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"CHILDHAVEN"

By John T. Lewis

P R E F A C E

Institutionalism is the bane of the church today and has always been. The lust for power and authority to dominate is a human element that must always be watched in the church. Paul warned against this when he said, "the mystery of lawlessness doth already work." This craving for power upon the part of some church leaders, and the abject connivance upon the part of others to their diabolical aspirations led the apostolic church into the great apostasy out of which came the Roman Catholic hierarchy that kept the Bible from the masses, destroyed the autonomy of the local congregations, and struck the death knell to religious freedom for a thousand years, and a part of two or three continents was saturated with the blood of martyrs before the word of God was restored to those who wanted it. This power was not obtained at once; but like creeping paralysis upon the human body, it was gradual and almost unnoticed till the spiritual body of Christ became impotent, and unable to carry on its scriptural functions.

"Boniface III., who was Pope for only ten months in the year 607, was the first to whom the title of Universal Bishop of Christendom was conceded by the Greek Emperor (Phocas)," himself a murderer and usurper. Thus, by a gradual process, it took the New Testament church more than five hundred years, after the close of the apostolic age, to completely lose its identity and merge into the most corrupt and tyrannical religio-political institution that ever blotched the pages of history.

Remember what institutionalism did for the Nineteenth Century Restoration, the greatest move for Christian unity since the days of the apostles. The spirit of iniquity is still fermenting and permeating that movement. Brethren I am afraid of these institutions, separate and apart from the church, organized by uninspired men to do the work that God has committed to the local congregations, and to individual Christians.

John T. Lewis.

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CHAPTER ONE

Two or three years ago three brethren in Montgomery, Alabama, started a move to raise three hundred thousand dollars to build an Orphan Home in Alabama. Soon others were interested in the project, and they established headquarters here in Birmingham. Brother T. F. Gossett, one of the deacons in Central Church, became the head money raiser; Brother Dan P. Barber, of the West End congregation, became their legal counselor; and Brother Gus Nichols, of Jasper, Alabama, became their Spiritual Advisor, and defender. This would seem to give the institution a legal standing in the community, and a guarantee to the churches of its scripturalness. Yet the move was not started by any congregation, it is not sponsored (?) by any congregation, therefore it is an institution separate and apart from the church, the existence of which has neither precept nor example in the New Testament.

Having lived and labored, with the church in Birmingham for more than 43 years, I knew if I did not take part in the movement, some would wonder why, and I would be accused by the promoters of not believing in caring for orphans. So when Brother Gossett called me, and invited me to attend one of their meetings, I told him I would, if I would be allowed to make a statement. He assured me that I would be. I told the brethren there assembled that I knew of no congregation in Montgomery that had more orphans than they could care for, and if they did, I was sure the other congregations would help them in the **emergency** that had come upon them. That was also true about Birmingham. I told them we could take three hundred thousand dollars and establish congregations in scores of the cities and towns in Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia where the gospel had never been preached, and thus be able to reach thousands of children with the gospel, where they would have access to two hundred at the most in **“Childhaven.”** That their institution would become a permanent drain on the churches, whereas the congregations thus established would become self-supporting, care for the orphans in their midst, and help establish churches in regions beyond them.

Brother Nichols replied to me; but instead of showing the

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fallacy, and unscripturalness in my position, he charged me of being inconsistent, “because I supported ‘our’ schools and colleges; but objected to the Orphan Home.” I now ask the reader to consider my position and “inconsistency.” God Almighty, in his “eternal purpose,” did not make it the duty of the church to build schools and colleges; but the following scriptures show that he did make it the duty of the church to carry the gospel to the world: Mark 16:15,16; Ephesians 3:10,11; 2 Corinthians 10:14-18; Philippians 4:15-20; and this was done in the apostolic age without the inventions and devices of men, Colossians 1:23. The following scriptures show that God has ordained that the church should not only care for its widows and orphans; but all the needy in the church, and they show how it was done in the apostolic age. Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 2:43-47; Acts 6:1-7; Acts 9:36-41; Acts 11:27-30; 2 Corinthians 8:1-14; 2 Corinthians 9:1-11; 1 Timothy 5:1-16; and James 1:27. No “Childhaven” in these scriptures, as an institution separate and apart from the church, to do the work that God has committed to the church.

The money that Christians have above what they contribute on the first day of the week, is theirs to do what they please with, Acts 5:1-11. Therefore, if they want to build schools and colleges where their children can be educated away from the bane, and immoral influences of worldly institutions, that is their business, and if they wanted to solicit other individual Christians to help them, that would be their business, and it would be the other fellow’s business as to whether he contributed or not; but it would neither be their **right** nor their duty to ask churches to put their schools or colleges in their budgets. Will Brother Gus Nichols say the same about “Childhaven”? If not, let him point out my inconsistency.

It is possible that my statement about “the bane, and immoral influences of worldly institutions,” may rile the righteous indignation of some of my conscientious brethren who are sending their children to these worldly institutions, instead of sending them to schools run by Christians, when it is possible. For their information, I publish the following from Associated Press:

‘Teen-Agers’ All-Night Parties, Girls In Nude Arouse Resort

“LAVALLETTE, N. J. July 20—

(P)—Drunk and disorderly teen-agers have been “raising holy hell” with parades of naked girls and all-night beach parties topping the list of “immoral” activities. Mayor William Chandler charges.

The mayor said yesterday that close to 1,000 boys and girls, 16 to 18 years old, invade this tiny beach resort each Summer, renting houses and staging parties “completely without morals and without restraint.”

