

THE REFLECTOR



MOVING?

Send us your **NEW** and **OLD** addresses. We need them **BOTH**.

NOVEMBER 1976

Volume 16/Number 11

'NOW IT IS DIFFERENT' - OR IS IT?

"It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,' and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church.' NOW, IT IS DIFFERENT and while churches are desirous of receiving members, they are wary and cautious that they do not receive unworthy persons. The churches therefore have candidates come before them, make their statement, give their 'experience,' and then their reception is decided by a vote of the members." -- Standard Manual for Baptist Churches, Edward T. Hiscox, p. 22.

One only needs to read such passages as Acts 8 to realize HOW different it is NOW. The Eunuch was not asked to relate any kind of "experience", in fact, he had none to relate except the experience of having heard the gospel preaching and his consequent belief of it. He was carried before no church for a vote. Indeed, it is different from the practice of my Baptist friends. In fact, I suspect that a Baptist preacher would be in trouble with either his congregation or his association (or convention) if he were caught doing what Philip did, that is, finding a

man who wanted to be baptized and baptizing him without requiring either an "experience" or a vote. We must, indeed, agree with Mr. Hiscox that NOW IT IS DIFFERENT--at least, with Baptists.

But, there are other differences:

BAPTISM

In the "Apostolic age" baptism was in order to be saved from sin. (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). Now it is different with Baptists. With them, baptism is merely an "outward sign of an inward grace" (an expression nowhere recorded in Apostolic days). It is to show that one has already been saved, so we are told. It reverses God's order of baptism and salvation. The Bible reads, "He that *BELIEVES* and is *BAPTIZED* shall be saved," while Baptists declare "He that *BELIEVES* is *SAVED* and shall be *BAPTIZED*.

FAITH

In the "Apostolic age" justification was NOT by faith only. (Jas. 2:24). But now it is different with Baptists. One is saved at the point of faith before and without doing anything further, especially being baptized, so we are told.

MUSIC

In the "Apostolic age" no mention is made of Christian's

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR.
P.O. Box 146
Fultondale, AL 35068

using mechanical instruments of music in worship to God. Singing (vocal music) is commended several times (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). But, now it is different with Baptists.

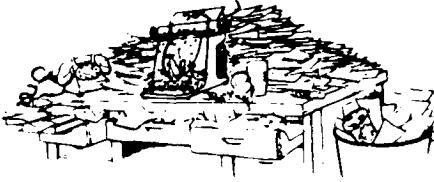
APOSTACY

In the "Apostolic age" the Christian was warned against falling away. Those who did so were lost. (Read I Cor. 10:12; Heb. 10:26-29; Gal. 5:6, and compare them with the "once saved always saved" position).

FAITHFULNESS

In the "Apostolic age" Christians were told to be "faithful unto death" to receive the "crown of life". (Rev. 2:10). But, now it is different with Baptists. All one needs to do is to believe at some point in his life and then his salvation is forever sealed regardless to future faithfulness. Oh yes, faithfulness is encouraged to make one a good "witness for Christ" but contributes nothing to his salvation. Once he has believed in the Lord, no amount of sin can endanger the soul, in the mind of the consistent Baptist.

Yes, Mr. Hiscox, a lot of things are now different. But is the Bible different? Can we afford to preach a different gospel? (Read Gal. 1:8,9).



FROM THE
EDITOR'S DESK

November, 1976

Dear Neighbor,

How about this! Here we are back "LIVE". For several months you have been receiving mostly C & P (Clip & Paste) papers. We appreciate your bearing with us. A series of events beyond our control threw us behind schedule, causing us to have to borrow the work of others in order to catch up. The church here has been most patient with us in this matter, for which we are thankful.

A word of thanks is in order for all those fine letters that we have received in the past few months encouraging us to continue this effort. It is our every intention to keep publishing THE REFLECTOR. With some of the private papers apparently in trouble, we feel the need more than ever to deepen our commitment to this endeavor. We think it will be easier for us in the future because we have been blessed with new volunteers to help with typing copy and other time-consuming aspects of getting the paper out. Hopefully this will free me to do more writing and other things I have wanted to get done.

