



MISSOURI MISSION MESSENGER

VOLUME IV

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER, 1943

NUMBER 9

Scriptural Elders

NO. 10

The next qualification we are to consider is stated in the negative. It affirms that an elder must be "no striker." This has nothing directly to do with a man's affiliation with a labor union. I personally know of nothing that would forbid laborers to band themselves together to secure their rightful wages, and to promote safer working conditions. However, a Christian belonging to such an organization could not engage in the use of force, or bodily violence in order to force an employer to submit to demands made upon him, for this would violate the tenor of the scriptures. But the term "striker" as employed in this instance does not affect a man's standing or activities in the Congress of Industrial Organizations or the American Federation of Labor. That is not the matter under consideration. While it is true that they had the guild system before the days of the apostle Paul, and that was the counterpart of our modern groups of organized and federated labor unions, nothing is said about them in one way or another.

This restriction placed upon a bishop, means that he is not to be an antagonistic pugnacious, belligerent individual. His disposition is to be the opposite of quarrelsome and contentious. He is not to be a pugilistic individual, attempting to settle difficulties that may arise by the ready use of his fists. He is not to be forward in the adjustment of matters by physical prowess or brute strength, for those methods generally settle nothing. Often they make a condition worse. It is true that "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." The elder labors with the congregation on a mental plane. If a man differs from him, it is useless to try and beat the correct idea into his mind. Ideas are not received by

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Northwest Mission Work

Bro. Kenneth Morgan will be in Spokane, Wash., on November 1, to begin mission work which will continue for a year in Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Washington. This work is made possible by the following congregations who have promised to give the monthly amount specified below:

Nixa, Missouri	\$10.00
Hammond, Illinois	10.00
Sullivan, Illinois	10.00
New Castle, Indiana	10.00
Secor, Illinois	10.00
Hartford, Illinois	10.00
Des Moines, Iowa (Dean Ave.)	10.00
Flat River, Missouri	10.00
Manchester Ave. (St. Louis)	10.00
Lillian Ave. (St. Louis)	10.00
Hale, Missouri	5.00
Fairview Chapel (Iowa)	5.00
Brookport, Illinois	5.00
Spokane, Washington	10.00

Bro. T. L. Sterner of Franklin, Neb. also contributed \$12.00 to the fund (representing a personal contribution of one dollar per month for the year). We congratulate the above named places upon their forward look in mission work. Others also wrote in and wanted to help, but the books were closed on the work and it was impossible to account their money according to our published statement. We are glad to see this spirit of helpfulness, this lack of selfishness demonstrated. May God prosper Brother Morgan and the congregations in the Pacific Northwest in their great endeavor is the prayer of every faithful Christian.

September Honor Roll

SUDDETH, Pvt. Wendell H.; 37674935, U. S. Army; Co. A, 31st E. T. Bn., 4th Plat.; Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.

MOORE, Cpl. Roland D.; 18188002, Hdq. and Hdq. Sqdn., AFPS, Ellington Field, Texas.

MOORE, Sgt. James L.; ASN, 38050833, S and A Btry., 131st F. A.; APO 36; c-o Postmaster, New York City, New York.

ALONG THE WAY

E. M. Zerr is to begin a series of articles on Historical Facts and the Bible, which will appear monthly in the Macedonian Call. The short, pithy items will show how God's Word has been sustained by the facts and events which have come to pass. All Bible students will find it profitable to save these and make a scrapbook of them. If you do not have the Macedonian Call coming to your home now, order at once, and get full benefit of Bro. Zerr's writings...