Chandler said one large house was rented this year by a high school fraternity group and a sorority, which were supposed to occupy separate floors. He said noises at the house prompted him

to stop in. There he found a “brazen parade” of naked girls heading for the shower room, in full view of the boys.

Stories of drunken and indecent beach parties were reported by night patrolman David Bendy.

Some of the girls’ groups bring 21 or 22-year-olds along as chaperones, Chandler said, but they “are worse than the kids themselves.”

“Everybody is pretty upset about it,” Chandler said.

He said he plans to propose ordinances at an August council meeting that would provide a parent of one of the youngsters must be present as chaperone at each cottage.”

The mayor may pass ordinances to stop those “Drunken, Nude, Teen-Agers” from parading in the public streets; but you cannot legislate morals in “Teen-Agers,” living under such environments. When I was in school the President, or Superintendent, of the school had the responsibility of running the school, and his voice was final in dealing with the incorrigible, and unruly students; but I have been out of school forty-four years, and they tell me now that the disciplinary measures are left to student councils, and the chances are if the President intruded in such matters he would be burned in effigy, and kicked out of his position. Since “our” colleges are aping worldly institutions in disciplinary matters, as well as other things, you need not be surprised to hear of such antics happening in

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them. I have thus written about schools and colleges in general, and “ours” in particular, that you may judge my inconsistency for yourself.

A college and “Childhaven” may have identically the same kind of organization; but the college is operating in the field of education, while “Childhaven,” as an institution separate and apart from the church, proposes to take over, and do a work that God has committed to the church. Is there a difference? Ask Brother Gus Nichols.

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CHAPTER TWO

Instead of Brother Nichols considering my position, in these matters, as worthy of respect and consideration, he has been making speeches over the country stigmatizing all gospel preachers who believe as I do in these matters at "Somerrites," "hobby riders," etc. He has boasted of lifting the churches in Alabama out of many old ruts, since he began preaching, and that he would lift them out of this one. Some modesty, eh?

In 1906 or 7, I was holding a meeting in the Baptist meeting house, in Calera, Alabama, a Methodist preacher there told the Baptists if they let me preach in their church I would unchurch the last one of them and take their house. He said: "I know that fellow, he came from Nashville, and they all run in **one old rut** and you cannot throw them out." If that Methodist preacher were living today he could not say that; because somebody, during the last third of a century, has lifted many of the churches out of that "one old rut," and they are hopelessly skidding back toward the denominational swamps from which the "Pioneers" of the Nineteenth Century lifted the church, at great personal sacrifices, and in spite of the ridicule, insults, and calumny heaped upon them by the clergy of that day.

About the only difference between some of our large churches today and the digressives is the use of mechanical instruments in the worship. Like the Digressives, and other denominational churches, along with the fraternal and social organization of the country, we are building kitchens, and dining rooms, in connection with our meeting houses, where we can meet, have our ash trays on our tables, feast, (not on spiritual food) smoke, joke and have a good time. We are building fellowship halls where we can have political rallies, and other non-religious meetings. I cannot understand why brethren would want such places connected with the church, because I am sure that most of those who want such things are members of some human organization that already have such places to meet. We are also building wedding chapels, where the instruments are kept for wedding occasions — ad infinitum.

Will Brother Gus Nichols tell you where we go from here? We "Somerrites" (?) know; but if we told you, you would not believe us. Fifty years ago some loyal (?) preachers were arguing that it was not wrong to have the organ in the Sunday School. Where are those organs today? and where do you

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think our wedding organs will be fifty years hence? Human nature never changes; but history repeats itself.

Brother Gus Nichols, and other Trustees of “Childhaven” have been my friends of long standing, and I have no bitterness, nor rancor in my heart toward any member of the board; but I do not believe their zeal is according to knowledge in this matter. They are trying to fasten upon the churches in Alabama a permanent, expensive, unnecessary, and unscriptural institution — “Childhaven.” I think it is about time for the church to wake up to the danger of a few brethren around over the country appointing themselves into committees, and establishing institutions separate and apart from the church, to do the work of the church, and then try to make all the churches financially responsible for the support of their project. I do not believe any set of brethren, or churches have any right, scripturally or otherwise, to start something they cannot support, and this does not mean that an emergency may not come upon the church, or a community that would call for the aid of other churches during the emergency. But I do not think it would take a Solomon to see the difference in the two calls.

What does “Childhaven” plan to do? Do they plan to take care of all the children that are left orphans in the churches of Alabama, or do they plan to fill the home with orphans (?) from every source? During the lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College, in January 1950, Brother Gus Nichols asked the question: “What are we going to do with all the illegitimate children born in the world?” If God Almighty has placed upon the church the duty of caring for “all the illegitimate children born in the world,” he has placed upon the church an impossible burden, and this I do not believe. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation “**one million illegitimate** children are born annually in the United States.” These children are not orphans in the New Testament sense; but bastards, and I do not believe that bastardy should be encouraged by urging the church to care for its progeny. Such orphans (?) are wards of the State, and not the church, and instead of the state trying to conceal the identity of these mothers, they should be forced to keep their babies, and their renegade fathers should be made to provide for them. Of course this might put a double burden upon some respectable (?) fathers, who may have decent families; but instead of encouraging such whoremongers, it would have a deterring affect upon the scoundrels.

