

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

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CFTF is unencumbered by any entangling alliances. Thus, we owe allegiance to no one but our Lord. Please help us reach as many brethren as possible with the news and articles, dealing to a great extent with what certain brethren refuse to print.

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH exists to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we advertise only what is authorized by the Bible (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary and reserve the right to refuse any advertisement.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than one month preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder
August 3, 1917-October 10, 2001

Editorial...

“Creation Science In Concert With *Acappella*” #2

In the 2013 May/June issue of *CFTF* we presented the documented fact that Dr. Brad Harrub, co-founder and Executive Director of Focus Press, co-editor of *Think* magazine, and adjunct faculty member of Bear Valley Bible Institute, Denver, CO, is scheduled to appear with the singing group “Acappella” of “Acappella Ministries” to present what is being billed as “*Creation Science In Concert With Acappella*.” The event will be held at the Helena Montana Civic Center and is open to the public. According to the brochure advertising the program, the “promoter” of the event is Rocky Mountain Christian Institute. *As of July 24, 2013 the advertisement on Rocky Mountain Christian Institute’s web site had not changed.* Please see the 2013 May/June issue of *CFTF* for the full report on this and related matters.

Where does the Bible teach it is a good thing for Christians to expose and refute the errors of atheists, agnostics, evolutionists, and infidels in general, teaching the truth about said topics, while at the same time ignoring the New Testament’s teaching prohibiting faithful brethren from extending fellowship to brethren caught up in a sin or sins of which they will not repent? There is a great host of theists who believe in the Genesis account of creation and who assent to the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world, but on the Judgment Day, to their eternal shame and regret, they will hear fall from the lips of our Lord their doom. And, why will that be the case with them? Because they never obeyed the gospel of Christ or as children of God they committed sins of which they never repented (2 The. 1:6-10; 1 John 1:9; Acts 8:22).

I am very sure that brother Ananias and sister Sapphira, husband and wife, believed 1) in God the Father, 2) that Jesus is the Son of God, 3) the plan of salvation, 4) in the Lord’s church, etc. However, none of those beliefs, no matter how strongly that erring husband and wife held them, kept God from executing both of them when they agreed together to lie to God about their contribution and actually committed the sinful act.

But sadly, brethren such as brother Harrub have not fully applied the lesson of the preceding paragraph to themselves. Often we hear of people who attempt to defend brother Harrub and other brethren involved in the same fellowship errors by pointing out what a marvelous and necessary work in apologetics they are doing. We would remind them that apologetics does not begin and end with exposing the errors of atheism, etc. Apologetics pertains to a defense of anything having to do with the New Testament system of faith. The apostle Peter declared to Christians, “**But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an an-**

swer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15; Also see Jude 3; Acts 15:1, 2; Gal. 2:4-6).

Please notice the following concerning the meaning of 1 Peter 3:15. The word translated *answer* in the text is the Greek *apologia*. This is the word from which we derive our word *apologetics*. It means the careful, logical defense of the one complete New Testament system of faith and any of the component parts composing the whole of it when the whole or any of its parts come under attack. Thus, Peter informs Christians they have an obligation to God, the church, and yes, even to themselves, to expose any and all error, refute it, and teach the truth regarding it. Such a defense is not limited to exposing and refuting atheists, evolutionists, etc. *It also includes this effort to expose and refute brother Harrub and all other church members who hold the erroneous view he does concerning fellowship, and to call them back to the truth of the New Testament system regarding the same.* This surely means that there is an effective apologetic that can be given, and it is each Christian’s responsibility to study and be ready to give it when needed (2 Tim. 2:15). Those who are in error, regardless of what it is or how many errors there may be of which they are guilty, have no *answer (apologia)* whereby they can successfully defend their disobedience.

In this same passage Peter declared that in giving **“an answer”** (making our defense) we are to give a *reason* for our hope. The Greek word translated *reason* is the word *logos*. Our English word “logical” is derived from it. Thus, we are to give factual and logical reasons for our hope, which hope the New Testament system provides (Rom. 8:24). As Paul commanded, **“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good”** (1 The. 5:21). No component part of the Christian system is to be accepted without proof, but it is to be accepted because of the proof that establishes its truthfulness. When each component part or constituent element making up the complete New Testament system is proved to be true, then the whole of it is true. And, there is a process whereby all component parts making up the whole New Testament system are to be proved. Thus the rational powers that God has given to man are to be correctly used to arrive at the truth on any topic pertaining to man’s salvation. Such is readily seen in the communication of God with man in the Bible. As Isaiah stated, **“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool”** (Isa. 1:18; Also see Acts 17:2; 18:4, 19; 24:25).

Is it not a very strange thing that those who represent themselves as Christian apologists fail to see the full application of 1 Peter 3:15? Do they not realize they have limited the application of apologetics to that of defending against atheism, evolution, etc.? Now, why is that the case? Is not Christian fellowship as much of an important component part of the New Testament system and as important to God

(and should be to Christians) as is the existence of God, the Deity of Christ, the plenary verbal inspiration of the Bible, the Genesis account of creation, and the like?

Paul stated, **“Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.”** And **“...I am set for the defence of the gospel”** (Phi. 1:7,17). Literally Paul is saying “I am set for an *apologia* of the gospel.” Certainly inspiration did not limit the meaning and application of *apologia* (defense) of the gospel only to proving the existence of God, the Deity of Jesus Christ, the plenary verbal inspiration of the Bible, or that which pertains to the origin of things. Brother Harrub and those brethren who think and act as he does in this matter ought to have as much concern for the Bible teaching about Christian fellowship as they do regarding the truth about God, Christ, creation, etc. And, that means they ought to be just as upset with the error that is preached and practiced by brethren concerning fellowship as they are about the error involved with the origin of all things. It is a shameful reproach on Christ, His church and a sad commentary on one’s state of mind to be so zealous in refuting a certain error or errors while all the time allowing other equally damning errors to go unchallenged.

Some time ago a faithful gospel preacher in Tennessee sent some questions to brother Harrub. Some of them are quoted below. To date he has not answered them. At this point, we conclude that brother Harrub does not believe 1 Peter 3:15 places any obligation on him to answer said questions. The questions are:

1. Have you canceled your speaking engagement at Creation Science Seminar with Acappella?
2. Do you plan to speak at the Lake Tahoe Family Encampment again this year?
3. Do you plan to continue to speak on events with brother Dave Miller?
4. Have you repented of taking part in these activities?

