptuous to presume upon God's orderings in nature and sow weeds when we expect to produce a lawn? Though we know the God of all grace, His children ought not to presume upon His grace while KNOWINGLY disobeying His Word.

Training

Our children need training - instruction. Read Proverbs. But are we ourselves trained -instructed in the mind and ways of God? It is well to attend all the meetings (and our children need a model in that); but besides that do we search diligently in the Word to find out the will and ways of God? If not, it is hypocritical to expect it of our children. Are we concerned to be here for the pleasure of God? The Lord Jesus was, preeminently so. So were Paul and Timothy and the house of Stephanus (1 Cor. 16:15).

Train up the child according to the tenor of his way, and when he is old he will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6, JND trans.).

Children differ in temperament and inclination and we need wisdom from God to train each one up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. How can we do that if we haven't learned what that way is? Lack of training is a bad form of training. Have we read and re-read "The Training of Children" and Light in Our Dwellings, available from Bible Truth Publishers? Training up of children often causes us to put our face in the dust as we are cast upon God for the wisdom, firmness, love, patience and self-denial required. We learn, too, things that are in our hearts that displease Him, but blessedly we learn what He is for us. Thus we as parents are also trained in the school of God while bringing up our children in the nurture and discipline of the Lord.

Correction

Are not disobedient and willful children a reflection of undisciplined parents (Prov. 29:15)? We will not spend the time, energy, self-discipline, and consistency to heed Eph. 6:4. Do we let our children have temper tantrums? Laugh it off? These may be seen in babies some months old, and that is the time to begin correction in a loving, firm, consistent, self-sacrificing way. Have we absorbed the idea from John Dewey and from evolutionary theory (little as we may think so) that restraint, discipline and the rod warp the character? This is defiance of God's Word, introduced through educational theories, psychology books, and books on babies. The Proverbs is rejected, at least in this area. Do we say, "I love them too much to spank them"? Or, worse still, "The rod was for the Old Testament times", thus sanctifying our notions and indulgences?

Withhold not correction from the child; for [if] thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die: thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from Sheol (Prov. 23:13,14, JND trans.).

Folly is bound in the heart of a child; the rod of correction shall drive it far from him (Prov. 22:15, JND trans.).

He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes (Prov. 13:24, JND trans.). (A footnote in J.N.D.'s translation says, "Lit. seek him earnestly (or 'early') with discipline.")

Do we on the other hand say, "I'll show them who is boss"? Ah, no! We need to bring them up in the nurture and discipline of the Lord, not lashing out when we finally get angry. That is just our loss of temper and indulgence of our feelings, rather than nurture and discipline. That is serving one's own convenience, rather than correction. No good will come out of it. Our Father has a firm hand attached to a loving heart (Heb. 12:5-11). Is this not the example for Christian parents?

Our children need to sense the love of parents who are themselves subject to the Father and bow to His discipline in the school of God. We must love them enough to be their example, and their correctors, ever keeping open the channel of communication by love and firmness. And we must be honest with them, confessing when we have erred.

If we ignore these things and the sad results follow, do we blame it on lack of Christian youth meetings, camps, etc.? We naturally incline to hide from ourselves true roots.

There are not lacking those who voluntarily have no children of their own (and the number of those refusing to have children is increasing)

engaging in youth work. Such disobey God (1 Tim. 5:14), and want to work with others' youth so that they will obey God. They have never learned to be a model as a parent or proved themselves in training their own, and are themselves an example of disobedience. They have shunned lessons in the school of God.

May God enable us to freshly look to His Word for guidance and to Himself for renewed energy to please Him. Our Lord Jesus has told us that without Him we can do nothing.

Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but are not satisfied; ye drink, but are not filled with drink; ye clothe yourselves, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages for a bag with holes (Haggai 1:5,6, JND trans.).

Is it not time we considered our ways, brethren? How does our home and family life comport with the model we have had before us in some of the foregoing verses of scripture? In spite of our shortcomings He graciously carries us and chastens us that we might be partakers of His holiness. Is it not in the best interest of what is due to Him, as well as what is best for our own souls, to take spiritual inventory of ourselves? May we cry with the Psalmist, "Unite my heart to fear thy name" (Psa. 86:11).