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Let us forget the scripturalness, or unscripturalness of this project, and take a common sense view of it. The first cost of the physical properties was fifty thousand dollars, cheap as a Real Estate or business proposition; but the buildings have not been used as an orphanage for more than twenty years. Therefore to recondition the buildings, to redecorate, and furnish the fifty-two rooms, repair the barns, the swimming pool, and other out houses, to buy the dairy herd to furnish milk for the orphans, to buy tractors, trucks, and other necessary machinery to operate a farm of 349 acres, will be far more than the original cost. Then if the home is ever filled with orphans it will take around fifty thousand dollars a year to run it. — and where will the money come from?

If the home were filled today with children from one to ten years old, it would be at least six or seven years before there could be a vacancy for another child, unless there was a death in the home. Who would take care of those left as orphans, in Alabama, during those years? “Childhaven” might tell you every week about the orphans knocking at their door, and it might cause you to send them more money: but that would not open the door to the orphans. Maybe there is where the “Somerites” could operate. Therefore “Childhaven” is an unscriptural institution, inadequate to care for all the orphans in the territory it claims to represent, and will be a perpetual financial liability fastened upon the churches by a few well-meaning brethren who want to do something, and do not know how to do it scripturally.

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CHAPTER THREE

Brother J. P. White, one of the deacons in Central Church here in Birmingham, has recently sent out a mimeographed circular letter, to some elders, and some preachers, around over the country purporting to be in defense of "Childhaven." Brother Earlie T. Williams, an elder in Poplar Street Church, Florence, Alabama, has answered him. The questions and answers appeared in the Gospel Guardian, Dec. 21, 1950. I think Brother Williams did a good job in his answers; but just why Brother White, since he is not on the Board of Directors of "Childhaven," thought it necessary for him to come to the defense of the institution, with his innuendoes, in the form of questions, I do not know.

When I read the questions in The Gospel Guardian I called one of the elders of Central Church and asked him if the questions represented Central Church, he said he had never heard of the questions before, and he doubted if the other elders had. Question 12: "Is it not a fact that a large percent of orphans taken into homes were taken for servants?" I will let those who have adopted children answer that one. Of course Brother White's answer would be, send the orphans to "Childhaven" whence they cannot be adopted into servitude. Since Brother White is a deacon in Central Church here in Birmingham, some might conclude that Central is not taking care of its needy. I think that conclusion would do Central an injustice, because I think I know that Central looks after its needy, and in the scriptural way.

We will now study the scriptures that I referred to in my first article. In 1st Timothy 5:1-16, we read:

"Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren: 2 the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity. 3 Honor widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 These things also command, that they may be without reproach. 8 But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own house-

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hold, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. 9 Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work. 11 But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry: 12 having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge. 13 And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house: and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14 I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling: 15 for already some are turned aside after Satan. 16 If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.”

In verses 1, 2, in the above scripture, Paul tells us the relationship of church members, and how the younger members should respect, and treat the older members, and how the younger members should consider, and deal with each other. In verses 3-16, he shows that when a widow is left with children they do not automatically become objects of charity, or wards of the church, they become such only when they have no relatives to care for them. You can go to “our” old folk, and orphans homes, and I venture to say you would find only a few that have no relatives that could and should be caring for them.

I came up the hard way. My father was a renter all of his married life, he and my mother had ten children, nine boys and one girl. At the end of the year, some corn in the crib, meat and lard in the smoke house, and enough money to get the children a pair of shoes around, my father was happy. My mother sewed some in those days, she would get 30 cents for making a pair of jeans pants for men, the butter, chickens, and eggs she sold took care of the grocery bills. A calf, a pig, or something my father had to sell supplied the children with what clothes they had.

It was a hard year in 1893. I was 17 years old, and my father hired me out for \$10.00 per month, through crop time, that is from March till August, to help run the expenses at

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home. Labor on the farm in those days worked 15 to 16 hours a day.

My father died in 1901, and left my mother to carry on the best she could. The youngest boy was around 6 or 7 years old when my father died. Four of the boys were grown. If some well-meaning person had suggested a “Childhaven” for some of the youngest children, he would have had, not only my mother, but four grown brothers to reckon with. We were poor but we had a sense of honor. My mother continued to rent land, and carried on with the children at home until 1907, when one of the older boys bought a farm, and my mother moved to it, and that was her home as long as she lived, she lived a widow for 37 years, and died in April 1938. She was never embarrassed, or cramped, in her old age by living in the home of someone else, all who lived there, **lived with her.**

My brother that bought the farm soon married, another brother and I took it over, and when he married, I took over the farm and managed to keep the interest paid on the mortgage as long as our mother lived. When the boys all married and moved out, I kept a kinsman hired to run the farm, and stay with my mother. My youngest brother was gassed in World War I, and he was never strong after that, when he came home he married and had three children. He died in the Veteran's Hospital, Memphis, Tenn., when his youngest child was a baby. When he died I did not tell his wife that she should put her children in an orphan home, get her a job, or go back to her people in Mississippi. I told her if she would stay with my mother, as long as I had a piece of bread they would have some, she stayed. “Betsy,” the baby, and my mother were almost as close as the Siamese twins, nothing gave my mother more pleasure than to have Betsy sit on the arm of her chair, to talk to her, and crawl up, hug her neck, and kiss her. Of course the other children loved their grandma too. Once when my mother was away on a visit, Venia, their mother, had to punish the girls for something, and when my mother came back, Doris, the other girl, met her at the gate and said: “Grandma you must not go away any more, we need you.” During all the years that Venia, and the children lived with my mother I never heard of either one ever giving my mother a cross word.