While among the brethren we see all sorts and sizes of efforts to deal with errors pertaining to the existence of God, etc., where is the paper or magazine that has given itself over to discussing the Biblical doctrine of fellowship with God and man? If ever there was a need for a “specialist” it is one dedicated to addressing the Bible’s teaching concerning fellowship with God and man, when brethren should not be fellowshipped, what the Bible teaches about withdrawing fellowship, etc. If the Bible authorizes Focus Press and *Think*, magazine, etc., to deal fundamentally and primarily with matters of origins and morality, then that same Bible authorizes a speciality effort to produce books, videos, tracts, speakers, and the like concerning the Biblical doctrine of fellowship. One program of work requires no more effort on the part of the apologists than does the other in studying the various persons and media used to disseminate errors

on origins or fellowship and properly dealing with them. If God demands that one call the names of false teachers in the area of origins, etc., examining their books and other works whereby they spread their error, then the same is true and ought to be done regarding errors related and pertaining to the important Biblical topic of fellowship.

How much financial support and backing would Focus Press, *Think*, Apologetics Press, etc., receive from the brethren if they dealt as plainly with fellowship errors in the Lord's church as they do with errors concerning the existence of God, origins, the Deity of Christ, morality, etc.? Obviously from bro. Harrub's lack of concern in appearing with the singing group "Acappella" (they know about as much about Christian fellowship as does the United Nations) he demonstrates that whatever the Bible teaches concerning that very important topic is of little import to him. *However, there continues to be time for him to remove himself from what is being advertised as "Creation Science in Concert With Acappella."* Think about what is being communicated to the church in the advertisement that Creation Science is "in concert" with *Acappella*. If ever there was a statement declaring fellowship between two parties, that advertisement could not have found better words to declare it. If you saw an advertisement saying "Creation Science and *Acappella* are in concert with *Contending for the Faith*," does anyone think that would send a message that all three organizations are in fellowship with one another? Indeed it would—and so does "*Creation Science in Concert With Acappella*." It is amazing how learned men with earned graduate academic degrees can be so blind to the meaning of words. But the real question is this, will brother Harrub and those brethren who "think" as he does regarding fellowship put forth the necessary effort to learn what the Bible teaches about fellowship, then consistently practice the same in all of their dealings, and speak against all error pertaining thereto?

Brethren Brad Harrub and Dave Miller have earned the doctor of philosophy degrees. But neither one will touch the important topic of Biblical fellowship in the same way and to the same extent that they do the topic of origins and morals. Now why is that the case? Neither of them would take the polemic platform to debate anything pertaining to the Biblical doctrine of fellowship. And, why is that the case with two men who are known among the brethren as apologists for God? Obviously, they are apologists for God *only* in a certain area and that area has nothing to do with the Biblical doctrine of fellowship—so much for preaching and practising the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

Regarding their apologetic work in the area of origins and morals, why is it that we do not see more oral debates with them involved as disputants?

Consider the denominational apologist William Lane Craig. Dr. Craig received a Bachelor of Arts degree in com-

munications from Wheaton College, Illinois, in 1971 and two summa cum laude master's degrees from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, in 1975, in philosophy of religion, ecclesiastical history, and in the History of Christian Thought. In 1977 he earned a Ph.D. in philosophy under John Hick at the University of Birmingham, England and in 1984 the D.Theol. under Wolfhart Pannenberg at the University of Munich.

The following from Dr. Craig's web site lists only some of his oral debates.

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Stephen Law, Westminster Central Hall, London, United Kingdom – October 2011, Transcript

Is the Foundation of Morality Natural or Supernatural?, William Lane Craig and Sam Harris, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana, United States – April 2011, Transcript

Is There Evidence For God?, William Lane Craig and Lawrence Krauss, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, – March 30, 2011, Transcript

Is There Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus?, William Lane Craig and Bart D. Ehrman, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts, United States – March 28, 2006, Transcript

Belief in God Makes Sense in Light of Tsunamis, William Lane Craig and AC Grayling, Oxford Union, United Kingdom – 2005, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Quentin Smith, Harvard Science Center, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States – April 2003, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Ingmar Persson, University of Lund, Sweden – March 18, 1999, Transcript

The Existence of the Christian God, William Lane Craig and Edwin Curley, University of Michigan, Michigan, United States – February 5, 1998, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Massimo Pigliucci, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, United States – 1998, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Quentin Smith, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, United States – March 22, 1996, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Douglas M. Jesseph, North Carolina State University, North Carolina, United States – 1996, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Corey G. Washington, University of Washington, Washington, United States – February 1995, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Dr. Michael Toolsey, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, United States – November 1994, Transcript

Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?, William Lane Craig

and Ray Bradley, Simon Frasier University, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada – 1994, Transcript

Is the Basis of Morality Natural or Supernatural?, William Lane Craig and Richard Taylor, Union College, Schenectady, New York, United States – October 8, 1993, Transcript

Does God Exist?, William Lane Craig and Kai Nielsen, University of Western Ontario, Ontario, Canada – February 1991 (<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/debate-transcripts>, accessed July 29, 2013).

He has also authored or edited over 30 books, numerous scholarly articles (many articles published in peer review journals), a multiplicity of popular articles, and his *Question of the Week* is disseminated through a large email list and number into the hundreds.

QUESTION: *Where is the list of oral debates dealing with origins and morals in which Dr. Harrub and Dr. Miller or anyone else in their respective apologetics associations have engaged?* We know what the late brother Thomas B. Warren did and intended to do regarding orally debating the same caliber men of high academic learning that Dr. Craig has debated. The fundamental reason Dr. Warren did not continue to engage in oral debates with other representative men the likes of the late Dr. Antony Flew, Dr. Wallace I. Matson, and Dr. Joe E. Barnhart is because his health failed.

However, brother Warren also wanted to educate and train men to be able to engage in debates with atheists, et al., when he was no longer on this earth. Several fellows who are about my age studied under him and continued in their formal education to earn their doctorates in philosophy and related fields, but all of them put together have not produced one tenth of the number of debates that Dr. Craig has, not to mention the amount of written materials he has produced. Why is that the case? *What a shame that a denominationalists is far more involved in polemics than members of the church of Christ.*

It is vitally important to know that—God exists, Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, the Genesis account of creation is true, the Holy Spirit’s inspiration of the Bible is plenary and verbal—inerrant, infallible complete, final, objective, absolute and humanly attainable, etc. Those things being the case, is it not at least as important to know what the Bible teaches concerning the need of being in fellowship with God, how one comes into fellowship with Him, how one remains in fellowship with Him, and how one ceases to be in fellowship with Him, as it is to debate origins and morals? Do we not understand that the point one comes into fellowship with God is the exact same point one is saved from one’s sins by Jesus. Thus, to study at what point one comes into fellowship with God is to study at what point one is saved by Jesus. Therefore, it is as important for those who are in fellowship with God to know what the Bible teaches about when one ceases to be in fellowship with God as it is to study any topic about origins or morals.

