

## VISITING PROGRAM TRAINING CLASS

Sixteenth Class

April 27, 1969

### FORMAT:

1. Open with prayer.
2. World news discussion and drill (5-8 minutes).
3. Difficult scripture drill (30 minutes).
4. Sermonettes and evaluations (30 minutes).
5. Recess (10 minutes).
6. Lecture (one hour).
7. Assignments for next class.

### DIFFICULT SCRIPTURES

- I. Disprove: Since the time of John the Baptist, the Law and the prophets have been done away (Luke 16:16).
  - A. This verse does not say that the Law and the prophets were done away. This meaning has been read into it by those who believe in grace without obedience. Verse 17 shows that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for any of God's law to fail. God's law stands forever (Ps. 111:7-8).
  - B. The term "the Law and the prophets" refers to the Old Testament scriptures. Luke 24:44 shows the three-fold division of the Old Testament: the Law, the prophets and the psalms.
  - C. Christ said that the Old Testament scriptures (the Law and the prophets) were preached as such, until the coming of John the Baptist. Matthew 3:1-3 shows that John came before Jesus preparing the way. He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, "Repent you: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Verse 2). This was new. Even many prophets and righteous men of old had not been privileged to hear what John and Christ preached (Matt. 13:10-11, 17).

Thus we see that until John, all that the people heard preached were the Old Testament scriptures. But when John came, he added something new -- the good news of the Kingdom of God. And in Verse 17, Christ showed, in context, that God's LAW was an integral part of this message.

- II. Disprove: Christians should avoid wealth because money is the source of

all evil (I Tim. 6:10).

- A. This scripture does not say money is evil. It says the love of money is the root of all evil, not that money is evil. Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare (Verse 9). They become lustful. The more they get the more than want. Soon much of their energy is spent on obtaining riches. This leads to evil.
- B. Money is not the root of all evil. Any good interlinear Greek-English text such as the Greek Englishman's New Testament shows that "the root" should be rendered "a root." The love of money then, is a root of all evil. There are other roots of evil besides this one, such as the lust for power, unbridled sex lust, etc.
- C. God is not opposed to wealth. His desire is that we prosper (III John 2). Many of God's servants were wealthy. Joseph was a prosperous man (Gen. 39:2). Job was the greatest man in the East (Job 1:3). Abram was rich in cattle, silver and gold (Gen. 13:2). But these men did not make the pursuit of material possessions their aim or goal in life. God prospered them as they obeyed HIM.

III. Why did Elisha curse little children and cause them to be killed?  
(II Kings 2:23-24.)

- A. Elisha was, at this time, in the office of Elijah, who had been taken in a whirlwind to another location (Verse 11). He was God's prophet. His office was one that must be respected.
- B. The Hebrew words here rendered "little children" have caused many to misunderstand what actually happened. These were not small children. The Hebrew word translated children is "naar." It can refer to a lad, servant or young man. See Strong's Concordance. The same word is translated as "children" in I Samuel 16:11, where it refers to Jesse's grown sons. It was also used to describe Joseph when he was seventeen years old (Gen. 37:2). In fact, not less than seventy times this word has been translated "young man."

The Hebrew word rendered "little" is "kawtone." It means "little, small, or young." This word is used to describe Benjamin, Jacob's son, when he was past twenty years old (Gen. 44:20).

These were not little children. They were young men -- juvenile delinquents. There must have been quite a crowd of these jeering teen-agers because forty-two of them were torn by the bears.

- C. They said, "Go up, thou bald head." By this they expressed their disdain for God's prophet. "Bald (or empty) head" was an expression

of contempt in the East.

- D. Then the Bible says that Elisha cursed them in the name of the Lord. He merely turned and, as a minister and prophet of God, pronounced God's judgment upon them. We must remember that it was God who sent the bears upon them, not Elisha. He only pronounced what God was going to do, just as God's ministers today have to tell the world what is going to happen to them if they do not repent.