Our mailing list is now around 2500 mark. You can help us keep it current and correct by sending any change of address soon. We have to pay 25¢ for each paper returned because of incorrect address. That counts up. IF YOU DO NOT SEND A CHANGE OF ADDRESS WE WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DROP YOU FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

Open letters like this will probably become a regular feature of this paper. Each month there are things that we would like to tell you about that we find hard to compose into an article. You know, just odds and ends. We will use this means to comment on such matters.

Let me tell you about a little thing that I saw at a local hospital the other day. I walked up the desk for my "MINISTER" badge when I noticed a new kind of badge in the rack. Right there along with the "MINISTER" and "MINISTER'S WIFE" badges was one reading, "MINISTER'S HUSBAND". We often get mail addressed to "Brother and MRS."..., we guess those folks must get some addressed to "SISTER AND MISTER". Oh well, things and times do change--but the scriptures do not--ones like 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Tim. 2:12.

Oh yes, I meant to tell you about a series of articles in coming issues on CALVINISM. Brother Barney Keith will be the writer. He has made an extensive study of the subject and we are looking forward to his material.

Come to see us. If you can't get by to see us, then write.

Sincerely,
The Editor

Simplistic Solutions To Deep Divisions

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR.
P.O. Box 146
Fultondale, AL 35068

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord...that there be no divisions among you." -- 1 Cor. 1:10

Religious divisions have been with us a long time. Centuries of dividing and subdividing have left "Christendom" in shambles. There are *Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, "Church of Christers", "Holinesses*, and what have you. Then there are various kinds of *Catholics*, different kinds of *Baptists*, a variety of *Methodists*, and so on down the line. Among those who have "Church of Christ" on their sign out front there are congregations of premillennialists, "one-cuppers", no-classes, pro-church-supported-institutioners, anti-church-supported-institutioners, no-located-preacherers, just to name a few. It is no wonder that good and sensitive people all but despair over such a condition.

Anyone who loves the Lord and respects His will wants to see all these differences resolved. (See John 17:20,21). Every sincere Christian should work to that end (Eph. 4:1-3). There seems to be a sincere longing in our generation for

"...in our zeal to eliminate divisions, let us beware of solutions that are simply too simple."

unity, perhaps more so than at any time in modern history. The news media and religious writings reflect this fact. We think it is good.

However, in our zeal to eliminate divisions, let us beware of solutions that are

simply too simple. Occasionally a sincere, but perhaps a bit *starry eyed*, brother will decide that all divisions can be erased by *love and understanding*. He sincerely chides *ALL* parties to our controversies for not showing enough love and understanding. Such simplistic solutions remind me of a man whose back ache was cured by having his bad teeth pulled. From that day on he advised all his friends with backache to have their teeth pulled. It had worked in his case. But not every backache is caused by bad teeth! Hatred and misunderstanding may cause SOME divisions, but it is non-sense to assume that such is at the root of ALL divisions!

Like backache, relief from any given division depends on the root cause. If division is caused by a lack of love--more love will solve it. If it is caused by misunderstanding--more understanding will cure it. If it is caused by factious men or "them that cause divisions" -- only marking and avoiding those men or their repentance will really get the job done. (Titus 3:10; Rom. 16:17,18). I have never figured out how to mark a person or faction without identifying them by name. If it is caused by immature loyalty to men (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-4) -- only mature spiritual loyalty to Christ will ease the pain of division. If it is caused by introducing unscriptural and /or unnecessary innovations into the church over the consciences and objections of sincere brethren--only the removal of these innovations will solve the problem. If it is caused by ignorance of the Bible-- only more knowledge through study will really solve the problem. If it is caused by a lack of considera-

tion for the weak in faith--more consideration will help matters.

Our divisions, whatever the cause, did not come into being over night and they are not likely to be solved overnight! Many of them have a combination of several causes, so it is naive to expect any one suggested solution to be a cure-all. We might wish it were so simple, but in our wishing let us not hastily accept solutions that leave the basic causes untouched. Such such simplistic problem solving just leaves the door open

"Aspirin may be good for temporary relief while rooting out the cause of backache, but it should not be accepted as a cure. Congeniality may be good for temporary relief while rooting out the cause of a division, but it should not be accepted as the complete cure."

for more problems to be added to those that we have left unresolved.