When our mother died, and another brother moved back to run the farm, I put a mortgage on our home, borrowed

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money and built a house for Venia and the children. I have hogs killed every year, and meat and lard put in the smoke house for them. Thus Venia was able to keep her children, they finished grammar school at Almaville, and high school in Murfreesboro. When they finished high school, Milton, the oldest child, was drafted in World War II, and while in the service he married in Baltimore, Md., lives there, and is rearing a family of his own. When Doris, the oldest girl finished high school, she worked a year at the air base in Smyrna, Tenn. She saved enough, with the work she did at college, to put her through her first year at David Lipscomb College. I then helped her till she finished college. She is now in her second year teaching high school, she has a car and drives from home each day. Betsy is now in her third year at David Lipscomb College, when she finishes, they will all be able to care for themselves, and the emergency will be over with us. I suppose all the other boys were as interested in Venia and the children as Mrs. Lewis and I; but they had families of their own, and our home was never blessed with children, so that responsibility became a pleasure to us, and we have been paid a thousand times by the love and respect the girls have for us, and by the fact that they are Christians and love the Word of God.

During all these years, with these responsibilities on me, I never ran to the church, told them that I had to provide a home for my mother, or provide for my brother's family, and I needed more money. That was my business, and not that of the church, and therefore the church knew nothing about these things. I am telling them now, only because I have heard of some of the "Childhaven" advocates asking: "How many children did he ever adopt?" This is my understanding of the teaching of Paul, in 1st Timothy 5:3-16. Is this "Somerville" **foam**? Borrow Brother Gus Nichols' glasses and see if you can see "Childhaven" in these verses.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Before a surveyor can survey anything, he must first establish a corner, to be known as **the beginning**. Therefore when we are studying the work of the church, we should begin at **the beginning**.

When Peter returned to Jerusalem after the conversion of Cornelius, and his house, he had to explain to the other apostles why he had preached the gospel to the Gentiles, and in Acts 11:15, he said: “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning.” We know that Peter was not speaking of **the beginning** of creation; he was not speaking of **the beginning** of the Jewish age; he was speaking of **the beginning** of the church, and the spiritual reign of Christ. The Holy Spirit fell on the apostles, in the City of Jerusalem, on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. Therefore, the City of Jerusalem was the place, and the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ was the day of **the beginning** of the church, and the spiritual reign of Christ on earth.

The greatest emergency that ever came upon the church, came upon the Jerusalem Church, at **the beginning**. On Pentecost “there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. They had come to Jerusalem to attend the great annual Pentecostial feast, and on that day about three thousand were converted, and added to the church. Evidently the most of them remained in Jerusalem after their conversion, and providing for them brought the great emergency upon the church.

The following scriptures show how the church met the issue. Acts 2:43-47, we read:

“And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. 46 And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.”

In Acts 4:32-37, we read again.

“32 And the multitude of them that believed were of

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one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.

36 And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, 37 having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.”

Can you see an old preachers home, an old ladies home, or “Childhaven” in the above scriptures? If you cannot, then you are a “Somerite,” a “hobby rider,” and should be put in the “one cup” group, according to Brother Gus Nichols.

There were hypocrites and liars in the church “at the beginning,” just as there are hypocrites and liars in the church today; but that did not prove the church was wrong in that day, neither does it prove that the church is wrong today. In Acts 5:1-11, we have the case of Ananias and Sapphira, their sudden, and untimely end, as God stamped his disapproval upon hypocrites and liars in the church “at the beginning.” Hypocrites and liars in the church today may not meet such a shocking and disgraceful end as Ananias and Sapphira; but their ultimate end will be the same. Read Revelations 21:8.

It was but natural where so many people were eating out of the same trough, as it were, that there would be complaints. Those complaints came up in the church “at the beginning,” and in Acts 6:1-7, we have the way the apostles handled that situation. Read the record:

6 “Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. 2 And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the

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whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch: 6 whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them.

7 And the word of God increased: and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

Thus you have the pattern of the Jerusalem Church caring not only for their orphans, but for all the needy in the church, during an unparalleled emergency, and when the emergency was over there was not a “huge thing,” as that at Cullman, fastened, as a leech, upon the church. Therefore, I do not think that Brother Gus Nichols and Brother J. P. White should be so reckless with the epithets that they are hurling at the “Somerites” because the stupid things cannot see the superintendent, and Board of Directors of “Childhaven” in the above scriptures. However, I know that innuendoes, misrepresentations, epithets, and ridicule are the only weapons of defense that error has.

I have been asked by women in the church: “What can we do?” I know when they ask the question they are wanting to do something that God has not authorized them to do. The following scriptures tell them what they can do, and how to do it. In Acts 9:36-39, we read:

36 “Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. 37 And it came to pass in those days that she fell sick, and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. 38 And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, entreating him, Delay not to come on unto us. 39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.”

The world would have never known of the “good works and almsdeeds of Dorcas if the widows she had helped, while she was with them, had not wept and told the story after she was dead. If you spend all the spare time and money you have helping “Childhaven,” how many widows and orphans do you

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suppose will weep at your passing, or will know that you ever lived? A few Christian women, scattered over the State of Alabama, full of “good works and almsdeeds,” with that personal touch of sympathy that Dorcas had, would do more for New Testament Christianity than all the ladies’ Bible classes in the state would do sewing for the orphans in “Childhaven.”

The ladies in the Digressive Church had to have the ladies’ aid societies before they could do anything, and aping them, the women of the church today, have to have the ladies Bible classes before they can do anything. Therefore “we” are building kitchens, dining rooms, and sewing rooms, in connection with our meeting houses, where the ladies can meet, eat, gossip, and sew for the widows and orphans. During World War II, I had a letter from a good sister asking me if I thought it would be wrong for their class to sew for the Red Cross. I wrote and asked her why under the sun they could not sew as individuals, and not as a Bible class. I never heard whether they sewed or did not sew.