The devil and the demons know that: God exists, that Jesus is Deity, that the Bible is the word of God, etc. But such knowledge is only at the “devil level” and that level or measure of faith (mentally assenting to the fact of a thing or someone) is essential, *but is insufficient to save any one* (Jam. 2:19).

Show me the so-called “specialist” who will deal fully, completely, definitively, and steadfastly with the Biblical doctrine of fellowship as he deals with atheism, etc., and I will show you a specialist who will get little support of any kind from the brethren. In fact, one can preach every day all day long on the existence of God, the Deity of Christ, origins, etc., and fail completely to deal with the sin(s) of the brethren on any other topic. And, that is exactly what these brethren do. Thus, they end up in fellowship with those who make up *Acappella*. At least one great difference in brother Warren and these “apologetics specialist” of today is this—he would deal with any and all errors pertaining to man’s salvation needs. On the other hand, these “specialists” in apologetics, as it pertains to origins, do not begin to keep up with the doctrinal issues in the church and the false teachers causing them. In their skewed zeal to deal with their narrow view of apologetics, they become willingly oblivious to other sins that are as bad or worse for the brethren than errors concerning origins.

Shenandoah Church of Christ, San Antonio, Texas

Over a period spanning around 50 years it was the late brother Guy N. Woods practice to book gospel meetings five years in advance. He did this because he was in such high demand as a faithful gospel preacher. Also, during that time he authored a multiplicity of biblical articles, several Bible commentaries, various other books, carried out an extensive amount of correspondence, wrote many Bible lessons for the *Gospel Advocate*, and in his later years served as associate editor and then editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. The later position he held until the liberals pressured the paper’s owner to remove him from the editor’s chair.

Beginning some time before, and all through the time noted in the preceding paragraph, brother Woods was a disputant in at least 100 oral debates on various issues with false teachers in and out of the church. At the time of his death in December of 1993, he had engaged in more debates than any of the then living brethren.

When one thinks of gospel preachers who understood that controversy is as much a part of Christian living as worship, many names come to mind. In the last approximately 100 hundred years some of the stalwarts of the faith who accomplished so much for the cause of Christ through their oral debates alone (there were also many written debates), not to mention in so many other ways, come to mind. At present I recall: Joe Warlick, J. D. Tant, A. G. Freed, N. B. Hardeman, Foy Wallace, C. R. Nichol, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Joe Blue, W. Curtis Porter, Rue Porter, G. K. Wallace, Thomas B. Warren,

and many more, some of them more well-known than others.

Why make the previous comments regarding debates and debating? *They are made because of certain comments made in public recently by brother Gabriel Rodriguez, the preacher for the Shenandoah Church of Christ, San Antonio, Texas and the director of the church's lectureship. We fear that brother Rodriguez's comments are representative of not a few in influential positions throughout the church.*

From the Shenandoah congregation's web site, on their home page one may click on the tab "Religious Discussions" and read the following:

During the months of April through September (2013), the Shenandoah congregation will be engaging in a series of religious discussions with her neighbors (Bill Shockley from Oak Ridge Baptist, James Empeur from St. Matthew Catholic church, and Sandra Leifeste from House of Prayer Lutheran church). The purpose for these discussions is not to hotly contest each other's beliefs, rather to have a genuine dialogue concerning our differences. Our goal is to resolve possible misunderstandings of each other's beliefs and hopefully, unite ourselves in the end (cf. Jn. 17:20-21).—Bold Mine, Editor

These discussions will take place Sunday evenings from 5-6. If you wish to attend, we ask that you abide by the rules agreed upon by all parties—no amening, applause, cheering, or jeering. We simply ask that you sit and listen to the exchange of ideas. The elders of the Shenandoah church of Christ will enforce these rules and ask anyone (not abiding by these rules) to leave (no questions asked).

The format of these discussions is as follows: Opening 15 minute remarks from each side on the assigned topic, 10 minutes by each participant to ask questions of each other, and 10 minutes for audience questions. (Note: the questions asked should not be accusatory, but in the spirit of genuine inquiry).

The subjects to be covered are: April - Who Am I?; May and June - The Basis For Our Understanding; July - Sin and Salvation; August - The Church; September - Morality.

The dates are:

April 14 - Bill Shockley (Baptist): VIDEO MP3

May 19 - Sandra Leifeste (Lutheran): VIDEO MP3

May 26 - James Empeur (Catholic): VIDEO MP3

June 16 - James Empeur (Catholic): VIDEO MP3

July 21 - James Empeur/Sandra Leifeste (Catholic/Lutheran): VIDEO MP3

August 18 - James Empeur (Catholic): VIDEO MP3

August 25 - Sandra Leifeste (Lutheran): VIDEO MP3

September 15 - James Empeur (Catholic): VIDEO MP3

September 22 - Sandra Leifeste (Lutheran): VIDEO MP3

(<http://www.shenandoahcofc.org/religious-discussions.html>, Accessed July 26, 2013).

The part of the statement about these discussions that

grabbed our attention more than the rest is the first paragraph. Is this writer of said paragraph saying that to "hotly contest each other's beliefs" is wrong? If that is the case, the faithful prophets of old, our Lord, his faithful apostles, and other faithful disciples of the First Century did not know it, for they engaged in some of the most hotly contested debates that ever transpired between God's people and the devil's crowd. Further, is the writer saying that the goal of the faithful debater is not "to resolve possible misunderstandings of each other's beliefs and hopefully, unite ourselves in the end"? Is the writer so ignorant that he does not know that debating can also be done to mark false teachers and stop the mouths of them too?

I listened to the first "dialogue" held at the Shenandoah church building on April 14, 2013 with Bill Shockley, Pastor of the Oak Ridge Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas.

Pastor Shockley did as one would expect a Southern Baptist preacher (or any other denominational preacher) to do, he called Shenandoah's preacher, Gabriel Rodriguez, "brother," stated that he had not in all of his years as a pastor received such an invitation, and made it exceedingly clear that the Shenandoah Church of Christ was a denomination. The differences in the two churches were matters of opinion and that they had more in common with each other than most people realized. He declared that the one thing that we must believe is, "In the beginning God..." (Gen. 1:1). He also remarked that when Baptists and members of the church of Christ enter heaven there will not be the Baptist Church or the Church of Christ, but just the family of God.