Aspirin may be good for temporary relief while rooting out the cause for backache, but it should not be accepted as a cure. Congeniality may be good for temporary relief while rooting out the cause of a division, but it should not be accepted as the complete cure. We must root out the real cause of divisions and be not satisfied with either mere temporary symptomatic relief or any suggested solution that has not duly considered the cause for the SPECIFIC division with which you may be dealing.

THE REFLECTOR is published monthly by the church of Christ meeting at 1116 Walkers Chapel Rd., Fultondale, AL. 35068. Second class postage paid at Fultondale, AL 35068.

EDWARD O. BRAGWELL, SR. Editor
Page 3

The Christian's Relationship

To The World - No. 1

BOB WALDRON
Sumiton, AL

God's people have always been perplexed as to the relationship they should sustain to the world. Does "world" always mean the same thing? Can the Christian enjoy nothing or everything in the world? Is Christianity supposed to be a matter of negative living alone? The attitude of many Christians toward living the life of the Christian is embodied in the saying, "Everything I like is either illegal, unscriptural, or fattening."

"World" is used in the Bible in several different ways. Thayer says it means the physical universe (Rom. 1:20); the circle of the earth (Mk. 16:15); the inhabitants of the earth (Mt. 13:38); the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ (2 Pet. 1:4); worldly affairs; the aggregate of things earthly; the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which, although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

When the Bible says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 Jn. 2:15), does it mean we are not to enjoy food and other material necessities and comforts? No, it does not mean we cannot experience them. In other words, they are not inherently wrong. We are not, however, to "love" them to the point of seeking them instead of or before God. Anything in this physical realm can become an idol supplanting God in our affections.

Page 4

"Can the Christian enjoy
nothing in the world or
everything in the world?"

tions. Whatever does that, whether it be a sunset or an ice cream cone would then be wrong because we would be making the wrong use of it.

In our study of the Christian's relationship to the world, we will use "world" to mean the characteristic rebellion and alienation from God that is seen in most of the earth's inhabitants. We will use the term to refer to any earthly thing which is placed between man and God.

The Bible says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the vanity (pride) of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and lust thereof: but he

that doth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn. 2:15-17). There must always be a separation between the Christian and the world. James says, "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. (Jas 4:4). The Christian must maintain a distinction from the world, not a physical separation by living in a monastery but a separation of the affections and interests.

What position does the

Christian occupy in the world? The expression has often been used, "They are in the world but not of the world." Jesus said of His disciples, "I have given them thy word; and the world hateth them, because they are not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (Jn. 17:14-16). Jesus shows here that one does not have to leave the world in order to be not of it. He said His apostles were not of the world even as He was not of the world. Jesus came from Heaven. Is this what He meant by saying He was not of the world? No, because the apostles had not come from Heaven. Rather, Jesus meant their motivations, their standards, their purposes and affections were not those that are characteristic of the world just as His were not.

The position the Christian occupies in the world obligates him to resist conformity to the world (Rom. 12:2). He has to realize that he is a stranger and a pilgrim who is seeking a better country, that is a heavenly (Heb. 11:13-16). Therefore the Christian must maintain a disaffection for worldly ways (2 Tim. 2:3,4). "Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lust which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11).

Not only must the Christian maintain a life marked by attitudes and ways distinct from the world, but he also has a holy mission to carry out. He must live soberly. He must recognize the seriousness of

life. He must live righteous-
ly, that is by God's standards,
and he must be godly or rever-
ent toward God (Tit. 2:12). He
must let his light shine as a
proper example (Mt. 5:16).
Many times we minimize the in-
fluence we may have, not real-
izing how much even a little
light illuminates the dark-
ness. The Christian must seek
to teach everyone that he can.
The early disciples, when they
were scattered abroad, went
everywhere preaching the word
(Acts 8:4).

"Does it ('love not the world')
mean we are not to enjoy a
brilliant blue sky or a
flaming sunset?"