If we expect obedience from our children and teach them that they ought to obey God and their parents, we as parents must be models of obedience to the Word of God. It is not my purpose to catalog the things wherein we as parents display to our children a lack of obedience to the Word of God; a few examples will suffice to illustrate what I refer to.

1. 1 Cor. 11:1-16 expects women to have long hair. Mother shows her disregard for this expectation of God's Word by cutting it. Children conclude that submission is not so important after all.
2. We sing, "Jesus, Thou art enough the mind and heart to fill"; but children observe their parents filling their mind and heart with radio and TV programs, and novel reading. Children conclude that sincerity and truth are not so important after all.
3. Modesty is enjoined in 1 Tim. 2:9,10; but children see their mothers dress provocatively and engage in mixed public bathing.
4. Consider too the music that fills our homes. Do we give our children a taste for "new beats", etc. rather than "the high praises of God" (Psa. 149, 150)? - although some would not allow worldly music but instead satisfy their musical appreciation by "Christian westerns" or "Christian rock" or at least something modern from the latest in "Christian recordings", "Christian radio stations" or "Christian TV programs".

We could go on, but each of us knows deep down in his heart what we indulge ourselves in to the detriment of our own and our children's spiritual welfare.

"We do not judge the flesh in others because we do not judge it in ourselves."

Parents say, When I was a child I was denied that. ... I shall see to it that my children have it. Furthermore, my child shall have every advantage I can provide. My children will be mature and sophisticated at an early age. They shall have dancing lessons to enhance gracefulness (cp. Prov. 31:30) and plenty of sports so they fit in anywhere; especially my sons, so they will be manly. Do you see my daughter primping in front of the mirror? She is only 5 and it is cute. My children are going to be somebody; (my ambitions will be realized in them); and don't anyone dare criticize them. Would any articulate such thoughts? Likely not, but our actions speak louder than words. Are not such things in our hearts, and ought we not to be exercised in secret with our Father about it, and cry to Him ever so mightily and persistently for grace to enable us to judge the thoughts of our hearts?

Oh to see more holy Hannahs, true mothers in Israel! Hannah must have taken the vow of a Nazarite (1 Sam. 1:15). She wanted a man-child, a Nazarite from the womb, to judge the wickedness at the tent of meeting at Shiloh, where Eli's sons corrupted Israel. (For, since she was a godly woman, she could not attend to it personally. She was mightily used of God in the very place God had assigned.) Eli uttered words to his sons but restrained them not (1 Sam. 3:13; cp. Prov. 29:15; 1 Kings 1:6). None of the above was for Hannah. As soon as she could she brought her son there, and how her prayers to Jehovah must have followed Samuel continually. And she uttered in her prayer of triumph those words which ought to fasten on our consciences and hearts: **BY HIM ACTIONS ARE WEIGHED** (1 Sam. 2:3).

Alas, we must needs deck (see "deck" in J.N.D.'s translation in 2 Kings 9:30; Prov. 7:16; Jer. 4:30) ourselves out for Easter, the roots of which are in paganism. Worse still, the heathen holiday and pagan idolatry of Christ-mass, officially introduced from paganism by Pope Damasus, is making more and more inroads. We are instructed to "flee idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:14), and "keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21), but we excuse it by observing Christmas more "purely" . We dare to justify this unholy mixture by our conduct. Perhaps we have forgotten that:

1. The point of departure is the point of recovery.
2. A moral stream never rises above its source.

3. The passage of time does not change the character of a moral action.
4. We should be separated from evil unto the Lord.

Do we really expect our children to practice these principles when our example trains them in practice to do otherwise and avoid the reproach of Christ? It is even excused by saying we are giving the kiddies a good time. What we are giving is an example - at all times. And what are we giving the Lord?

"Who will give us flesh to eat?" cried the children of Israel, who were dissatisfied with God's way with them and provision for them (Num. 11:4, JND trans.).

And they lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. Then he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul (Psa. 106:14,15, JND trans.; cp. Psa. 78:26-31).

And so we get rid of the above matters by labeling it "legality" and "lack of love", when the truth is we are not enjoying the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25; 2:12). A law is a fixed principle. The perfect law, that of liberty, is the new nature doing what it wants to do: obey God.