A new edition of The Simplified Testament is now being printed. This book which has furnished thousands of readers with helpful explanations should be in every home. It is just the right size to carry with you, too... Advance orders for the new book of sermons, "To Every Man that Asketh" are being received in this office. The writers for this edition are: W. E. Ballenger, Robert Brumback, Winford Lee, Roy Harris, A. R. Moore, L. C. Roberts and W. Carl Ketcherside. The book will have a hundred pages, and be well bound. You can obtain two when they are released from the press, for a dollar bill... Harold Ottwell of East Alton, will conduct a short meeting at Ellington in November. Brethren there now have their new building completed and are meeting in it... Bro. John Scobee baptized a mother and her son and daughter on August 29, at Pollock, Mo. Bro. Winford Lee recently closed a meeting there... The editor is getting this edition of the paper out from New Castle, Indiana, where he is assisting in a meeting. Five have been added to date (Sept. 3) four of them by baptism. Bro. E. M. Zerr has been home during the entire season and we have appreciated his assistance as well as that of visiting preaching brethren, elders and members... The money to carry on the Pacific Northwest Mission work was received before our paper was out carrying the notice. Bro. Morgan will begin that work for one year, starting November 1.

Mere Monthly Preaching

It's a natural thing to see that the monthly preaching system is at last proving ineffective in most places. Brethren who used to say "We want to go to church next Sunday, because it's preaching Sunday," now pay no more attention to that Sunday than any other. We wonder what those churches will do that have depended upon two entertaining sermons on a certain Sunday each month, when that is no longer effective? Will they in prosperity decide to have the preacher come twice per month, or three or four times? They have the money to do that now you know. I want to serve notice on them that even if they drift into a full-time pastorate system, that will just prolong the agony, and make the dying struggles last a few more years. Even denominationalism with its high-priced pulpit entertainers and its orators without a peer, is forced to admit that it will not work. Many of them cannot get enough people to come on Sunday night to listen to their preacher, to pay to open the church doors.

Brethren that pay a man \$35 dollars a trip to come and preach to the elders, are putting out \$420 per year for 24 sermons, which they often admit themselves do little permanent good. They should if they want to reach the world, have an extra meeting each year, and a two weeks song training session. If a congregation already has one meeting per year, in addition to monthly preaching; they could sponsor another and have their vocal music training, give each one of the men who conducted it \$150 each and still have \$120 more left in their treasury after all the good was done. They could then take that extra money and spend an additional ten dollars per month in mission work elsewhere. If a church really wants to be active and grow, let them plan a program of two short meetings, a month Bible Reading, and a two weeks singing class every year. They will

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MISSOURI MISSION MESSENGER

Published on the Fifteenth Day of Each Month in St. Louis, Mo.,
Subscription Rate \$1.00 Per Year

W. Carl Ketcherside
Editor and Publisher

Publication Office
7505 Trenton Ave.,
University City, Missouri.

Dedicated to the task of arousing churches in this state and elsewhere to a greater zeal in mission work, and assist in developing the talents of all to be used to the glory of God.

CARL'S CORNER

It is a genuine pleasure to me to have the privilege of meeting with other preachers of the gospel. I learn much from such association. The meeting I am now in at New Castle, Indiana has been especially fruitful in this respect. Bro. D. Austen Sommer has been with me on several occasions and we've spent happy hours talking about the glowing prospects for the church. On two occasions I have spent the night with Bro. E. M. Zerr, and we have talked into the wee hours of the morning. Brother C. R. Turner has been engaged in a good work at Anderson, and has come to be with us in the series here, and it has been good to converse with him about his activities in varied fields. I find that Brother Zerr is not booked for Bible Readings this fall and winter. The reason is apparently that brethren have decided to seek a bomb-proof shelter for the duration. I can't understand it. With more money than ever before, with the world needing the gospel worse than it has ever needed it, a lot of us are going into spiritual retirement for the duration! Snap out of it! A spirit of defeatism will kill the church. Gasoline rationing cannot close a church, but lack of faith can. Book a Bible Reading even if of brief duration for this winter. Get busy brethren, and the Lord will reward your work.