In James 1:27, we read:

27 “Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”

“To keep oneself unspotted from the world” sounds like “Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father” is an individual affair, as was practiced by Dorcas; but I cannot see any authority, in the verse, for putting “Childhaven” in “your budget.” Read the following:

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P. O. BOX 142
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

November 14th, 1950

Ave. E. & 30th St. Church of Christ
Ensley, Alabama

Dear Brethren:

In James 1:27 we learn that pure and undefiled religion before God, is to “Visit the Orphans.” Now the word visit in its full meaning means more than just going to see them, or being in sympathy with them. It means to take them under your care, under your oversight. This brethren, is practicing

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Christianity. Not just a form of it.

As a Christian we are not measuring up to the STANDARD if we fail to take part in this work.

We are facing a new year. As you make outt your budget for the year 1951-won't you please remember the Orphans.”

I accept what the writer of the above letter said about James 1:27; but to fit his appeal, it would have to read: “Send the orphans to “Childhaven” and you will not have to worry about the care and oversight of them, all you will have to do is to put “Childhaven” in **your budget.**”

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CHAPTER FIVE

In Acts 11:27-30, we read of another emergency that came upon the disciples in Judea:

27 “Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. 29 And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea: 30 which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.”

If there were a board of directors and a superintendent of anything, operating in the apostolic age trying to do the work that God committed to the church, the New Testament writers ignored them, and recognized only the elders. I am one hundred percent for the New Testament way of caring for the needy in the church, if that is Somerism, then I am a Somerite. This is the “one old rut” that I have been in since August 17, 1898, when I obeyed the gospel, and it is the “one old rut” that I have been trying to get other responsible beings in since August 10, 1902 when I began my first meeting at Elkin school house in Cannon County, Tennessee. But if Brother Nichols or Brother J. P. White will show me the pattern, in the New Testament, by which they are building “Childhaven”, they will not have to lift me out of that “one old rut,” I will jump out and I will visit every congregation in Alabama that will allow me to speak and urge them to support “Childhaven.”

In the directors' meeting, that I attended, Brother Ralph Whorton, one of the original promoters of the “Childhaven” idea referred to a statement that Christ made in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, and said he was sure Christ meant to help all people, I told him He did not, and if he could not quote the passage I would. Christ said: “Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, **even** the least, ye did it unto me.”

Brother Gus Nichols had an illuminating article about “Childhaven” in the Gospel Advocate January 4, 1951. It was a report, and an appeal for help. Read it:

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ALREADY

“Friends of orphan children, by their liberal and regular contributions, have made it possible to buy the old I.O.O.F.

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Orphan Home property at Cullman, Alabama, consisting of 359 acres of good land, and over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of buildings. All of this was purchased for only fifty thousand dollars. By much hard work and self-denials this money has been raised and the property is paid for. We have a few thousand dollars above this, but not enough to get the home ready for the reception of children.

WHAT IS BEING DONE NOW

“It must be kept in mind that the Independent Order of Odd Fellows had ceased to use this property several years ago, and that thousands of dollars are needed for repairs and equipment at once. A modern heating plant, with boiler and stoker, is being installed at a cost of about \$9,000.00. Carpenter work and plastering will cost about \$7,000.00; electric work and materials about \$3,000.00. Plumbing and fixtures will cost around \$6,000.00. **THIS WORK IS BEING DONE, AND MUST BE FINISHED BY THE LIBERAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE IN WHOSE HEARTS THE MILK OF HUMAN KINDNESS MAY BE FOUND. LET US RAISE THIS MONEY IN THE NEXT THIRTY DAYS!**”

HOW IT CAN BE DONE

We have thousands of brethren who could give **ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH**. (Contributions would be deducted from income taxes.) Many are able to give **FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH TO THIS GOOD WORK**. **THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH COULD GIVE \$25, or \$50, or \$100 each**. Finally, almost every one of us could give \$1, or \$5, or \$10 or more. Will you do what you can, and do it now? Every dollar received goes right into the home to prepare and care for homeless children. Don't you want the joy that comes from having a part in a good work like this? Is not the best investment made in boys and girls, rather than in lifeless stocks and bonds?”

The implication in the above would seem to be that if you are not contributing to “Childhaven” **The Milk of Human Kindness**” is not in your heart. It is the characteristic of Brother Nichols to quote lots of scripture in his preaching, and writing. The following is the scriptures he gives to support his plea for “Childhaven.” We will study the passages in their context and see what they prove. Read them. Brother Nichols says:

“ **‘REMEMBER THE POOR’** ”

“Jesus said, **‘For ye have the poor with you always, and**

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whensoever ye will ye may do them good.’ (Mk. 14-7) Paul said, ‘Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward (Zealous) to do.’ (Gal. 2: 10.) It is easy to forget the poor. Job denied that he had eaten his food ‘Alone, and the FATHERLESS hath not eaten thereof.’ (Job 31: 17.) He said, he had not, ‘Seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering.’ (v. 19.) ‘WHOSO STOPPETH HIS EARS AT THE CRY OF THE POOR, HE ALSO SHALL CRY HIMSELF, BUT SHALL NOT BE HEARD.’ (Prov. 21:13.) We are commanded to ‘Visit the FATHERLESS,’ (Jas. 1:27), which means we must help them when in need. ‘Defend the poor and fatherless.’ (Psa. 82:3.) ‘He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.’ (Prov. 14:21.) ‘He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.’ (Prov. 19:17.) ‘The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth.’ (Psa. 37:21.) ‘Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.’ (Psa. 41:1.) ‘A good man sheweth favor.’ (Psa. 112:5.) ‘He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.’ (Prov. 28:27.) ‘Plead the cause of the poor and needy.’ (Prov. 31:9) ‘Relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.’ (Isa. 1:17.) ‘Give to the poor.’ (Matt. 19:21.) ‘Give alms of such things as ye have.’ (Lk. 11:41.) ‘Half of my goods I give to the poor.’ (Lk. 19:8.) ‘Ye ought to support the weak.’ (Acts 20:35.) ‘Give to him that needeth.’ (Eph. 4:28.) ‘As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.’ (Gal. 6: 10.) ‘Be ready to every good work.’ (Titus 3:1.)