God sent the bears to teach them a lesson in the only way that some people seem to be able to understand, by forcefully showing His power and shutting their mouths. This is an example which shows us what God means in Hebrews 10:31, where He says: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

## HOW TO DEAL WITH HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROBLEMS

### I. ADVISING ON HEALTH PROBLEMS

Caution must always be exercised in advising on a person's health problems, lest you be found to be practicing medicine. Don't put people on diets and fasts! What constitutes the "practice of medicine" is much broader than one would ordinarily think. Some of the general definitions given by the courts are as follows:

"The 'practice of medicine' as contemplated and defined by law, is not restricted to treatment of diseases and disorders of the human body by use of drugs or surgery."

"The practice of medicine may be said to consist of three things; first, in judging the nature, character, and symptoms of the disease; second, in determining the proper remedy for the disease; and third, in giving or prescribing the application of the remedy to the disease."

"It is not limited to attempts to treat by medicine or surgery, but includes those who practice neither medicine nor surgery in any of its departments, but who profess to cure, and who treat or attempt to treat the sick by means other than medicine or surgery."

Some cases of practicing medicine even touch upon the realm of divine healing and anointing with oil. In New York, it was stated, "A Christian Science healer who holds himself as able to heal diseases by prayers to God and accepts compensation for his services is engaged in the practice of medicine."

But merely praying for the sick is permissible. "Prayer for those suffering from disease, or words of encouragement, or the teaching that disease will disappear and physical perfection be attained as a result of prayer, or that humanity will be brought into harmony with God and the fixed determination to look on the bright side of life, does not constitute the practice of medicine in the popular sense."

"Faith healer, treating patients by laying on of hands without diagnosis or promise of cure, held not engaged in the practice of medicine and surgery."

What is the penalty for practicing medicine" Is it merely a matter of a few dollars fine? No, it is much more than that. If a person practices medicine without a license, and the patient should die, the wrongdoer could be prosecuted for manslaughter or murder!

Now you can see why extreme caution must be exercised in advising brethren in God's Church concerning their health problems.

You can and should teach them to study and live by the seven laws of radiant health. You can teach them the truth of the Bible concerning faith and healing. But, don't put them on diets or fasts. Let them decide that.

You could recommend they go to a good doctor or specialist for a physical check-up if they want detailed advice on their physical health problems. Sometimes this is advisable and helpful.

Never tell a member not to go to a doctor or hospital. Don't tell them not to take their sick children. And also, don't tell them to stop taking a medicine they might be relying upon. It is their decision to make.

You can anoint (if you are an elder) and pray for them. You can try to strengthen their faith and encourage them to trust God. But don't tell them what to do. You could be held legally responsible and prosecuted if they die.

## II. HOW PROSECUTION BEGINS IN CASE OF DEATH

In order to act wisely in a case where a person dies, it is helpful to know how such cases come to be prosecuted. How does the District Attorney's office even become acquainted with information? Such information can come to them through a complaint by anyone that knew a doctor was not called or medical aid refused, such as a neighbor who was previously told about the parents' religious beliefs, a relative who happened to be visiting or from any other similar source. It may also come through more official

channels, such as facts gleaned by police or fire officials called in as members of a respiratory squad. Also, if no doctor signs the death certificate, generally speaking the Coroner's Department will hold an inquest to determine the cause of death. This will most likely bring out the fact that no doctor was called. Such a fact would be a "red light" to the District Attorney.

Generally speaking, when these cases come before the District Attorney, he has the discretion as to whether or not he will prosecute. As this type of case is not so well known as the obvious type of crime such as murder or robbery, there is always the possibility that he might choose not to prosecute. This is the type of circumstance where a "contact" is invaluable. The prosecutor might easily be persuaded by a friend to drop the matter so long as the newspapers have not made major news of it.

The fear along this line is that the case will fall into the hands of a newly-appointed Assistant District Attorney. Such men are customarily extremely zealous. They want to make a "name" for themselves.

### III. SUGGESTIONS FOR AVOIDING PROSECUTION

The following suggestions, although by no means a guarantee, will definitely aid in avoiding prosecutions and notoriety in the event a death should ensue from other than natural means.

#### 1. Don't say anything!

This is the first and foremost rule in every criminal case. The importance of this one rule cannot be overemphasized.

Avoid telling anyone how long the person was sick. Avoid telling anyone that you knew the person was seriously ill. Avoid telling anyone when the illness first became serious. Don't mention divine healing.