For the love of Christ constrains us, having judged this: that one died for all, then all have died; and he died for all, that they who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who died for them and has been raised (2 Cor. 5:14,15, JND trans.).

In Exodus, the book of redemption, the manna is described - as the food of a redeemed people. In Numbers, the book of Israel's travels and murmurings, the manna is described differently. Christ is the antitype of the manna. To those in the wilderness (typically speaking) He was not satisfactory as God gave Him (Ex. 16:31). The manna must be ground and beaten (Num. 11:6-9) to make it suitable to our taste instead of our taste being adjusted to God's provision. There is the taste of fresh oil. The Spirit is grieved.

Is "What harm is there in it?" our motto, instead of "What is there for Christ in it?" And when "our young people" lack spirituality and are drifting away, we say, We need young people's meetings, camps, etc.; and, At least if we can get them into fellowship, - as if the assembly is supposed to do what the home life was meant to do. But have we not produced a new generation that has learned from our example? Surely they will work out our ways and lack of devotion even more.

If an assembly is in a good state and a brother holds a "Christian young people's meeting" and the Christians go on well, we point to it in justification of the "Christian young people's meeting" and credit that;

meanwhile ignoring other places where "Christian young people's meetings" are held and they are not going on well. How sad it is if we cover up our condition one way or another. "I don't see it", we say. But that may be another form of the question "Wherein?" repeated so often in Malachi because of insensitivity to the Lord's will.

May God enable us to make confession of where we are. Christ's remedy is found, not in Christian youth meetings, camps, etc., but in Revelation 2 and 3 where we find the position He occupies as Judge until He comes. The word is, "Let him that has an ear hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies": repent.

RULE AND SHEPHERDING IN THE ASSEMBLY

We are considering this subject after the family because 1 Timothy 3:5 (JND trans.) says,

... (but if one does not know how to conduct his own house, how shall he take care of the assembly of God?)

Would not such a scripture make every true overseer tremble?

... But to this man will I look: to the afflicted and contrite in spirit, and who trembleth at my word (Isa. 66:2, JND trans.).

Does not the reading of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 cause us to get low before God and humble ourselves and tremble at His Word?

David ruled the kingdom well, though he was a poor father. This will not do in God's house, the assembly. God's house is not ruled by kingly power but by moral power and example. A position of authority in the world, or heading one's own business, or "higher education", or wealth, does not fit one for rule in God's house, although these do sometimes intrude anyway, sad to say.

If a Christian who does not evangelize at home tells his brethren that the Lord has called him to evangelize in Tibet, will not his brethren call his attention to the incongruity and unsuitableness of this? - for the home sphere is the training ground. 1 Tim. 3:5 tells us the same regarding overseership (besides the other qualifications). Yet, the unqualified seek to intrude into overseership.. What a poor model this is, and young Christians see through it and are stumbled.

"Apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2) does not mean that an overseer needs to be a "teacher" (1 Cor. 12:28; cp. 1 Tim. 5:17), but it does indicate an acquaintance, not with the letter of scripture merely (much as that is necessary and desirable), but with the mind and ways of God so that instruction therein can be imparted in visitation and in assembly affairs, as well as refuting of gainsayers (Titus 1:9) and rebuking those that go on

sinning (1 Tim. 5:20) in cases where this is called for and does not call for putting away, which last only the assembly, as such, can do.

An elder, then, is not an old brother, though an old brother may be an elder. Nor is an elder a novice - one newly come to the faith. Eldership seems to refer to an office (not gift) in a local assembly (Titus 1:5), while "bishop" (overseer) refers to the work. Such a one oversees. Yes, he is concerned about the lambs, whatever physical age they are, as well as the sheep. The great desire of an overseer is that, first, the Lord, the Chief Shepherd and Overseer of our souls (1 Peter 5:4) be obeyed and glorified, and then that we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