Send your contribution to CHILDHAVEN, P. O. Box 142, Birmingham, Alabama.”

“(Gus Nichols)”

You can take a passage of scripture out of its setting and prove anything. The first scripture Brother Nichols referred to was Mark 14:7. Now read the context Mark 14:3-7:

3 “And while he was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster cruse of ointment of pure nard very costly; and she brake the cruse, and poured it over his head. 4 But there were some that had indignation among themselves, saying, To what purpose hath this waste of the ointment been made? 5 For this ointment might have been sold for above three hundred shillings, and given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

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6 But Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. 7 For ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye can do them good: but me ye have not always.”

Can you see anything that looks like “Childhaven,” or “The Milk of Human Kindness” in this passage of scripture? Mark does not tell us the name of the woman, nor the one that objected; but John does. We read John 12:3-8:

3 “Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, that should betray him, saith, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred shillings, and given to the poor? 6 Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein. 7 Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying. 8 For the poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always.”

It seems to me that Judas Iscariot had about squeezed all “The Milk of Human Kindness” out of this example. At least we know that Judas did not want the money to build an orphan home in Jerusalem.

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CHAPTER SIX

In Acts 15:1-35, we have the record of the council, held in Jerusalem, to settle the question of circumcision that the Judaizers had introduced in the church at Antioch while Paul and Barnabas were away on their first journey. In Galatians 2:1-10 Paul was telling of his visit to Jerusalem, and his experience in the council. We read:

2 “Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. **2** And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. **3** But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: **4** and that because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: **5** to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. **6** But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man’s person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: **7** but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision **8** (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles); **9** and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; **10** only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.”

The next verse that Brother Nichols referred to to sustain his appeal for “Childhaven” was verse 10 of the above scripture. I would not be true to myself, nor to God, if I did not try to understand his word. But I cannot see any authority in that verse for establishing a permanent, expensive institution with its board of directors and superintendent, separate and apart from the church, to do the work God has committed to the church, and I do not believe that God will condemn me if I do

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not read the idea into the verse.

The next scripture that Brother Nichols refers to is Job 31:17, and 19. We do not know when Job lived; but evidently in the Patriarchial age, possibly about six hundred years after the flood, when the descendants of Abraham were nothing more than a nomadic tribe wandering over the country. Therefore I am sure that Job never heard of, or even dreamed of an institution like “Childhaven.” I cannot see therefore how anything he said could start “The Milk of Human Kindness in your heart” flowing toward “Childhaven.” Brother Nichols then quotes Prov. 21:13:

13 “Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, He also shall cry, but shall not be heard.”

If Brother Nichols thinks that “the poor” in this verse refers only to orphans, and you have to build an institution like “Childhaven” to put them, in order to hear their cry, then I can understand why he quoted the verse; but I do not believe it refers only to orphans, neither do I believe you have to build an institution like “Childhaven” to put them in to hear their cry.

Brother Nichols refers next to James 1:27, but I have already told you what I believe about that verse. He then quotes part of verse 3 of Psalms 82, “Defend (Judge) the poor and fatherless.” I believe this scripture; but I do not believe you have to build a pen to put them in to “Defend them.” Brother Nichols either quotes or refers to fifteen more passages of scripture, in his short article, besides the ones I have examined, but there is not a germ in either passage that would sprout the “Childhaven” idea in a thousand years. Brother Nichols is a strong and frequent debater with the Church of God (?) or some sanctified (?) preachers who will quote or refer to a conglomeration of scriptures that have absolutely no bearing on what they are trying to prove: but their members will think they have proven their doctrine by the scriptures. In his defense of “Childhaven” Brother Nichols has adopted their technique, he quotes or refers to a great many passages of scriptures, both from the Old and New Testaments, and no doubt but that the board of directors thinks he has proven his arguments (?) by the Bible.

When I am preaching or talking to Methodists or Presbyterians, on the subject of baptism, I never hesitate to tell them that there is not an honest person on earth that can take

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the New Testament read every verse in it that says anything about baptism and get an idea of sprinkling for baptism.

So I say to Brother Nichols, and to the other members of the board of directors of “Childhaven,” and also to Brother J. P. White, deacon of Central Church, without fear of successful contradiction, that there is not an honest man living that can take the New Testament, read every verse in it that says anything about helping the needy, and how it was done in the apostolic age, and get an idea of an institution like “Childhaven” to care for the needy. Now I hope that some little peanut will not hop up and say, Brother Lewis has accused the Methodists, Presbyterians, the board of directors of “Childhaven,” and Brother J. P. White, deacon of Central Church, of not being honest. I have accused them of nothing, but have simply stated facts.