The Christian is to be dif-
ferent from the world, a peo-
ple for God's own possession,
zealous of good works (Tit. 2:
14). Christians do not just
happen. There is a process
whereby people are delivered
from the world. That process
is conversion. In our next
article we wish to study the
meaning of conversion.

"What Saith The Answer Of GOD?"

Send Questions to:

CHARLES G. MAPLES, SR.
1744 Stiener Ave. S.W.
Birmingham, AL 35211

QUESTION: "Why is baptism more
than just a public showing?"--
W.H.; B'ham.

ANSWER: First, our querist has
drawn the proper conclusion;
that baptism **IS** more than "a
public showing."

Scriptural baptism **IS** a
showing; a likeness to the
burial and resurrection of our
Lord (Rom. 6:3-4). It also
shows a likeness to the saving
of "eight souls by water" in
Noah's day (1 Pet. 3:21). It
shows others that the one be-
ing baptized is willing to
please the Lord, by obeying
His requirements, regardless
of the lack of popularity of
such in the religious world.

But, far beyond the outward
showing, there is significance
in scriptural baptism, and not
as some say, simply "an outward
sign of an inward grace." Such
people insist that one is

"saved before and without wa-
ter baptism," and should then
be baptized as a denomina-
tional requirement. But, in this
they do err!

1) Scriptural baptism is ob-
edience "from the heart" to a
requirement of the Lord (Mk.
16:16; Rom. 6:17,18,3,4).

"...far beyond the outward
showing, there is significance
in scriptural baptism..."

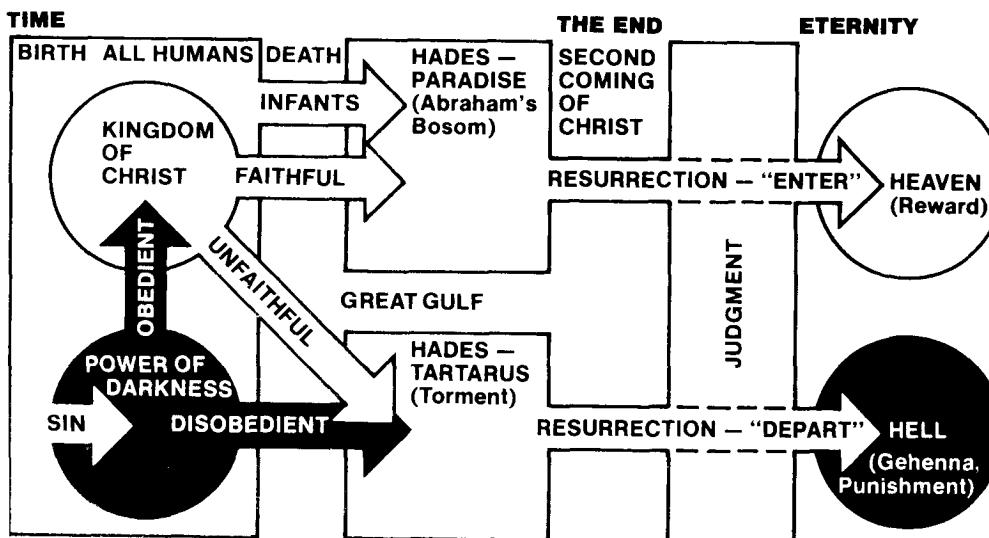
2) Scriptural baptism; a
burial in water; puts one "in-
to Christ" (Gal. 3:27, "...For
as many of you as have been
baptized into Christ have put
on Christ.")

3) Scriptural baptism brings
one into the benefits of the
death of Jesus Christ -- "Know
ye not, that so many of us as
were baptized into Jesus
Christ were baptized into his
death?" (Rom. 6:3) ...And we
are reminded that "every Spir-
itual blessing" is "in Christ"
(Eph. 1:3,7).

4) Scriptural baptism is
that part of the new birth
referred to by Jesus as being
"...born of water..." (John 3:
5). From such one is "raised
to walk in newness of life"
(Rom. 6:4).