God's Word has provided for visitation where help needed may be privately given. The character of the ministry meeting for edification is guarded in 1 Cor. 14, a meeting wherein prophets speak - if we obey its directions; and God addresses our state - if His prophets are faithful and exercised. Here is occasion for publicly given help, encouragement and correction. We also find, in the Word, teaching of disciples, and in this too we may receive training in divine things. God has made ample provisions to meet our problems and state. It turns out that we see the effect of our worldliness, self-indulgence and pleasure-seeking reflected in the next generation (without recognizing where the cause of the reflection is), and rather than humbling ourselves with our faces in the dust and confessing our sins, and forsaking them (Prov. 28:13), we want to set up another channel of "ministry to Christian young people", as such, avoiding self-judgment and destruction of our idols. And is this really with the intent of holding meetings wherein is given ministry that we shirk to give in the ministry meetings for edification (1 Cor. 14)? Is that what is given in the Christian young people's meetings and camps? I ask my own heart and yours, my dear brethren, is it so? Occasionally so, perhaps. Is it God's way for His people? Is it the real path marked out in scripture? Things set up contrary to the Word lead to a generally lower state among God's people, though for a time man's way may seem wise.

If ministry can be brought before Christian young people (I'm speaking conventionally), in special meetings and camps for them, that we think cannot (?) be brought through channels we find noted in the Word, ought that not to warn us where we are heading? If what is needed is not brought through those channels, is it not time for us to "consider your ways" (Haggai 1:7)? May our consciences be before God about it.

Do we have a general ministry that leaves us unruffled and unrebuked in our low state? Is that God's way with His people? When a voice is raised

exposing things, do we say, "Preach Christ"? (as if preaching what is due to Christ is not preaching Christ), and "legality"? The avoidance of direct, conscience-searching ministry makes for an easier, more popular ministry. Soon we shall give account before our Lord.

Being a TALKER is not the qualification for taking part in meetings. It is ministry from the Head we need, not the repetition of things that are true in themselves. Ahimaaz was a fast man on his feet, but he had no suitable message (2 Sam. 18:22). He said only so much as was pleasant. He was unfaithful and less than truthful in reply to David's questioning. He bowed to those to whom he spoke, but not to the one who sent Cush. Is our ministry like this? Cush did the opposite of Ahimaaz, and David was much moved.

Moses' blessing of the tribe of Levi is very instructive. They became the priestly tribe, teaching "Jacob thine ordinances, and Israel thy law". They put incense before God and whole burnt offerings on His altar. How did this come about?

Who said to his father and to his mother, I see him not, and he acknowledged not his brethren, and knew not his own children; for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant (Deut. 33:9, JND trans.).

We so much need the spirit and preparation of Ezra the priest, "a ready scribe in the law of Moses".

For Ezra had directed his heart to seek the law of Jehovah and to do it, and to teach in Israel the statutes and the ordinances (Ezra 7:10, JND trans.).

Teach me thy way, Jehovah; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name (Psalm 86:11, JND trans.).

May God direct our hearts more fully into His ways that we might be here more for His pleasure, ever keeping before us the great Model Who has left us a model that we should follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21), our blessed object Who always pleased the Father (John 8:29).

CONCLUSION

We have considered a few of the real causes of lack of spirituality and drifting away on the part of our children. Our refusal to own up to those causes compounds the problems, because IT IS GOD 'S WAY TO WORK THROUGH CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE.

We saw, too, in Chapter 1 that there are many parts to Christian youth works. These things begin with Christian young people's meetings. understand these other things to be a normal, logical development. The direction of it all is back to the systems of man.

Provision has been made by the Head of the body for the spiritual development of all the saints; He has given gifts (Eph. 4). These gifts, though differing in character (Romans 12, have one common purpose in God's mind, namely, edification of the body, as may be seen in Eph. 4:13-16. Here, consistent with the rest of scripture, the entire body is in view, not segments. Youth work stands in sharp contrast to this, substituting an artificial grouping in the flock that scripture does not recognize nor authorize. In fact, we have seen in Chapter 2 that scripture is against such fragmenting of the flock.

Ministry carried out according to the teaching and the practice recorded in scripture always has in view the entire flock of God, the entire family of God seen in its oneness, and the body of Christ seen in its unity. We desire, therefore, to encourage SUCH a ministry in contrast to the youth work which we believe violates the character described by these scriptural relationships in which we are set as saints.