This general rule of not saying anything, like all others, has its qualifications. If a person would absolutely refuse to answer every casual question of inquiry, it could result in a full-blown investigation. But is this so bad? Even if an investigation is held, if it can turn up no detrimental facts, there is no problem.

On the other hand, if the person does speak, and does give the right answer, you can perhaps ward off an investigation. But if you do speak and say the wrong thing, then your statements could be the very basis of a successful prosecution.

Remember, there is absolutely nothing that a State Official is going to

be asking about that is going to be to your benefit. The only information he is going to be seeking, is not information to free you, but information to prosecute you. Always keep in mind that everything you say that is detrimental will be fed right back to you in court.

In the initial investigation of the case, a little tact in refusing to answer these questions would be highly beneficial. To state, "I'm not going to answer any questions; I don't have to; I know my constitutional rights," would obviously only serve to clash with the carnal mind. Some practical reasons should be thought of such as the parent merely saying, "Please, sir, I'm just in no mood to talk to anyone or answer any questions. Please just leave my wife and me alone." If you are just a witness, there is no better way out than the old time-worn cliché, "Look, I just don't want to get involved."

Remember, if circumstances become pressing and time is needed, never forget the famous statement, "I'm sorry, but my attorney has instructed me never to say anything under circumstances like this until I've had a chance to talk to him first."

2. If legal circumstances or wisdom demands that you answer, then be succinct and discreet.

Keep in mind that the officials don't know everything you know, and the little they do know, they really don't fully comprehend. Too often an investigator will just strike out blindly, acting as though he has all the facts, and the victim will just "spill the beans."

If the investigator should know something about anointing with oil, there is no need to assume that he knows that the practice of medicine is held in disrepute. It might be good to draw an analogy to the Catholic Church, and the fact that, "We, as they, anoint with oil."

When one minister at the scene of a death was abruptly asked by an investigating officer, "Who are you?" he simply replied, "A friend." No further questions were asked.

If you are known to be a minister, and asked why you are there, a general answer that might suffice would be: "I just came to perform my general ministerial duties of offering spiritual encouragement and as a family friend."

Do not mention faith healing under any circumstances. It cannot be introduced during the trial as a defense. It will only serve to raise antagonisms at the time of the inquiry and make the whole case newspaper-worthy. It can always be brought up later if it is to the person's

advantage.

Deny any knowledge that the ailment was serious. Or if this cannot be done) then: (a) Place the time when the seriousness first became apparent as close to the time of death as possible. (b) Take the shortest period of time possible for the length of the illness. (c) If the question of a doctor should arise, it might be met with, "If I had any idea that she was that sick and that a doctor could have healed her, I certainly would have called him immediately."

3. Befriend a doctor with at least an affinity for our religious beliefs.

The calling of a doctor, during the last stages of a very serious illness, could work for good or for evil from the legal point of view. On the one hand, if he were called in soon enough to ascertain the cause of death, and was of a friendly attitude, he might sign the death certificate and thereby avoid any Coroner's inquest.

On the other hand, a doctor might recommend some course of medical treatment that he feels would absolutely save the person's life, but which we would consider absolutely inimical to God's laws. If the person died, then the doctor would be a powerful witness for the prosecution not only to prove gross neglect but proximate cause as well.

Also, unless the doctor held an affinity for our religious beliefs, he could contact the District Attorney if the patient was a minor and request that a court-appointed guardian be named. The court could then take custody of the child, and the guardian consent to such a course of medical treatment.

The worthwhile physical knowledge that a doctor does have to offer should be taken into consideration and, depending upon the circumstances, weigh heavily in favor of consulting or calling one in.

4. When rejecting medical service on drugs, predicate the refusal on the grounds of risk or potential adverse results.

One of the most practical and valuable ways of rejecting certain medical services or drugs is to base the objection on the grounds of risk.

A procedure might be to ask a doctor: "What are the chances of the operation being a failure? What are the chances of it being useless? What are the chances of it being harmful? What are the chances the drug will have an adverse reaction?" etc.