—W. Carl Ketcherside

AMONG the CHURCHES

CHURCHES ATTENTION!—The Missouri Mission Messenger is essentially a newspaper. Its outstanding purpose is to publish and circulate news happenings in the congregations in this state. We believe that it is inspiring to others to know what you are doing, and how you are doing it! For that reason, we would like to invite you to contribute news items each month for publication. Such news letters must be in our hands on the first day of each month. If they arrive in Saint Louis after that date they will not be used under ordinary circumstances. We suggest that elders or leaders appoint a correspondent to send in the news each month. Do it systematically! Do it regularly! If you say that you are not doing anything to report, you are in bad shape. Get busy and do something, then you too, will be able to appear before the brotherhood as an inspiring example of faithfulness. Let your faith be spoken of throughout the whole world. We reserve the right to re-write your contributed material to conform to our journalistic policy, or to omit certain portions when the amount of space for this assignment is not sufficient to print the article in full. Be sure to put the zone number on our address from this time on. It is (14). It should be as follows: W. Carl Ketcherside, 7505 Trenton Avenue, University City, (14), Missouri.

We'd like to hear from every church in the state. Are YOU still on the map? If so, what are you doing to prove it?

SHAMROCK (3 miles west of Nixa)—The following families from Nixa have banded together to establish this mission point; L. Stoneman, A. Glenn, L. Moore, McConnells, Youngs, and Bonita Herndon. Bro. and Sister Mooney met with and assisted them in the work three Sundays. Bro. and Sister Sackett assisted them on August 29; Bro. and Sister Stine on September 5. (Bros. Stine and Sackett are elders at Nixa). Bro. R. O. Webb will conduct a meeting sometime in September for the new congregation.

OZARK—We are few in number but trying to be faithful. The church is now engaged in a study of the Hebrew letter which requires much investigation. We take chapter 8, on September 5. Sister Rowena Boyd, who has done a good job in the children's class as teacher, will go to Kansas City to

teach in the public schools right away. We are sorry that Bro. John Rhodes could not be with us in August because of unavoidable circumstances, as we were looking forward to his meeting.

SAINT LOUIS (5344 Lillian)—Attendance on August 29, was 186 at the morning service, 128 at night. The contribution was \$86.85. Bro. Topping delivered the morning address, with Lee Ross from Manchester speaking at night. On the same night, three of our boys, Joseph Provencher, Teddy Ratliff and Randall Whanger spoke at Manchester Avenue, and Bro. Clinton Jones was at Webster Groves. The three boys mentioned above will present the program at Granite City on September 5.

ALDER SPRINGS—Brother John Rhodes is with the congregation assisting in adjustment and development work. He is holding a short meeting in connection with his personal work attempts, it is reported.

SALEM—In August our congregation made 40 calls upon the sick, sent 9 cards to those who were ill, and 19 to men in the armed forces. Our average attendance for Lord's Day morning was 42, and for the night meetings 18. The average contribution was \$13.91. Bro. Herbert Estep preaches here each fourth Lord's Day. Bro. Otis Crandell delivered the last three sermons for Bro. Roy Harris at Goodwater, in order to release him in time for his meeting at Saint Joseph. Bro. Crandell will direct the song service for Bro. Brumback who is to hold the meeting at Hammond, Ill.

SUMMERVILLE—We are getting along fairly well down here, but we miss the "better-half" of our congregation that has moved to Saint Louis to engage in defense work.

—J. P. STOOPS

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS—Bro. Robert Brumback closed a three week meeting on August 29th. Attendance was good at all sessions, with brethren from other congregations and local non-members present in goodly number. The last day was the climax however. On that occasion the new church edifice was well filled, with representatives from five sister congregations present to mingle their hearts in prayer and their voices in song. Bro. Floyd Acree directed the singing at regular services, but in the afternoon visiting leaders

assisted. The meeting was indeed a grand success. As a result of the cooperation of the brethren, the tireless personal work and efficient preaching of Brother Brumback, fourteen were added during the course of the meeting.

—GLENN ELLIS

GALLATIN—We are so busy with the work of getting our recently purchased building in proper shape for occupancy that we will only report work moving along in fine shape. We greatly appreciate the helpful cooperation of all the brethren. When Brother James Trullit preached for us in August, we had more towns-people than had attended for years. Our development work continues. "We praise thee, O God," To Him be all glory.