When it came time for Gabriel Rodriguez to speak he engaged in some brief pleasantries. He then remarked that in speaking to Pastor Shockley at the time they were arranging their dialogue brother Rodriguez said to him:

I told, and I stressed very importantly, that as we had these discussions that they were not going to be a debate. I told him that I'm tired of debating. Because debates in the past have not served us well. They've only caused to infuse further division. And the purpose of humanity, especially in the religious area, we would hope, would be one of unity, that we can come together and talk about our differences and to hopefully understand each other a little better and possibly come to the conclusion that the difference might be a simple misunderstanding of who we are. And so this was the intent of these discussions.

When a man who represents himself as a gospel preacher expresses such tripe as brother Rodriguez did before and to a Baptist preacher during an assembly of the Lord's church in their own building, what else can we expect from such a church but apostasy. When there are elders in a church who will allow this kind of error to go on from no less than their preacher and with their complete approval, all we can say is, "What a shame and disgrace for the cause of Christ!"

—David P. Brown, Editor

Deviations From The Truth

Roelf Ruffner

Perhaps nothing in the realm of Christianity (so-called) is as pervasive as the frequent claims of the influence of the Holy Spirit. From heart flutters to sanctimonious pronouncements, all are prefaced with a mysterious deference to the Holy Spirit.

A case in point is the recent conclave of the Roman Catholic Church's cardinals to choose a new Pope. This "College" of aged men (One Scottish Cardinal was absent for past homosexual activity) shut themselves up in the Vatican for several days "voting" for a new Pope. In an English newspaper, an Austrian Cardinal related how the Holy Spirit gave him special "signs" signifying that Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina was "the one." He admitted he asked others for advice before the conclave. After a couple of votes, the ballots were burned and Pope Francis was chosen.

What about the other Cardinals who voted for someone else for Pope? Was the Holy Spirit not giving the correct "sign" to them? Maybe the "signs" they felt were not from the Holy Spirit?

In Acts 1:15-26, it took the Apostles, with God's help, only one casting of lots (not voting) to choose a successor to Judas. Today we have something better to choose elders and deacons in the church—the final revelation of God by the Holy Spirit—the New Testament (2 Tim. 3:15-16). The willing candidates are either qualified by meeting the qualifications given by the Holy Spirit or they are not. This is the way God chooses elders to oversee the church of Christ today, not by so-called mysterious "signs" of the Holy Spirit (<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=17863&repos=4&subrepos=2&searchid=1042267>, accessed May 25, 2013).

Redeemed Atheists?

At the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commanded all men every where to repent. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained... (Acts 17:30-31).

The other day the new Roman Catholic Pope Francis made the claim in a sermon that even atheists can be "redeemed by the blood of Christ." Really? This sounds a lot like the old heresy of Universalism which erroneously claims because of Jesus' sacrifice all men have been saved.

Recent Popes have been aiming at this for a long time so this is nothing really new. Of course this is in direct conflict with the entire scope of the Bible and the gospel. His minions went on and tried to clarify the statement by claiming that atheists can do good works too. They quickly drew up Mark 9:38-40 to "prove" that Jesus was inclusive of all folks that

do good works. This same passage is used by religious liberals to justify their ecumenism. But Jesus indicated that though this fellow was not an apostle ("**he followeth not us**" –vs. 38) but still a disciple, he had permission from Jesus to do what he did ("**in my name**" or "**by my authority**" –vs. 40). He was not an unbeliever but a follower of Jesus. That dog won't hunt!

We do not have access to the blood of Christ by good deeds but by obedience to the Gospel of Christ (cf. Acts 22:16), (<http://www.theblaze.com/stories/2013/05/23/pope-francis-sermon-sparks-debate-even-the-atheists-have-been-redeemed-with-the-blood-of-christ/> accessed June 7, 2013).

Is Yoga A Religion?

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8)

"Of course it is," should be the answer of any objective observer. The practice of Yoga is tied by hundreds of years to the Eastern religion of Hinduism. But many in their yearning to be "multi-cultural" have introduced this religious practice into many aspects of our lives. Even the Public Broadcasting System uses our tax dollars to play daily yoga classes on television. Where is the much vaunted "separation of church and state?" But supporters insist that it is merely a form of exercise and meditation or "a unity between spirit and body and between human and divine." Public schools are now using it in exercise classes.

FREE CD AVAILABLE

Contending for the Faith is making available a CD-ROM free of charge. **Why is this CD important? ANSWER:** It contains an abundance of evidentiary information pertaining to Dave Miller's doctrine and practice concerning the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders, MDR, and other relevant and important materials and documents directly or indirectly relating to the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Apologetics Press, Gospel Broadcasting Network, MSOP, and more.

To receive your free CD or make a financial contribution toward this important CD's distribution you can reach us at **Contending for the Faith, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383-2357**, or request the CD by emailing us at dpbcftf@gmail.com.

Even some of our brethren are involved in this mysticism by swallowing the tenants of the Emerging Church Movement (ECM). ECM takes Eastern meditation along with Roman Catholic mysticism in attempts at **“will worship”** (Col. 2:23). They chant (**“vain repetition”**— Mat. 6:7), burn candles, engage in trance-like prayers and meditation. This is not New Testament Christianity. It is an attempt to merge Christianity with Eastern religion and Western mysticism. The Apostle Paul says a man does this because he is **“vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind”** (Col. 2:18). There is nothing **“new under the sun”** (Ecc. 1:9); especially in religion (<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/lifestyle/56386520-80/yoga-says-hindu-lake.html.csp>, accessed June 13, 2013).

A Spiritual Criminal?

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

Brethren, as the old saying goes “it does not take a rocket scientist to understand this passage.” Yet many brethren refuse to obey it. For me it simply states: (1) If one teaches false doctrine (aka not the “doctrine of Christ.”), they have sinned and are not in fellowship with God, (2) Neither the individual Christian nor the church should fellowship them. (3) If we knowingly aid this false teacher in any way, we are fellowshipping him and are guilty of sin ourselves.

What about those who knowingly fellowship the sinner in point # 3 (vs. 11)? Are they “out of the loop” of sin because they have not directly fellowshipped the false teacher? No they are not! They are also sinning by fellowshipping a sinner, the sinner of Verse 11 (cf. Eph. 5:11).

If a friend of mine robs a bank, then comes and tells me of his crime and I agree to hide him, what am I? Legally I am an “accessory after the fact” even though I did not help rob the bank. I am guilty of a crime. If I then tell you about the situation and you do not contact the police, what does that make you? At the very least you are hindering the arrest of a fugitive, a crime in and of itself.

Yet some brethren will not flinch in fellowshipping those who bid “God speed” to a false teacher—a spiritual criminal.

The Evolutionary Mind-set

And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died (Gen. 7:21,22).