5) The apostle Peter says
"...baptism doth also now save
us..." (1 Pet. 3:21), and must
therefore surely be "more than
a public showing."

Bible baptism is, in truth,
a "showing" of one's faith (Mk.
16:16), but it is far more
than that!



“Being Knit Together In Love”

R. J. EVANS
3251 Greendale Rd.
Birmingham, AL 35243

Much is said in the Word of God, either directly or indirectly, about Christians being knit together. The apostle Paul told the Colossian brethren, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love ...and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God". (Col. 2:2, 19). A congregation of the Lord should consist of members knit together in the common bond of love and truth, working together, seeking to build up the cause of Christ. In order for a congregation to be "knit together in love", various essential characteristics must be prevalent. Several of these which come to mind at the moment are as follows:

1. **THE ELDERS MUST BE WORKING TOGETHER AMONG THEMSELVES.** In other words, there must be a harmonious relationship among them all. Elders must be communicating with each other. They should be meeting together often, discussing and planning so that they can effectively carry out the important work which has been entrusted them. The responsibility of overseeing the total work of the local church belongs to the elders. But too often, and in too many churches, elders are doing primarily deacon's work and the actual work of the elders is being left undone and wanting. However, when the work of "serving tables" is given over to the deacons, the elders can then fully concentrate on the spiritual needs of the local church.

In order for elders to truly work together, they all must have a genuine love for the truth. They are bound by the pattern for the church and its work found in the New Testament. They are not at liberty to do as they please. (2 Jn. 9). God's truth and the spirit

ual good of the local church must at all times have priority over self-will and personal preferences. Also, in maintaining a spirit of "togetherness" among the elders, there must exist the right attitude and proper respect one for another at all times. This may sometimes involve overlooking such things as minor personality differences, little idiosyncrasies, etc.

But most important, elders must be fully qualified for their office. They must not meet some or most of the qualifications--they must meet them ALL! (1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1). Now some may be wider in scope in meeting these qualifications than others. For example, one elder may be able to teach in a public manner more effectively than another. But each elder still must meet every qualification! A congregation is headed for disaster when elders are not qualified and/or if they are not working together. And furthermore, if elders are not "working together" among themselves, there is little hope for the congregation of which they are overseers to accomplish much "working together". If, perhaps the congregation does, it is in spite of the elders -- not because of them. "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." (Mk. 3:25).

2. **THE CONGREGATION AND THE ELDERS MUST BE COMMUNICATING WITH ONE ANOTHER.** This is a two-way street. The elders have a responsibility toward the congregation; the congregation has a responsibility to the elders. The elders are required to be examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3); take the oversight (1 Pet. 5:2); and take heed to the flock (Acts 20:28); rule well (1 Tim. 5:17); feed the flock (Acts 20:

28); and watch for souls (Heb. 13:17). The congregation must know the elders (1 Thess. 5:12); esteem the elders (1 Thess. 5:13); be submissive to the elders (Heb. 13:17); be at peace with one another (1 Thes. 5:13); obey the elders (Heb. 13:17); remember and imitate the elders (Heb. 13:7); and call the elders when in need (jas. 5:14).

We hear on every hand about the failure to communicate--in government, in the home, in business, and in the Lord's church. When a congregation is plagued with a communication gap between the elders and members there can be no progress. An atmosphere must prevail where the members feel free to communicate with the elders. Yes, the elders make the final decisions, but avenues of communication needs to be open so that the members have opportunities to offer suggestions, ask questions, etc. This, in turn, affords the elders an opportunity to "feel the pulse of the brethren". The elders must make sure that the congregation is well informed as to what is expected of them and as to what is going on. Elders must guard against leading the members into believing that their work and their decisions are "deep dark secrets". Effective ways and means must be utilized so that the elders can inform the congregation of their decisions and go over with them the details of their decisions and plans. Each local situation determines what would be the most expedient in accomplishing the aforementioned. Open communication between the congregation and the elders is imperative!

3. **EVERYONE MUST HAVE A DESIRE TO PLEASE GOD, RATHER THAN SELF.** Often, in order for the "knit together" atmosphere to prevail, personal preferences and matters of opinion must be kept to ourselves. Where opinionism, radicalism and hobbyism reign -- chaos, confusion, strife and contention results.