—D. PATTERSON

SAINT JOSEPH—The first week of our meeting with Brother Roy Harris is drawing to a close. Seven have been added to date; four by letter, three by baptism. Attendance and attention have both been good. Brother Harris has a fine delivery and presents lessons both plain and interesting. After the meeting concludes next week, we will remain for a third week of song practice sessions, each morning during the meeting Bro. Harris is conducting a song drill for children. He has 14 enrolled and the children are deriving a great deal of benefit from the work.

—CLEO GIBSON

POLLOCK—Meeting now history. Crowds and interest both far above expectations. We closed Sunday night, August 22, with a capacity audience, some not being able to get into the house. Six were added by baptism, others seemed almost persuaded. Cooperation from surrounding congregations was superb. I start August 24, at Fairview Church near Clarinda, Iowa, then will be back in Missouri until November 1.

—WINFORD LEE

KIRKSVILLE (August 29)—Good meeting today with wonderful spirit manifested. Twenty were present, contribution \$10.06. One placed membership, and two others will do so as soon as they get letters from their home congregation. Our schedule for today included the study of the Roman letter, chapter 3, taught by the writer; an edification talk by Bro. O. M. Blackorby; with communion service under direction of Bro. Arthur Gingrich. At night, Bro. O. M. Blackorby directed the Old Testament study in Numbers 20, and the New Testament les-

son was presented by Bro. Charles Hawes.

—WILLIAM SMITH

KANSAS CITY (26th and Spruce)—Bro. and Sister Moore got to attend our morning service together on August 29. We were glad to see them. Bro. Brumback took occasion one Wednesday night to give us a resume of his interesting work in Connecticut. Bro. Kenneth Morgan was present on another Wednesday night and delivered us a fine sermon, the regular class work being suspended for that night.

Miss Imogene Ditto, daughter of Bro. and Sister R. A. Ditto, now of Texas, was married Sunday, August 22, to Mr. Walter Holloway also of Texas. They will make their home in Connecticut for the present.

Three of our young sisters who have been away for a long time were home this month. Doris Hendron was transferred here by the Social Security Board in Washington, D. C. where she has been employed. Margaret Cobble, who has a Civil Service position in Washington, D. C. spent her vacation here, and Nettie Mae Jonsson was home for a couple of weeks before joining her husband, Gerald E. Johnson, now stationed at Corpus Christi, Texas.

Bro. Millard Van Deusen has been with us two Sundays, after being transferred to Sedalia, Mo. from California.

—LERITA FRAZIER

INDEPENDENCE — Crowds have been somewhat smaller especially at nights, because of vacations. Two have been added by baptism recently. Bro. and Sister McKenzie. They have been regular attendants since last January. Bro. Churchill Teghtmeyer and family were with us August 22. He preached a good sermon. Bro. Glenn Ellis will be with us on August 29, and we'll have dinner in the park. Since we have now made the rounds of all homes arranged to accommodate our audience, we will meet in our home again for awhile. Our lot has been purchased and we hope to begin a basement edifice soon. We will be located at 601 South Liberty, near the Kansas City bus line, in an easily located place on one of the main streets.

Sister Springer is recovering nicely after an operation on her gums. Her son, a warrant officer in Atlanta, Ga., and his wife were recent visitors. Her other son, who is in the service at Camp Robinson in Arkansas, came in August 26, for a visit.

The writer visited in the Ketcherside and Burton homes in Saint Louis during August; attending Lillian Avenue Church twice and Manchester once, an enjoyable privilege. We heard recently from Frank Kreeger, and while we do not know where he is his address is: Franklin D. Kreeger, A. R. M., 2-c, U. S. N. V. B. 137, c-o P. O., San Francisco, California.

—IVA KREEGER

KANSAS CITY (59th and Kenwood)—We were all glad to see Brother Robert Brumback and family when they returned from the east about the first of August. He is in a meeting at Excelsior Springs now. During the month we have been privileged to hear Brethren Winford Lee, J. O. Paisley, John Rhodes, and Robert Brumback. We were pleased to note Bro. and Sister Arthur Freeman among our visitors on Aug. 22, when we reached our peak attendance of the year—150, contribution was \$73.00.