It never ceases to amaze me how naïve and blind evolutionary scientists are. The other day a news article was on the internet titled “Bizarre Creature found in 200-million-year-old Cocoon.” You can just hear the “ooing and aaawing.” The fossil of the mucus cocoon of an ancient leech was found

in Antarctica. What followed in the article was something out of a work of fiction. The writer tried to explain how such a tiny creatures’ cocoon just HAPPENED to survive 200 million years without decaying.

Possibly even more amazing is the fact that this soft-bodied, microscopic creature survived the vagaries of time. Preserving a soft-bodied organism like this one for so long is tricky and requires some outside intervention to keep the tissues from degrading.

And “This preservation is quite bizarre, but soft-bodied organisms cannot usually become fossilized unless they are rapidly entombed in a medium that prevents further decay.”

I have an explanation—the world wide Flood of Noah’s day. Immediate immersion in water followed by tons of sediment and debris covered the cocoon and sealed it from decay and oxidation. Over the centuries the remains fossilized under pressure into stone. But this explanation is not in this person’s paradigm or way of thinking. Such is the working of an “evolutionary” mind-set (http://www.nbcnews.com/id/50128117/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/bizarre-creature-found-million-year-old-cocoon, accessed July 11, 2013).

Questions For Mormons

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8).

Do you know any members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or Mormons? This theological cult has been around for 183 years and has 14 million members. Lately many members have been “surfing” the internet to find answers about their church. They are not happy with the answers they uncover about their founder, Joseph Smith, Jr. They are making their leaders very unhappy because they cannot answer their questions. According to an article in the *New York Times*, there is a growing number of “doubters” in the church. Some of these questions are listed below. Why not ask your Mormon friends what they think about these questions?

- Why does the church always portray Joseph Smith translating the Book of Mormon from golden plates, when witnesses described him looking down into a hat at a “peep stone,” a rock that he believed helped him find buried treasure?
- Why were black men excluded from the priesthood from the mid-1800s until 1978?
- Why did Smith claim that the Book of Abraham, a core scripture, was a translation of ancient writings from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham, when Egyptologists now identify the papyrus that Smith used in the translation as a common funerary scroll that has nothing to do with Abraham?
- Is it true that Smith took dozens of wives, some as young as 14 and some already wed to other Mormon leaders, to the great pain of his first wife, Emma?

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/21/us/some-mormons-search-the-web-and-find-doubt.html?pagewanted=all>, accessed July 25, 2013)

—2530 Moore Court
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Brother Terry Hightower brought the following article to our attention. It is from *OneNewsNow.com*, Monday, July 22, 2013—<http://onenewsnow.com//church/2013/07/22/where-sexual-liberalism-is-welcome-bible-believers-are-not#.Ue7n-BY3VDzw>—accessed July 31, 2013. Although the authors, Russ Jones and Charlie Butts are not members of the Lord's church they have written the truth on this timely, important, but sad subject.

Bro. Hightower is presently undergoing treatment to his eyes. The problem is a consequence of type 1 diabetes. He has suffered with it for many years. This form was previously referred to as insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) or juvenile diabetes. We understand something of the long term problem with which he has suffered over the years, for our son has dealt with it since he was about 19 years old. I know Terry and his family would appreciate your prayers on his behalf.

Although Terry is in the midst of his treatment some of which involves injections directly into the eyeballs as well as laser surgery, he continues to show his concern for informing brethren about spiritual matters. We wish him well. I am sure he would appreciate hearing from the brethren. His email address is: Terry Hightower <terryhightower@yahoo.com>.

—DPB

WHERE SEXUAL LIBERALISM IS WELCOME, BIBLE BELIEVERS ARE NOT

Conservatives do not have high hopes for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), which has been leaning liberal for decades and is now officially leaning further to the left.

Meeting in Orlando July 13-17, delegates at the General Assembly passed a significant resolution that Mark Tooley, president of *The Institute on Religion & Democracy (IRD)*, tells *OneNewsNow* opens the denomination's doors to people of all sexual orientations or gender identities.

"Implied in that resolution that that should include the ordained clergy," he notes. "So this is perhaps the first or one of the first specific affirmations by this particular denomination of so-called sexual orientation and sexual or gender self-identity."

The denomination's leadership has been on that trajectory for a long time, and it has had a damaging impact. Once counting about two million members in the 1960s, the Disciples of Christ now has about 639,000, making it perhaps the fastest declining denomination in the nation.

"That's always the irony for the liberal church—that they embrace sexual liberalism with the idea that that will make them more welcoming and throw open the doors, but, of course, the consequence is always just the opposite," Tooley observes.

People either leave the church entirely, or find a church where the Bible is taught and still held sacred.

The resolution passed by the church's governing body lists sexual orientation and gender identity alongside race, age and other categories to which the denomination is "striving to become a people of grace and welcome.

Doug Harvey, executive director of *Disciples Heritage*

Fellowship, a non-denominational ministry mostly comprised of former Disciples of Christ churches or congregations still officially connected with the denomination, agrees that the liberal view of sexuality and transgenderism is difficult for many church members to embrace.

"A lot of the older folks in the Disciples of Christ denomination remember what it once was and simply don't have a category in their brains to put a church that would actually ordain ultimately gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people," Harvey states. "So even when it's there on paper, it just kind of goes over the top of their head; they just can't comprehend it. And I say, 'God bless their innocence,' but that's not the world we live in."

Once a renewal group within the Disciples of Christ, Harvey says *Disciples Heritage Fellowship* lost hope years ago of facilitating change that embraced an evangelical worldview (sic). He suspects this recent affirmation will cause more to lose hope, too.

"Those churches will go through a painful process of studying their history and their own faith and then make a decision," he predicts. "Some will leave, some will choose to stay, but those that choose to stay often lose their best members—the solid Bible-believing young adults." ❧

[Editorial Comment: The "Disciples of Christ" began their journey down the broad road of apostasy well over a century ago. It was in the late 1960s the apostasy that began in the 19th Century in the Lord's church degenerated to the point that two denominations had formed out of it—the "Independent Christian Church" and the "Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)." Each church is a denomination. In their minds they are only a "Restoration" background church and understand

about as much about primitive pure New Christianity as a nest of baby mice.

In the Lord's church today, the liberals (those who by their doctrines loose men from what God in the Bible has bound on them) are working long and hard to change the churches of Christ into what the Disciples of Christ are. As they continue their work, in time they will lead those members who listen to them to the same place the so-called Disciples of Christ are today. Many in the church are already to that point in their beliefs and practices. And, to what have they attained? It is a place that permits church members to think that they can be as worldly as they want to be, but because they are "religious" God will not punish them.