You know Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia, and told them he was going to visit them and he wanted them to take up a collection to help build an orphanage in Jerusalem to take care of all the orphans throughout Judea, to keep from having to put them in a denominational home. Then he wanted them to put the home in their budget. **Or did he?** Well we will go to the New Testament and see. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-3, we read:

16 “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. 3 And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: 4 and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.”

What was Paul urging this collection for? Was it to buy a large farm near Jerusalem, with buildings, barns, and a swimming pool to be fitted up for an orphanage to put the orphans throughout Judea in, and to be supported perpetually by the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia? Or was he urging a contribution to help the needy through an emergency that had come upon the churches in Judea, with the understanding that those churches might help them through an emergency in the future? In 2 Corinthians 8:13, 14, Paul referring to the same contribution says:

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13 “For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; 14 but by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality.”

The equality that Paul speaks of is brought about by churches and individual Christians supplying, out of their abundance, the wants of those in need, whereas in the future the rule might be working in reverse. For instance if I am in want, today, and you are not, you supply my need, and if you are in need tomorrow and I am not, I will supply your wants. These conditions will always exist in the church, and it is easy to understand, “that there may be equality,” as Paul teaches. But there is absolutely no justification in God’s word for fastening a permanent, expensive institution upon the church.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

We are studying the teaching of the New Testament on the subject of the church caring for its needy. If there is a precept, an example, or a necessary inference in the New Testament, from which you can deduce the “Childhaven” idea, we want to find it, and that will be the end of all controversy, on that subject, so far as I am concerned.

But you cannot learn the teaching of the New Testament on this subject by quoting or referring to a lot of passages of scripture that mention the needy, and leave the reader to guess that building an institution like “Childhaven,” separate and apart from the church, with a board of directors selected by a self-appointed committee, from congregations scattered over the country, and then the board selecting a superintendent to have charge of the home and the oversight of the orphans put therein, was the way it was done in the apostolic age. At least that is not my way of teaching the truth on the subject. In 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, we read:

8 “Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; 2 how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 3 For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, 4 beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: 5 and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God. 6 Insomuch that we exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also. 7 But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us see that you abound in this grace also. 8 I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love. 9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich. 10 And herein I give my judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to will. 11 But now complete the doing also; that

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as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability. 12 For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not. 13 For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; 14 but by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality: 15 as it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack.”

Paul was here speaking of the contribution he was gathering from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, principally made up of Gentiles, to relieve the wants of their Jewish brethren in Judea. This should have gone a long way toward amalgamating those two almost incompatible elements in the church — Jew and Gentile.

Paul called the contribution given by the churches in Macedonia “the grace of God.” Although they were in “deep poverty” themselves, and gave “beyond their power,” yet what they did give was by the grace or favor of God. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, Paul says:

19 “Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; 20 for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.”

If we belong to the Lord, everything we have is his and it is only committed to our trust while we live.

In 1 Peter 1:3-5, we read:

3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Therefore the only inheritance that the Christian has that is worth while is “reserved in heaven” to be revealed at the judgment. All earthly inheritance is corruptible, it can be defiled, and may fade away over night.

In his parable of the Unrighteous Steward, Jesus said, in Luke 16:9-13:

9 “And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends by

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means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles. 10 He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's who will give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

Jesus here calls money “the mammon of unrighteousness” and tells us the use we can make of it, so when it fails us, and that will be at death, that the angels will waft our spirits away into “the eternal tabernacles.” In verses 22, 23, of the same chapter, Jesus said:

22 “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. 23 And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

Paul writing along the same line, in 1 Timothy 6:6-10, said:

6 “But godliness with contentment is great gain: 7 for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; 8 but having food and covering we shall be therewith content. 9 But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

I have quoted these scriptures to show that whatever we possess of this world's goods, whether it be little or much, is that which God has committed to our trust, and for our need, and the use we make of it will determine our destiny at the last day.

Therefore, Paul called what the churches in Macedonia, in “their deep poverty,” had given, “the grace of God.” So whatever we do toward the support of the gospel, or helping the needy, must be considered “the grace of God,” that is, it

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is by God's grace or favor that we are able to do it. Paul set before the church at Corinth two great motives to move them to liberality in their contribution for the saints in Judea. First the liberality of the poor saints in Macedonia, second the great sacrifice that Christ had made for them.

If it was all right for Paul to tell the church at Corinth what the poor churches in Macedonia had done to move it to liberality, what would be wrong in telling the church today, that was not measuring up to its duties, what other churches made up of poor people, were doing for the express purpose of moving it to liberality? We learn that the church at Corinth had made a promise, and a beginning, the year before to make a contribution to the saints in Judea, and they had made that promise known to Paul, and he was urging them to complete the doing out of their ability. If it was all right for the church at Corinth to promise a year ahead, and if it was all right for Paul to urge them to fulfill their promise, as he did, what would be wrong in getting the church today to make a promise, if there was a need for it, and then urge them to fulfill it? What is true of the church would be true of the individual Christian in such matters.

The difference between the churches in Macedonia and the church at Corinth, was, the churches of Macedonia were joyfully making their contribution out of their "deep poverty," and Paul was urging the church at Corinth to make a contribution and fulfill their promise out of their "ability." Would it be hard to find conditions like that in the church today?

We are studying the eighth chapter of second Corinthians, and I have quoted, and commented on verses 13-15, in a previous article; but I quote them again because they contain the milk in the cocoanut. "For I say not **this** that others may be eased **and** ye distressed; but by equality: your abundance **being** **a supply** at this present time for their want, **that** their abundance also may become **a supply** for your want; that there may be equality: as it is written, He that **gathered** much had nothing over; and he that **gathered** little had no lack." Therefore Paul was not fastening on the churches in Macedonia, and Achaia, an expensive and permanent institution, in the city of Jerusalem, to care for the orphans in Judea. It was an emergency that he was trying to provide for.