—FERN MIZE

SALT LOUIS 7121 (Manchester)—Soldiers here recently on leave; Clarence Grover and James Bandy. Leaving the city: Martha Boren to Camp Gordon, Georgia; Esther Alexander to Dixon, Mo.; Ruth Woodruff to Delaware; Bernice Weems to her parents' home near Ellington, Mo. Recent visitors from out of the city: Helen and Irene Turner, Chad Freeman from Sullivan, Ill.; Loren and Eva Honn from Kemp, Ill.; Iva Kreeger and daughter from Independence, Mo.; and Ruby Lee Landes from Kansas City, Mo. Members from here visiting elsewhere: Mary Jane, Lionel and Curtis Burton at Kansas City and Hale, Mo.

We are glad to report satisfactory improvement for Sister Ruth Honn, who underwent a major operation at Missouri Christian Hospital. Her mother, Mrs. C. R. Turner came to be with her during the ordeal, but has returned to Indiana.

Jerry Minton has been transferred from Camp Forest, Tenn., to Camp Laguna, Arizona. Linnie Sue Bezdek is spending her vacation with her husband who is stationed in North Carolina.

Our attendance on August 22 was 100, with a contribution of \$102.15. Bro. and Sister Tate placed membership with us during the month.

—EVELYN ROBINSON

BROOKFIELD—Attendance has decreased due to serious illness of several. Sister J. L. Peavler has been confined to her bed for several weeks. Bro. W. M. Christian is

in a Kirksville hospital, not expected to survive. Bro. J. O. Paisley of Kansas City expects to be with us September 12. Bro. R. O. Webb has asked to be released from the oversight due to his health condition. We hope he will be able to resume his work with us soon again.

—DOROTHY STUART

NIXA—Attendance and contribution good. We are now studying the book of James in our four classes. Brother W. Carl Ketcherside will begin our meeting in the middle of October. We eagerly await the event. Sister Thelma Busard and family have returned to Nixa, and attend services here. On August 15, we had among our visitors the Clyde Justice family from Independence and Norma Katherine, Gloria and Sharon Emmett.

Bro. Dewey Hulse and wife of Springfield were with us on August 22, and Sister Kate Steinert was able to return to worship on August 29. Charabell Wasson, who is visiting her parents, from Petersburg, Virginia was with us over three Lord's Days. We chronicle also the approaching marriage of Louise Wisner and Freeman Glenn. We are happy that Sister Haguewood and Wonda Mae made a safe return from California.

WORTHINGTON—(Sept 7). began meeting at Martinstown last Sunday, with good attendance. Meeting at Saint Joseph resulted in six baptisms and six placing membership. Enjoyed working with those brethren. The church there seems to be pushing forward. We had two weeks of preaching and a week of song drill. In addition we had a class each morning to train the youngsters in song.

—ROY HARRIS

DEXTER—Just closed two weeks meeting here at Bridge congregation with Bro. H. L. Carlton doing the preaching. We had a wonderful meeting and every member was spiritually uplifted. We are all working and praying for the betterment of the Cause of the Saviour.

—MILTON GARNER

“JUST USE ME”

I am the Bible.
I am God's wonderful Library.
I am always—and above all—the Truth.
To the weary pilgrim. I am a good, strong Staff.
To the one who sits in black gloom, I am glorious Light

TRACTS!!!

We are working now on some new style tracts especially adapted for use in mission work, but which will be suitable in any community in the world. Printed on a different type of paper, and arranged in a form different than you have generally seen literature of this type they will carry an advertising value that will sell our message wherever they go. These tracts will be profusely illustrated in such a manner as to gain attention and hold it! They will be ready about the first of the year. Space will be left for congregational address and imprint.