If the doctor should remark the odds are 70 to 30 in favor of success

or lack of any adverse reaction, the patient or parent can meditatively contemplate the answer. He could then state, "I just don't feel I should take the chance. It just seems it would be better off to do whatever else we could and then let nature take its course."

If the matter is serious enough and the particular doctor sees no possibility of adverse effect but only 100 percent success, then the patient or parent can merely state they would like to obtain further consultation and advice on the subject. It is almost always possible to find other medical advice which would take a contrary position. It can be contended then that the adverse consultation was relied upon.

5. Keep knowledge of illness restricted to as few people as possible.

During the steps when an illness becomes serious, keep as many people out of the house as possible. Do not tell outsiders about the seriousness of an illness or your belief in divine healing. The more people that have knowledge of the subject, or are present during the final stages, the more potential adverse witnesses you have. Only one antagonistic person, with a sufficient amount of first-hand knowledge, can furnish enough testimony upon which to pass a successful prosecution.

It should also be considered that when a Fire Department respiratory squad is called it is generally customary that the police are also notified. This, of course, should not in any way deter the calling of such help if it appears they might save such a life. However, a private ambulance service which maintains oxygen and respiratory equipment might be kept on file, and utilized when needed, rather than the public services.

6. Do not attend an informal, requested hearing at the District Attorney's office, unless unusual circumstances dictate otherwise.

A strong general rule is that a parent should never go to the office of the District Attorney to discuss such a case. If circumstances should for some reason require him to attend, then under no circumstances should he go without an attorney.

Another fact is very important. In one case the prosecutor admitted that he could never have tried the case without the statements given by the mother. After the child had died, she stopped in his office, at his request, and told him everything about the case. She even signed a statement to that effect. She also made statements to certain officials in the Coroner's office. They proved certain facts that he could not have proven otherwise.



## 7. Don't involve the Church.

Beware of advising people and involving the Church. People are free moral agents and must make their own decisions. They must learn to stand on their own feet.

The Church must come before individuals. Don't make the Church responsible for lawsuits. Help people in order to protect the Church, but let people help themselves where possible. Don't try to live their lives for them. Don't obligate the Church.

Don't be hostile toward doctors and hospitals. When brought into contact with medical men, be friendly, but firm. Be careful not to mention the Bible, religion, or the Church of God.

## IV. WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF AN UNTIMELY DEATH

When there is an untimely death in the Church with overtones of divine healing having been relied upon, prompt action is necessary in order to avoid prosecution and bad publicity. Therefore, here is the procedure to follow:

1. In the event of an untimely death of any member or prospective member or one of their children, and it is under any circumstances other than that which would be considered absolutely normal in the world's eyes (i.e., in the hospital, a doctor in general attendance with basically full medical aid being given, etc.), the local minister should immediately contact Headquarters by telephone and notify us of the circumstances which would include the names and telephone numbers of all persons either directly involved or witnesses.
2. After receiving this information, either Mr. Rader or Mr. Helge can consult with the local minister by telephone and ascertain if there is potential criminal liability or bad publicity for the Church member, the minister or the Church. If so, one of them may need to fly to the area and personally question and counsel parties involved.

## V. PREVENTION IS THE BEST CURE

Remember to instruct the Church members ahead of time on the principles of health and measures to prevent serious illness. Increasingly, we need to drill them on this type of general health and diet information so that they can decide what to do in case of sickness without the minister constantly having to "suggest" nearly every step they take. Teach them to truly GLORIFY God in their bodies. This is part of the direct Gospel commission.

Also, teach them the truth about deep, living FAITH in God so they WILL

automatically trust Him when a crisis comes. Then, again, the minister won't have to be constantly "suggesting" or encouraging measures of faith at a time when, legally, they ought to be deciding on their own without the Church having to be directly involved. We cannot "legislate" the degree of faith for people to exercise in a crisis -- or any other time.

Do build that real understanding and faith ahead of time. Definitely have special sermons and Bible Studies on health, diet, disease and on how to TRUST in GOD for healing - - and WITHOUT getting the Church involved in legal disputes! Then, if legal problems arise -- and far fewer should this way -- follow the course outlined above and instruct all the members in this ahead of time, as well.