The only reason the "Independent Christian Church" denomination has not embraced all that the Disciples of Christ

have taken to their bosom is fundamentally this—they do not desire to go where the Disciples of Christ denomination has gone. Since they are "Independent" churches, some of them are closer to the Disciples of Christ in their beliefs and practices than are others of them. Whether Nadab and Abihu or Jeroboam in the Old Testament, or Ananias and Sapphira and the Judaizing teachers of the New Testament, it has always been the case with those who are not content to do only what is authorized by the New Testament, leaving undone what is not authorized and what is specifically forbidden (Col. 3:17).

If the churches of Christ want to see where the liberals are taking many congregations of God's people, just take a good long look at the Disciples of Christ denomination and you will get a firsthand introduction to where many of us have gone and others are headed. —DPB



THE BIBLE CONDEMNS HOMOSEXUALITY

The Bible's condemnation of homosexuality is as clear and plain as the Bible's condemnation of murder, adultery, premarital sex, kidnapping, lying and idolatry. Further, for me to openly condemn homosexuality theologically makes me no more a "gay basher" than I am an "adultery basher," "premarital sex basher," "kidnapper basher" or a "murderer basher." If you disagree, your argument is with God's Bible.

The homosexual community has two ways of promoting their personal choices of being homosexual through the religious forum. *First*, some will claim the Bible actually promotes and condones homosexuality. *Second*, others try to get the Bible banned from public use by categorizing it as hate literature.

For any to use the Bible to condone rather than condemn homosexual activity in the theological arena just proves such a one has absolutely no idea what the Bible actually teaches. For anyone to suggest the Bible says homosexual activity is acceptable to God, is nothing short of willful blindness. So to set the record straight once and for all, here is what the Bible teaches on the subject.

Anyone who has heard of the cities of "Sodom and Gomorrah" knows that they were notorious hotbeds of homosexuality.

And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof (Gen. 19:5-8).

The Greek word in the New Testament for homosexu-

ality is literally "a sodomite." Homosexuals try to redefine what the term "sodomite" means (A term that has unchanged in 5000 years, even today—"sodomy"). Apart from the fact the city was clearly destroyed by God because of homosexuality in the narrative of Genesis 19, even the New Testament clearly states exactly the same thing in Jude 7.

Even as Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Any sinner should always remember that the God who commands us to love our neighbor is the same God who will cast any and all unrepentant sinners into the "eternal fire." Here are more Bible quotes regarding God's condemnation of homosexuality.

Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination (Lev. 18:22-23).

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them (Lev. 20:13).

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate (homosexuals—*NKJV*), nor abusers of themselves with mankind (sodomites—*NKJV*), Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9).

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous

man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind (homosexuals—*NKJV*), for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine (1 Tim. 1:9-10).

And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving

in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet (Rom. 26, 27).

If the homosexual community chooses to practice homosexuality in privacy, that is their free choice. But let such persons know for certain that the Bible condemns all such practices and God will judge them unfit for the eternal kingdom of heaven if they continue to practice and promote homosexual sex (sodomy).

—Author unknown



DEAVER, WOODS, AND DIRECT HELP

Gary W. Summers

Mac Deaver, the champion of “the direct help from God” heresy, occasionally prompts the reader who is considering his 2007 book (*The Holy Spirit*) to laugh. He does not intend to be humorous, but the reader cannot help but chuckle at his tactics. In his first chapter, Mac tried to establish that Gus Nichols agreed with his position while at the same time saying that in his oral debates he “never claimed brother Nichols to be in agreement” with what he had publicly defended (11). It remains confusing, then, to hear him say that brother Nichols probably did agree with him (12). Anyone who has read Gus Nichols’ book on the Holy Spirit knows that he did not agree with Mac, despite Mac’s suspicions to the contrary. Do these quotes of brother Nichols (from his book, *Lectures on the Holy Spirit*, published in 1997), sound like he believed that the Holy Spirit directly helped or influenced the Christian?

Question: Should we pray to God to give a preacher a “ready recollection?” Is this providential, miraculous, or what?

Answer [from brother Nichols, GWS]: That’s all borrowed from the Apostles in John 14, when Jesus promised them that the Spirit would inspire them to reveal Christianity, to reveal the Gospel. He said, “**He shall bring to your remembrance all things whatsoever I have said unto you.**” (John 14:26) Jesus did not want them to go out and preach without knowing exactly what he had taught, without any perversion whatsoever. He would not let them preach until they had received that power.

In Luke 24:48, he said, “**Ye are witnesses of these things.**” And then in v. 49, “**Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.**” It is error for a man to claim that same power tonight, when he is not an apostle, not in the same class they were, when the world is not in the same condition. (Acts 1:8)

They had no New Testament at that time, not a line of it. And I say again, it is a pity for people to reason in circles and ignore the facts that make a difference (151).

The reason that this quote is particularly pertinent is that many of Mac’s supporters are constantly asking, “Don’t you ask for the Holy Spirit to help you when you preach?” or some variation of that sentiment. Brother Nichols, who allegedly agreed with Mac, utterly demolished that view. Below is a further comment that cannot be misunderstood.

Question: How does the Holy Spirit guide men today other than through the Word?

Answer: Tonight I have been saying over and over that he does not! The Holy Spirit’s guidance is in the written word of God, and by it he does a thorough job guiding us. “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.” (Psa. 73:24) (83).

Unlike Mac, brother Nichols believed that the Word of God was sufficient and that we did not need direct help. This next quote is equally clear.

Question: Does the Holy Spirit speak through men today in a direct way? Does he motivate them to speak by “influence” on this behavior?

Answer: The Holy Spirit now through the Bible influences us to speak; but there is now no direct “independent of the word” operation, or revelation, for us. Such ideas “make the word of God of none effect” today because people will ‘turn up their noses’ to the word, and look forward to, or expect, imaginary direct revelation. This is absolutely a “decoy” to get people away from the word of God. The whole thing is a work of Satan, who wants to belittle the “word” of God and render it ineffective (82).

It is both comical and sad to see Mac Deaver trying to get brother Nichols to agree with his position. His treatment of brother Woods is both puzzling and humorous. In chapter one of his book, Mac spent a good deal of time trying to show that brother Warren utterly defeated Woods’ position on the Holy Spirit’s indwelling at a forum in 1967. Then Deaver begins his third chapter by attacking what Woods wrote concerning the Holy Spirit. But after doing so, he then tries to convince the reader that this man with lame argu-

ments actually agrees with him (does that make Mac equally lame?). In other words, if a man was so erroneous in his Holy Spirit views as Deaver alleges Woods was, then why would he trumpet that Woods agrees with him? Mac does not seem to be able to help it. Sooner or later, everyone agrees with him.