Can the directors of "Childhaven" suggest a method of

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deduction by which they can deduce the “Childhaven” idea from the above scriptures? These scriptures were written to provide help for the needy in Judea; but not to build an institution separate and apart from the church to care for orphans. We must honor God in, and through the church. The church is the only blood-bought institution in the world. It is the only institution that has any right, or authority from God to carry on his divine worship and work in the world. To establish an institution separate and apart from the church, is to challenge God’s authority, and to impeach divine wisdom.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

“This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments,” and you will have nothing to do with an institution unknown in the New Testament, separate and apart from the church, controlled by a board of directors, appointed by a self-constituted committee, from all over the country, and neither the board nor the committee responsible to any congregation. The board of directors appoints a superintendent, and he is responsible to no congregation for his acts; but to the board of directors. This board calls its institution an orphan home, and wants all congregations throughout the country to be responsible for its upkeep, and if it fails the church will get the stigma, whereas the church as such had nothing to do with it. Such an institution is “Childhaven.”

If a congregation fails to do what it can in having the gospel preached to the world it alone is responsible to God for its failure. If a congregation neglects caring for its widows and orphans, that are widows and orphans indeed, it alone will be responsible to God for its negligence. During the 1950 lectureship, at Freed-Hardeman College, I heard Brother Gus Nichols relate two cases that would have almost brought tears to the eyes of an Egyptian mummy. He said a man died and left his widow with two or three children, she called Brother Nichols and told him that she did not have a relative and asked with tears in her eyes, what she could do. He did not say what he told her; but he thought it was an outrage because the church did not have an orphan home to put her children in. I thought he should have told her not to worry that he would see that the congregation provided a place for her and the children, and see that they were supported till they could care for themselves. The other case was where two orphans were put in a sectarian orphanage; because “we” did not have an orphans home to put them in. Thus Brother Nichols in his zeal to make the “Childhaven” idea lather was trying to make a deplorable public display of the negligence of the churches in Alabama because two congregations that he knew; either through ignorance of their duty, or from pure cussedness, had neglected to provide for their orphans.

Brother Nichols has also declared that all who oppose

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“Childhaven” are “Somerites” and hobby-riders. “Somerism” is what Brother Nichols calls Daniel Somer’s fight against “our” schools and orphan homes, and a “Somerite” is one that Brother Nichols says is teaching the same things that Daniel Somer taught on these matters. I was taught by Brother David Lipscomb that to knowingly misrepresent another’s position or teaching in religious matters was about as low as a man could go. Daniel Somer’s body has been molding amid the dust of the dead for several years, and I make the above statements that you may know that I appreciate my responsibility in stating his position in these matters.

In 1891 Brother David Lipscomb and J. A. Harding established the Nashville Bible School in which the Bible was to be used as a textbook, and every student was required to have at least one lesson a day in the Bible. If Brother Somer ever wrote anything against the Nashville School in its early days I never read of it. In 1901 Brother J. A. Harding left the Nashville Bible School and went to Bowling Green, Ky., and established the Potter Bible College. It was then that Daniel Somer began his relentless and scurrilous fight against David Lipscomb and J. A. Harding for establishing schools in which the word of God was to be taught. Christians should teach their children the word of God from the cradle up, and David Lipscomb and J. A. Harding thought those children along with all others when they went away to school should have that same teaching by competent teachers, so they were teaching the Bible to every student absolutely free. At that time Daniel Somer was going around over the country holding what he called “Bible readings” and charging for his teaching. In 1903 Brother Somer held a meeting in Winchester, Tennessee, and Brother Lipscomb invited him to visit the school and see the work the Nashville Bible School was doing; but he refused the invitation. He had set his course upon the sea of controversy, and continued his vehement denunciation of the schools for teaching the Bible which he declared to be the sole duty of the church. By contending that the schools were established to usurp the sole prerogative of the church in teaching the Bible Daniel Somer created such a spirit of animosity among his followers that for a number of years no teacher nor student from any school that taught the Bible could preach in their pulpits. In 1905 I was holding a meeting in the town

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hall of Williamsburg, Michigan, and staying in the home of Brother Everett, in Barker Creek, five miles away. One day the Octographic Review, Daniel Somer's paper, came, in which he had a tirade against J. A. Harding. Brother Everett had read it, and he came into my room and asked: "Do you know this man J. A. Harding?" I said "yes, sir, I know him, and know him to be a Christian gentleman, with more faith than any 40 men you ever knew" — that was the end of that subject. When Daniel Somer began his fight against the schools, "we" had no orphan home for him to fight at that time.

Brother Gus Nichols is a half Somerite himself, he teaches, as Daniel Somer taught, that the schools and colleges that teach the Bible are doing the work of the church; but he takes the opposite end of the road of confusion, he teaches that the schools and orphan homes are in the same category, both, doing the work of the church, and therefore should be put in the budget or supported by the churches.

In Ephesians 3:20, 21, Paul says:

20 "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen."

In Colossians 2:9, 10, Paul says:

9 "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, 10 and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power:"

These are the scriptures that Daniel Somer used in his fight against the schools teaching the word of God, and thus, as he claimed, usurping the authority of the church. Yet in Acts 19:8-10, we read of some of Paul's labors in Ephesus, and remember he wrote Ephesians and Colossians. We read:

8 "And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9 But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 10 And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."

Paul evidently did not think that the school of Tyrannus

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