Christian young people' s meetings are allegedly meetings for babes, lambs and little ones in God's family. The proof that this is the idea is the very scriptures cited in support. Why refer to John 21, 1 John 2, etc. if this is not the case? The fact is, though, that the meetings, camps, etc., are not for lambs, babes and little ones as spoken of in scripture, but a division within this, namely, lambs, babes and little ones who are physically young. Such a procedure of using scripture does not commend itself as proper and it warns us that something is wrong. Indeed, the scripture support for the Christian youth work not only does not exist, but the Old Testament examples cited herein, and the New Testament passages considered, are against this kind of activity. The order for God's house as given in scripture provides for the feeding and shepherding of God' s flock and care of God's family. Just as "there is one body" is a test for so many inventions of Christians, so "there shall be one flock " is a test for us. It excludes the "calls " to service in special Christian youth meetings, conferences, and camps to serve "the young people".

Let us humble ourselves individually and corporately and "hear the rod". Let us seek a right way for ourselves and our little ones. Let us gather before the water gate, men and women and all that can hear with understanding, and obey that Word. Let those who minister be faithful in giving corrective ministry as needed. Let those who oversee in the assembly keep 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 in memory. Let us carry out the order and discipline that becomes God's house, for holiness becomes His house forever. Let us go forward as one flock ought and as members of one body ought.

O THOU, whose mercies far exceed
All we can do or say,
As in Thy people Thou indeed
Dost daily more display;
Let, for our happiness, O God,
On us while here below,
By virtue of Christ's death and blood
Thy richest blessings flow.

Preserve Thy flock most graciously
Within Thy sheltering fold;
Move them from every harm away,
And in Thy safeguard hold,
Till Thou shalt fully have obtained
In us the fruits of grace,
And we, in joys that never end,
Shall see Thee face to face.

Do Thou, the very God of peace,
Us wholly sanctify,
And grant us such a rich increase
Of power from on high,
That spirit, soul, and body may,
Preserved free from stain,
Be blameless until that great day.
Lord Jesus Christ, Amen!

L. F. #288

It will be said that I have not elaborated on what should be done in a right and positive way of help. That is true, though we have mentioned channels of blessing indicated in the Word. When we are generally and corporately humbled before our gracious God, He will hear and answer our cry for deliverance. When we have turned from our ways, He will show us His way. We shall then be in a spiritual state to know how to

meet need as directed by His Word and His love shed abroad in our hearts.

May our gracious Lord raise up servants with a powerful prophetic ministry of a Haggai and Malachi character, which will be "urgent in season land] out of season, convict, rebuke, encourage, with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2); knowing that "every scripture is inspired, and profitable for teaching, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ..." (2 Tim. 3:16). May He raise up shepherds and overseers who will watch after our souls in accordance with the due order.

Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:1).

O Holy Father, keep us here
In that blest name of love,
Walking before Thee without fear
Till all be joy above.

R. A. Huebner -- Aug. 1983

APPENDIX 1

This appendix (except for quotation #1) contains quotations from youth work promotional material from youth leaders who are among companies of brethren who have merged (see Introduction, paragraph 7). These are particularly cogent since these people are among companies of Christians who profess to be "outside the camp" and profess to know the truth of the assembly, that "there is one body" (Eph.4:4). These quotations will no doubt shock the spiritual sensibilities of any who have a concern for the testimony of the Lord. There were those shocked by it in their own circle of fellowship and warnings were raised. Quote #8 is a good example of the warnings raised, but alas went unheeded. I urge my reader to read these quotations. Hopefully they will shock you into a realization of what is ahead. No doubt some will exclaim that "we wouldn't go that far!" Some of those who started THOSE activities regret how far they have "developed", and exclaim that they never intended it so. Let us learn from the experience of others! That is how others once thought also.

QUOTATION #1

Fiction: Young people of all ages should be invited to youth meetings.

Fact: The more you divide your youth group by age, the better. ... Each group has different age-level characteristics and each should have a program designed for its interests. ... Only in desperate situations should you try to bring together young people of all ages. That's like trying to mix oil and water.

QUOTATION #2

"Thou wilt show me the path of life" (Psa. 16:11).