We would like to hear from all congregations which plan to hold vacation Bible studies next season. We have now arranged and will have ready for delivery in January 1944, advertising matter for such work which will, we believe, be the finest that has ever been distributed in your community. It is especially written to gain and hold interest of both parents and children. If you want to distribute 500 or a thousand of these in your community, we will book you for them. No orders taken for less than 500, however. Preachers doing this type of work should make their arrangements for these advertising circulars at once.

F. A. DITRICK DIES

Word has been received of the death of Brother F. A. Ditrick at Shelbyville, Illinois on the morning of September 12. Brother Ditrick, a faithful preacher of the gospel for many years, had been confined to his bed for a long time as a result of a cancerous condition in the bone of one leg. He was especially well-known in central and southern Illinois, where he had labored with churches before this editor was born. We extend our sincere sympathy to our aged Sister Ditrick and the church at Shelbyville.

To those who stoop beneath heavy burdens, I am sweet Rest.
To him who has lost his way, I am a safe Guide.
To those who have been hurt by sin, I am healing Balm.
To the discouraged, I whisper a glad message of Hope.
To those who are distressed by the storms of life, I am an ANCHOR, sure and steadfast.
To those who suffer in lonely solitude, I am as a cool, soft Hand resting on a fevered brow.
Oh, child of man, to best defend me, just use me.

"Give Me The Bible"

The sacred volume which we dearly love has wielded a powerful influence over both friend and foe in the days that are past.

Lew Wallace, the author of "Ben Hur" was a confirmed skeptic. He assayed to write a great historical novel, in which he expected to refute the claims of Christianity. He read the New Testament as a source book for materials, and his viewpoint was so altered that he wrote the novel, "Ben Hur" as an honorary tribute of the highest respect for Christ, as the Son of God.

It is said that Voltaire, most renowned exponent of the idea that the Bible was a myth, changed ere he died, and in his last moments on earth pleaded to God for mercy, and requested that he be buried with Christian rites. He had written more than 250 publications to refute the truth of Biblical claims, but came to the Rock of Ages for succor in his dying days.

I once knew a famous doctor, who said that men can live without religion, but it is hard for them to die without it. When the mist of departure hangs upon them and obscures the past and the future, they want a hand to hold on to; a guiding hand from someone who knows the way and is not afraid to walk in it.

Still the Word of God suffers more from the neglect of its friends than from the attacks of its enemies. Nothing is so sad as indifference of those who pretend to care for you, but do not. Ingratitude is sharper than a serpent's tooth, and its wounds more deadly. We need not worry so much about the ability of the Bible to defend itself among its avowed haters, what we need is to permit it to influence the lives of those who claim to love it.

It Pays to Advertise

The elders and deacons of the Churches in Saint Louis decided about three months ago to inaugurate an advertising campaign in the three metropolitan newspapers serving their area. The plan called for using each of the papers for a month, with one ad per week, that is in each Saturday edition. The average cost is about \$42 per month for four insertions of 28 agate lines each. That is a rather small ad of one column width, two inches long. Yet there are already reports filtering in of those who have seen the ads and have been led to

come to church by reason thereof. The cost of \$500 per year for this work will be small if even one soul is saved thereby. And of course when you make contact with one person that always leads to more.

The surprising thing to us is that in localities where free local church notes are invited and desired by printers of county or small town newspapers, many of our churches haven't got enough "get-up" to keep the work before the public. You'd think that we were ashamed someone would know we were keeping house for the Lord. Why can't we initiate a movement in Missouri to publicize the Church of Christ. Take advantage of every opportunity to put the truth before men and women, by telling them where it is being dispensed. We have almost one hundred churches in this state that are counted faithful congregations. Think what it would mean if we all went on a campaign of one year to make the public "Know The Local Church of Christ."

We exist as a service institution. If the Missouri Mission Messenger can assist you, let us do it. Come on, let's get busy!

MERE MONTHLY PREACHING

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save more souls, save more money, and strengthen the church more than they could ever do with a system which apes the Methodist circuit-riding of the days of Peter Cartwright.