It parallels the global warming enthusiasts. If it is hot, that is evidence of global warming. If it is severely cold, that is also evidence of global warming. If it is too wet or too dry, guess what? It is just further proof of global warming. So it is with Mac. If someone's views are different from Mac's, he nevertheless agrees with him. Even if he plainly denies what Mac believes, he still wrote a phrase or sentence that could possibly be construed as agreeing with Mac. There is no escaping this irresistible conclusion—everyone agrees with Mac!

James 1:5

Since this discussion focuses on James 1:5, let us see what Mac says, Woods says, and the Scriptures teach. To begin with, James 1:5 teaches: **“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”** The first thing that one studying the book of James would notice is that this verse is not isolated but is part of a text. The wisdom being sought here is probably that which will enable the Christian to understand the reason for various trials which must be endured in order to develop patience (vss. 2-4). After this verse come three that encourage the seeker of wisdom to pray in faith; if he doubts, he will not receive an answer because he is unstable and double-minded.

Brother Woods kept this verse in its context; he wrote: “The ability to see great blessings in sore trial is not an inherent one, and must, therefore be acquired” (40). Brother Woods then elaborates on the means by which this wisdom is and is not acquired. He made clear that this wisdom does not come from:

- 1) a study of philosophy;
- 2) meditation;
- 3) consulting with wise men.

In other words, brother Woods differentiated between a) knowledge obtained through study by the accumulation of facts, and b) wisdom, which is the ability to apply the knowledge one has learned. In that connection he wrote that facts stored in the head “are obtained only through mental effort” (40). Wisdom, on the other hand, can only be bestowed by God.

Whether the reader agrees or not with brother Woods, the point is that this is what he taught in his commentary. He closed this section by saying that the manner in which God grants the wisdom prayed for is not dealt with in the text, which is absolutely correct. James did not tell how God

would grant the wisdom—just that He would.

Everybody Agrees With Mac

Perhaps a television network would like to pick up the above title as a religious sequel to the secular *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Although brother Woods simply stated a fact—that the manner of God's granting the wisdom was not specified—Mac immediately (and incorrectly) draws the conclusion that therefore brother Woods believed it was a direct infusion from God. He argues that, since the wisdom can only come from God and not through mental effort or study, that it must come direct from God's mind to ours. Mac concludes: “Now, will someone please explain to me how it is that brother Woods did not imply direct help from God!” (49, emph. Mac's).

Okay, Mac, read the following explanation carefully. What are the ways in which God can grant His people wisdom? Of course, there is the direct method, which was actually done in the first century. Wisdom is one of the nine spiritual gifts that Paul lists in 1 Corinthians 12; in fact, it is the first one he mentions (vs. 8). The second is knowledge. In granting these gifts, God gave Christians the information or the ability directly. Just as prophets were given the words to speak, those with these gifts could communicate spiritual knowledge they had not studied to obtain or impart wisdom which usually came from observation and application of principles. By the way, to say that God grants wisdom today directly implies that these gifts are still operational. If it is argued that even one of the gifts remains operational, how can anyone shut the door to the other eight, which includes speaking in tongues and the working of miracles? To suggest that brother Woods would have opened this door would be a repudiation of everything that he ever taught on this subject.

Although brother Woods affirmed that wisdom did not come through mental effort, which studying would require, he did not rule out thinking, period. Suppose, for example, that the one praying for wisdom to understand why Christians face trials was brought face to face with a situation in which a brother had suffered. God, through His providence, might allow him to overhear a conversation in which a pagan was so impressed by the demeanor of the Christian in the face of the trial that he was considering the authenticity of Christianity. Having heard of the benefit of a brother's suffering, he immediately achieved the understanding for which he had prayed. Did this wisdom come from study or meditation? No, he grasped the point in a moment, in a flash (as it were). This sudden realization that came through God's providence required a minimum of mental activity—totally unequal to that which is achieved through mental effort.

Mac immediately rules out the explanation just provided for God giving wisdom through providence, but he does so erroneously. Misapplying what Woods said about knowledge requiring mental effort, Mac then concludes that no mental effort is required in wisdom, either: “Thus, it has nothing to

do with reflection or any other mental activity at all” (49). As already shown, the mental activity required in studying and learning and the mental activity in coming to a sudden realization are two entirely different matters.

Andrew Connally

Now the careful reader notices a bit of misinformation in Mac’s book on the Holy Spirit. Below the quote from brother Guy N. Woods is footnote 50, which begins on page 48 and finishes on page 49. Mac states that Connally quoted the Woods’ passage and then drew the following conclusion: “But God gives it, directly to us, and He gives it ‘liberally’” (49). The only problem is that Connally made that statement before quoting the passage by Guy N. Woods. Whoops! All right, it is only a technicality, but is it one that a man who prayed for wisdom would make? Surely, Mac prayed for wisdom in writing his book.

Connally was assigned James 1:1-12 for the ninth Annual Denton Lectureship book, which was published in 1990. The quotation cited above came before the Woods’ quote. Immediately after it, Connally wrote “Thus here is something God does for the child of God personally and directly in response to believing prayer” (50). What Connally meant by the word directly only he knew. In 1990 Mac did not hold the position he currently advocates, let alone Andrew Connally. Although it is possible that Connally believed what Mac now teaches, it might be the case that he was thinking of God’s providence, in which God brings something about apart from the Word versus something that comes about as a result of our studying the Word.

Certainly brother McClish, who edited the book, did not understand brother Connally to be saying that God infuses wisdom directly into our minds, just as He would have a spiritual gift in the first century. As editor of the original *Gospel Journal*, brother McClish devoted an entire issue that dealt with the various aspects of Mac’s teaching. Mac did not say that either Connally or McClish agreed with him (which is surprising), but he did offer this comment in the footnote 50 already alluded to: “Notice that Connally uses the word ‘directly,’ and please consider that this book was edited by Dub McClish” (49). The reader is left to draw his own conclusion.

Wisdom

James says to pray for wisdom, but Jesus had earlier promised others that they would be granted miraculous wisdom. In Luke 12:11-12, He said that, when His disciples were delivered up to authorities, they should “not worry about how or what” they should answer. In other words, both knowledge and the wisdom to use that knowledge would be provided. Jesus added that the Holy Spirit would tell them in that very hour what they should say. This same idea is repeated in Luke 21:14-15 when Jesus told His disciples: **“Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate before-**

hand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.”