The single working person has many unique needs today! With all the pressures of society and the world we live in, the single person needs the correct dimension and outlook for the future, spiritual strength and positive reinforcement. With these objectives in mind, a Single Adult Seminar will be held Discussions will be centered around occupations, Christian lifestyle, financial planning and the role of the single person in the assembly. Discussion and seminar leaders will be The weekend will include a time to fellowship together, time to relax, and an opportunity to meet new people and renew old acquaintances. Consider this a personal invitation to a great weekend together, if you are a single adult between the ages of 25 - 39. Pray that the Lord will prepare hearts

and provide blessing to those that attend. Registration forms will be mailed to assembly correspondents very soon.

QUOTATION #3

Pilgrim's Camp, for Christians ages 45 and up, will be held at "..... Campy September 3 through-7T 1980. This is a time of fellowship, prayer, study of the Scriptures, discussions and relaxation for pilgrims on the heavenly journey.

QUOTATION #4

It is anticipated that the first issue of the new Young People's Bulletin will be mailed in September to high school, college and career age young people (30 and under).

QUOTATION #5

We hope, D.V. to have a Junior Bible Camp from August 11 to 18, a retreat for brothers and sisters from August 21 to 23, and a Senior Bible Camp from August 25 to Sept. 3.

"We enjoyed a blessed season together at the annual Western Young People's Advance" at..... We enjoyed the music and testimony of There were seven workshops: Christ for the Young Man; Christ for the Young Woman; Christ as Man; Christ for Salvation; Christ as the Good Shepherd; Christ as Lord and Master; and Christ as seen in the life of Joseph. There were four one-hour sessions for each workshop and the Lord gave real liberty as the Person of our blessed Lord Jesus was seen and spoken about. (He truly is Altogether Lovely.)

QUOTATION #6

Here is an example of appeals made to Christian young people to become youth leaders. It advertises a camp specifically for developing youth leadership.

TDC Camp

"What does TDC stand for?" is a common query. Whenever this question arises it affords an opportunity to tell of an exercise that was conceived by.....early in 1977 and brought to fruition the summer of that same year. It is a camp of six days' duration, designed to challenge and encourage young people 17 years and up to contemplate the issue of their lives with reference to the critical elements of Timing, Decision and Commitment. The process used to achieve this entails Teaching, Discussion and Counseling. TDC is therefore a camp for the serious Christian. It is a leadership training

session. The program at this camp places large emphasis on camper initiative and provides opportunity for that initiative to find expression in the very fabric of each year's organization.

Illustrative of this characteristic, immediately after the very first session the mantle fell from the original director and rested on and the writer of this article - exemplary of its perennial theme, "Passing the Torch" (from one generation to the next in line). We have taken the pains to explain all this because we believe that the young person now reading this article could well be one of those leaders of the next generation with hand outstretched to accept the charge. Can it be you? If so, plan to come to TDC '80, Saturday, August 16 through Friday, August 22, 1980. We'll be glad to welcome you, leader.

QUOTATION #7

A woman wrote,

The Lord's hand has been clear all along - ever since I first considered full-time camp work and now He leads me to serve Him again in professional employment as well as in local assembly involvement.....

COMMENT: That form of speech was learned from the denominations. There are those who think working with people is a more holy occupation than working with things; as if our Lord was occupied more holily in His ministry than as a carpenter. Nor am I aware that a sister was in full-time service in apostolic times (unless it is INFERRED) except that brethren took around with them a wife.

QUOTATION #8

.... bringing these natural pleasures up to the plane of definite Christian engagement, and even putting them on a par with spiritual enjoyments, is, I believe, a false and harmful combination, certainly foreign to New Testament teaching and to the Spirit's condition for intimate communion. I cannot tell you why, when the pleasures are innocent enough; but it just does not work; and if spirituality survives for a time, leanness of soul is well on its tracks. Though it be all right to admire, in its place, what is of God, you are yet not at the same moment in a deeply spiritual frame, the Holy Spirit's hand refusing to be forced, though we gladly would. How many hymns, indeed, of long and hallowed use are now obsolete and cannot be sung in sincerity - at least not while at camp. Have we not forced the boundary-line of legitimate Christian pleasure when we can no longer sing truly: "O give me a heart that can wait in submission,