Whatever may be said in favor of mere monthly preaching, here's what may be said against it. It's the most expensive, church-killing spiritual-deadening method of entertainment that was ever devised by human ingenuity to keep listless church members awake. If you don't think it is, I'll challenge your comparison of your congregation or any other that you know of employing the system, with any of three that I know of which do not have it—and I'll leave it up to you to decide which one is accomplishing the most in taking the gospel to the community and the world. A system as well as a man is known by the fruits that are borne! A business that is dying on your hands should be investigated. The Lord's system will work if you work it. We do not need more preachers seeking appointments with churches when pay a good stipend, but we do need more memberships that are faithful the days Christ is with us, as

well as the days when the preacher drops in. (Editor's note: The above was written by me, so do not blame Brother D. Austen Sommer with it! Thanks!)

Saint Louis Bible Reading

Starts January 3, 1944! Sessions each week day except Saturday from 9 a. m. to 2:30 p. m. Daily development classes from 2:30 to 3:30 p. m. Study session each Wednesday night. Lecture series on Thursday nights, Student Participation Program on Friday nights. Bible Reading continues six weeks. No tuition. Only cost will be room and board. Teacher: W. Carl Ketcherside. Subject: The entire New Testament. Make arrangements at once to attend. Here's your chance to study the entire New Testament with a capable instructor. For further information or to give notice of expectation of coming address: Robert Morrow, 7117 Manchester Avenue, Saint Louis, Missouri. Write AT ONCE.

Scriptural Elders

(Continued from Page 1)

that channel.

We are duty bound to employ the methods of the Saviour and to pattern our lives after His sinless existence. Of him it was said, "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement unto victory" (Matt. 12:19,20). Here we learn that Christ was not to use boisterousness or loud clamor. He did not engage in wrangling. The quiet and gentle methods of approach which he used are best described by the reference to the smoking flax and the bruised reed.

The papyrus was long, slender and frail. If it fell across the road and a wagon ran across it, or a man stepped upon it, the result was an injury to the plant. The least touch or violence or handling would then break it in twain. Smoking flax needed only the touch of a finger on that part which was smouldering to extinguish the tiny spark, and put out the fire. So gentle would be the method employed by the Saviour in his public preaching, so considerate, that it would not break or extinguish that crushed spirit with which he dealt; yet so effective would be the measures employed that he would send forth judgement unto victory.

I have seen men in the church,

even officers, who took offense at every little thing that was done or said. They seem to think that every word spoken is a personal thrust at them, and contains a barbed point directed at their lives. Such persons have a guilty conscience. They are possessed of a type of inferiority complex, and they attempt to sustain their ego, and call attention to themselves, by constantly taking up every little thing that is said, and demanding a settlement of it. They keep the church in a state of uproar by their personal antagonisms. Some of them act as if they would like to settle the misunderstandings which arise, by slapping some one in the face, or by calling them outside the house to engage in a disgraceful and unbecoming brawl. Such a person has no place in an office of the church. He is too little and the office is too big; he is too un consecrated and the office is too sacred; he is full of too much of the spirit of the evil one to occupy an office created by the Holy Spirit.

Once I knew of a congregation where a crucial situation arose as a result of the intermarriage of two of the leaders' families. It had no place in the church, but the disagreement on the outside was projected into the services publicly, inasmuch that when one of the men had charge, he would not call upon the other one to take part, and vice versa. Eventually, after they had not spoken to each other for months, they met in the road, and after an exchange of hostile words, they decided that the dust of that country road would provide a good cushion in which to settle the affair. So the two of them wallowed, pummeled and belabored each other until both were virtually exhausted. It settled nothing except that always there would be a deep-seated animosity between them. Both of them quit the church, and it finally died a natural death in the community, the gospel no longer being effective over the hearts of others, when it could not even control the bodies of the leaders. Countless souls will be lost in the judgement because of the childish actions of two men who grew up in body but never in mentality.

The New Testament says, "See that none render evil to any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." Careful consideration of that verse, and application of it to our lives would guarantee a perpetuity of our influence as children of God.