A deep abiding love for truth is essential to the genuine spiritual growth of any congregation. Where there is

not a sincere desire to please God, we then become susceptible and vulnerable to many evil consequences. When we love not the truth we can be deceived by unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:10); we are apt to turn our ears away from hearing the truth (2 Tim. 4:4); we may resist the truth (2 Tim. 3:8); we may speak evil of the truth (2 Pet. 2:2); we may hinder others from obeying the truth (Gal. 5:7); and, last but not least, if we have not a desire for and love for God and His truth, we shall be eternally lost. "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2:10).

4. *UNTIMELY TALK AND GOSSIP MUST BE ELIMINATED.* What has occurred and has been settled five, ten or fifteen years ago is gone, past and should be forgotten. Continually bringing up old incidents and problems contributes very little to the up-building of the local church. In fact, it will keep the morale of a congregation at a low ebb, incessantly. Accomplishments which may have taken years of hard work to build up, can be rapidly torn down by a few destructive tongues. Untimely, damaging talk and character assassinations destroy churches! Also, if and when there are occasions to discuss problems and grievances, they must be discussed in a constructive manner --not in a destructive one!

Most of the problems which arise among us usually have their beginning between two individuals. They often become "congregational" problems, prematurely and unnecessarily, because someone has done too much talking. This should not be! We must be guided in these matters strictly by the principles and commands which are set forth in Matthew 18:15-17. Read them.

If there is an accusation against an elder, it too, must be handled correctly and scripturally. The apostle Paul told Timothy, "Against an elder receive not an accusa-

tion, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Tim. 5:10 20).

I once heard a bit of advice that I would like to share with you at this point: "We should say nothing about others that we would be unwilling to write out and sign."

5. *THERE MUST BE A WILLINGNESS TO WORK ON THE PART OF ALL.* We are not working "together" when only two or three are doing all the work. "There is nothing for me to do" is often heard, but it will just not stand. You can visit others, conduct home Bible classes, hand out tracts, enroll others in a free Bible correspondence course, and a host of other things. We can all

volunteer to take out turn, periodically, in caring for the communion trays, cleaning the building, mowing the lawn, etc. If you have the ability, you can volunteer to teach a class, help lead the singing, etc., etc. There is so much we ALL CAN DO!

A working congregation is a happy congregation; a happy congregation is a working congregation! Are we working? Are we happy? Are we "knit together in love"?

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The above article is taken from the "CAHABA HEIGHTS BULLETIN" of Cahaba Heights church where its author preaches regularly. It is typical of the thought-provoking writing done by him.

Words: "SKIRTS"

HIRAM HUTTO
108 French Way
Athens, AL 35611

Perhaps you have heard the statement that during Bible times, especially during the Old Testament period, men wore skirts. I suppose the inference being that if men could wear skirts (which most people associate with women's clothing), then women could wear pants (which most would associate with men's clothing). Conversations about this sent me to searching. In the Bible, did men wear skirts? And if they did, just what were the skirts that they were wearing?

The word "SKIRT" appears 12 times in our King James Bible. "SKIRTS" appears 7 times. This gives a total of 19 times. Clearly then, "skirts" is a Bible word. But what does that word mean?

According to Young's Concordance, the word "skirt" or "skirts" in our King James Bible is a translation from three different Hebrew words.

He gives the following Hebrew words, their English meaning, and the number of times and places such appears in the Hebrew Old Testament: *kanaph* (wing) 14 times; *peh* (mouth) 1 time; *shul* (hem, skirt, train) 4 times. But that doesn't tell us too much: "wing", "mouth", "hem, skirt, train." Another way to try to get more information is to investigate the different ways the same Hebrew words are translated in other passages.

Kanaph: this word appears 99 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. It is translated:

border	2
corner	2
end	2
overspreading	1
quarter	1
skirt	14
uttermost	part 1
wing	70
etc.	