Nor know of a wish or a pleasure not Thine." And how many hymns of the same sentiment are now a dead letter?.....Though a Christian may slip, as to this -and we all do, the great wrong in the present instance consists in the Church officially trying to unite and blend together into one these two diverse elements, as though this were part of her mission. Now the simplest Christian knows how foreign this is to Scripture, and how conspicuously absent is anything of glorying in the grandeurs of God's natural creation in the New Testament. Is this to be our guide, or is it not? Whatever might be permitted the individual Christian as a little diversion in this way, as in social things otherwise, is one thing; but to organize and concentrate on a movement for sports and pleasures in connection with the world's great provision for such - and that under the auspices of the "assembly of God", is quite another (and hitherto unheard of) thing. Let us not deceive ourselves; the prime objective in these vacation resorts is pleasure and recreation, and not the Bible, even though we would sanctify the occasion by conjoining the things of the Lord. By a law inflexible and divine we cannot by any conniving blend these two things; and if-we cannot thus bend-the Lord to our way and desire, then it is plain enough He does not approve of nor lead to these vacation playground Bible camps, whatever may be pleaded to the contrary by their promoters at the expense of His mere forbearance.

What an admission also of loss of daily fellowship with the Son of God to speak of our daily work as "hum-drum daily routine", and point away from it to these camps to be "among IDEAL CHRISTIAN SURROUNDINGS"! How are worldly camps - though ever so beautiful " ideal Christian surroundings"? "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings WITHOUT US", etc. says Paul. And where are the ministers of Christ after this pattern - "in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings," etc. etc. 2 Cor. 6:4-10

COMMENT: This warning was raised in 1958 to those among whom the publications cited above circulated, before matters had gone this far. (I had not seen this warning at that time, when I was heavily engaged in camp work. At that time most likely I would have tried to get rid of this by saying it was cranky, unloving, written in a bad spirit, and with no concern about "the needs of the young". Alas, my heart is capable of anything.) THE WARNING HIGHLIGHTS THE PRINCIPLE OF MIXTURES INVOLVED IN MANY OF THESE ACTIVITIES. I quote it as being as applicable today as in 1958.

APPENDIX 2

"Scripture characterizes an act by its tendency."

This is clearly seen in connection with causing the weak brother to perish(1 Cor. 8:11). Now we know that one for whom Christ has died CANNOT ever perish. How then does one cause the weak brother to perish? By becoming a stumbling block for the weak brother. And so becoming a stumbling block for the weak brother has the tendency to cause him to perish (though of course he cannot), and becoming a stumbling block therefore is characterized as "causing the weak brother to perish" because THAT is its tendency.

APPENDIX 3

A few practices sanctioned last century.

1. Sunday School Work: There are two observations I will make.

(a) I am under the impression that last century Sunday School work was a facet of gospel work for lost children. Happily, there are still some such; but many have changed their character into something else in the process of time.

(b) Irrespective of this change, I am not aware that the Sunday School sets up a group such as is the subject of this paper, having a divisive character and fostering a self-conscious group identity within the flock.

2. Meetings of laboring brethren and private meetings with young men in connection with the Lord's work: Letters of J. N. Darby, vol. 3, pp. 319, 293 (S.H. edition). Here again, I will make two comments.

(a) First, I am prepared to reject any principles, practices and statements of J.N.D. that I believe are contrary to scripture, as I understand it. (For example, the idea that three isolated sisters could break bread; or, that Napoleon may have been the seventh head of the Beast.)

(b) The assemblages of brothers gifted in the way of service supposed in these letters, are probably pastors, evangelists and teachers, at least. And this reminds me of Ephesians 4 where the body is in view, not the flock as in John 10. Laborers and servants are, in scripture, it seems to me, looked at in connection with THE BODY OF CHRIST, as specially responsible, gifted members for the responsibility entrusted. Drawing an analogy from Mr. Darby's activities is not valid because it applies to the flock the special function of these servants which strictly speaking has to do with their place in the body. Thus, I do not grant the analogy intended to support the youth items which are the subject of this paper.

This appendix highlights an approach some take to supporting what in reality is not scriptural. If there were scripture, it would be produced. (We have examined the alleged scripture support and found it has no such meaning.) Analogies are helpful to explain what scripture teaches and supports. It is not valid to use non-analogous 'analogies' as in the two cases above.

... Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

"Take heed therefore HOW ye hear" (Luke 8:18).