Look at that: border, corner,

The Reflector
P. O. BOX 146
FULTONDALE, AL 35068

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE
PAID
FULTONDALE, AL 35068

end, uttermost part. This would lead one to get the idea that our word "skirt" might not be what we normally think of when we hear "skirt". Rather, it just might mean the same thing that is meant when we speak of the *outSKIRTS* of a town. Let's look further.

Peh appears 430 times. It is translated:

collar	1
edge	34
end	3
mouth	341
skirt	1

This seems to further confirm that the word is talking about the edge of a thing, and not what is normally thought of as a "skirt". Look again.

Shul - This word appears 11 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. It is translated:

hem 6 skirt 4 train 1

Again we are driven in the same direction. Skirt in the sense of edge, hem, or border. Not skirt in the sense of "skirt and blouse".

In this connection, it is interesting to note that 6 times where the King James has "hem" or "hems" the American standard has "skirt" or "skirts". No "skirts" here either, is there?

This is quite interesting, isn't it? I thought I would see what some commentators had to say about the various passages where we read about "skirts." Look at these:

Deut. 22:30. "A man shall not take his father's wife, nor discover his father's skirt"

LANGE'S: "The skirt (wing, edge, corner, XX. 11,12) the paternal upper garment (Ges. coverlet of the bed, so that to discover the skirt was to defile the bed,)"

Ruth 3:9. "And he (Boaz) said, who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid :

spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman:

LANGE: "the covering of the bed", "the corner of the coverlet"

KEIL: "the corner of the counterpane".

1 Sam. 15:27. "And as Samuel turned to go away, he (Saul) laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent."

LANGE: "the skirt of Samuel's mantle"

KEIL: "the lappet of his mantle (i.e. his upper garment)"

1 Sam. 24:4,5,11. "Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt..."

LANGE: "corner of the upper garment".

KEIL: "the edge of Saul's Cloak".

Jer. 2:34. "Also in thy skirts was found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents"

LANGE: "Used here, as frequent of the skirts (wings) of a coat, 1 Sam. XXIV.6; Hagg. II. 12; Zech. VIII. 23 etc."

KEIL: "the skirts of the flowing garment, Ezek. V.3; 1 Sam. XV. 27; Zech. VII. 23"

Ezek. 5:3. "Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts"

KEIL: "the corners or ends of the garment"

Ezek. 16:8. "I spread my skirts over thee, and covered thy nakedness"

LANGE: "corner of the upper garment".

KEIL: "lappet of his garment".

Hag. 2:12. "If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, pottage..."

KEIL: "Lappet of his garment".

Psalms 133:2. "the ointment ... that ran down ... that went down the skirts of his garment".

PULPIT COMM: "the lower fringe

of his long vesture".

Lam. 1:9. "Her filthiness is in her skirts"

KEIL: "the hems or skirts of her garment".

Nahum 3:5. "I will discover thy skirts upon thy face." KEIL: "the skirts, borders, or lower edge of the long sweeping dress".

Conclusion from the commentators? In no instance do we find these saying that the word "skirt" means what we normally think of when we say "skirt". Instead we find them saying that the word "skirt" in the Bible means such things as: the edge, the corner, the lower fringe, the collar, it has to do with the upper garment, the wing of a garment, the end of a garment, the hem of a garment. But no where what we mean when we say "skirt".

Next I turned to the International Bible Encyclopedia on the word "skirt", I found it giving the same three words that Young gave with these comments: (1)...kanaph, 'wing', 'extremity' (Ruth 3:9, etc., is the usual word. But in I S. 24:4ff perhaps 'corner' is the best tr. (2)...shul 'loose hanging' (Ex. 28:33, etc; in AV often rendered 'hem'. (3)...peh 'mouth', 'opening' (Ps 133:2, "the precious oil...that came down upon the skirt"). But the 'opening' is that for the head, so that RV 'collar' is the correct tr."

What shall we say to these things? What does the Bible mean when it speaks of skirts? According to the sources that we have noticed it means, the edge of a garment, the hem of a garment, the border of a garment, the opening of a garment, the fringe of a garment. Did men wear skirts? If they did, you will have to look at some other words, if you mean by that what is normally meant by people when they speak of skirts?