This means that God gave them the words directly and the ability to speak with wisdom. Again, this clearly indicates a miraculous ability. Do we still have this ability today? No, the promise was made to Jesus’ disciples in the first century who did not have the Scriptures—not to us who do have the opportunity to learn and use them properly. Stephen literally did what Jesus promised. As he faced his adversaries, **“they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke”** (Acts 6:10).

Of course, Jesus Himself set the standard. When He finished teaching on various matters, no one had anything else to say. He perplexed those with His question on John’s baptism so that they admitted they did not know how to answer Him (Mat. 21:23-27). When He gave His answer on taxes, they marveled and left (Mat. 22:22). When He answered the Sadducees concerning the woman married to seven husbands **“they were astonished at His teaching”** (Mat. 22:23-33).

Jesus silenced His adversaries with His great wisdom. Mac has silenced no one. Daniel Denham wrote 90 pages of criticism of Mac’s book, which is included in *Profiles in Apostasy #2*, recently published by *Contending for the Faith* (Feb. 2011). He had at least three times that material which he has accumulated on the subject, showing the fallacies of Mac’s reasoning and positions. If Mac had a fraction of the wisdom of Stephen, the apostles, or the Lord, no one would be able to refute the positions set forth in his book, but brother Denham, this writer, and others have shown that Mac’s teachings do not reflect wisdom but folly.

Brother Denham points out that Mac wrote “that God in answering our prayer would be increasing our personal capacity to grasp or comprehend that wisdom provided in the Scriptures...” (109). Really? And Mac knows that—how? Mac’s problem is that Mac teaches that man, when he prays for wisdom, cannot receive information; so he fancies instead that God will enhance his “Capacity to comprehend or better grasp that source material” (109). In other words, he alleges that his “comprehension skills of the revealed Word would increase.”

Brother Denham rightly says: “There you have it! Just accept Mac’s doctrine and God will multiply your brain cells, energize your cognitive functions, and/or juice up your intellect” (115). Once again, we see that Mac’s case is built on assumptions that are only conjectures. James is not teaching that our brain cells will be supersized if we pray for wisdom. In some manner God will grant our request, as brother Woods wrote. God is capable of supplying wisdom in a way other than directly.

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LED BY THE SPIRIT

DUB MCCLISH

One is not a child of God, a Christian, unless he is led by the Spirit: **“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God”** (Rom. 8:14). How does God lead His children through the Holy Spirit? Most denominationalists, in their doctrinal confusion and emotionalism, are under the delusion that there is some sort of direct guidance of the Spirit in their lives. Some feel that this is done by giving free reign to their impulses or yielding to their hunches. Some believe the Spirit must “illuminate” the written Word for them if they are to understand it. Further, some claim that they receive some special blessing of spiritual strength (or the ability to behave righteously) from work which the Spirit does for them directly and internally beyond and apart from the written Word and apart from God’s external activity in the realm of providence. Others believe they hear a voice speaking directly to them from the Spirit. Still others believe the Spirit leads them by showing them special signs which indicate specific decisions that need to be made at a given time. (Some wait on the Spirit to “lead” them to get up in the morning, which socks to wear, and even which one to put on first.)

It is not surprising, but expected, that unbelievers advocate the above-listed errors. Nor are we surprised that “change agents” and “new hermeneutic” advocates are urging at least some of these activities of the Spirit of God in their do-or-die agenda to wreck the church of the Lord. The matter that causes both surprise and dismay is that some otherwise sound brethren are now saying that the Spirit operates in a direct mode apart from and in addition to His Word in the realm of sanctification. Our concern is that they apparently do not have in mind merely the way God operates and what He does through His “behind-the-scenes” providence or in answer to our prayers, indirectly and external to our hearts and minds (which Biblical doctrines are practically universally taught among the elect [e.g., Gen. 50:20; Est. 4:14; Rom. 8:28; et al.]). These brethren seem rather to be insisting that the Spirit does some things directly and internally to and in the Christian’s heart that He does not do through His Word alone. If this is not what these brethren mean by their words, they should say so and do it plainly (and we would hope soon)! It is imperative that our words on this subject be carefully-chosen, precise, and well-defined so as not to raise questions unnecessarily. (We say this realizing that we all fall short of this lofty aim occasionally.) If one cannot state in unambiguous, clearly-comprehensible terms, his concept of the way the Holy Spirit does His work for the Christian, it may be a strong signal that he has an incorrect concept that he needs to abandon or at least hold only to

himself if he must hold it.

Two major differing views concerning the way the Spirit dwells in the Christian (i.e., representatively or personally) have been held by those who have genuinely pleaded for the restoration of the ancient order over the past two centuries. The “how” of the Spirit’s indwelling, in and of itself, has not been considered a “fellowship” issue by respected men among us in past generations and should not be now. However, so far as we know only an infinitesimal number who were/are counted faithful through all these years have advocated (until very recently) the idea that the Spirit leads, guides, instructs, strengthens, or produces spiritual fruit in the Christian in any direct or immediate way, apart from or in addition to His spiritual “sword,” His Word (Eph. 6:17). (We realize that “how many” or “which” brethren believe a certain doctrine does not guarantee its truthfulness. However, it hardly seems wise to disdain or abandon hastily doctrinal convictions arrived at by many able men over a long period of time.) To contend that the Spirit thus operates on the heart of the Christian in some direct, immediate way has generally been (and continues to be) correctly perceived both as (1) a surrender of the all-sufficiency of the Word of God and (2) an opening of the door to unrestrainable subjectivism.

It is not always kept clear (but it should be) that the way the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian and the way the Holy Spirit works in the life of the Christian are separate issues. Some (both among representative-indwelling advocates and personal-indwelling advocates) apparently believe that the personal indwelling view somehow implies or at least tends toward the direct-work view of the Holy Spirit. However, we deny even the tendency, much less the implication. The personal indwelling view no more implies or tends toward the direct work of the Holy Spirit than the doctrine of the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins implies or tends toward “salvation by meritorious works” (as denominationals have long averred). We do not know of any brother who faithfully teaches the role of baptism in God’s salvation pattern who would ever think of considering it some sort of work of merit on man’s part. Likewise, until lately faithful brethren have been all but non-existent who hold that the Spirit dwells in one personally and who therefore believe that this conviction implies some work in or for us by the Spirit separate from, in addition to, His written Word. Again, let us keep clear the distinction between the indwelling and the operation of the Spirit.

Now back to our original question: How does the Holy Spirit direct, lead, and do His work in the Christian? Does

He provide direct leadership and influence in our lives? Does He directly (apart from, in addition to His written Word and His external providence) tell us where to go, what to do, when to do what, and such like? Does He directly (apart from, in addition to the Bible and providence) give us spiritual strength and cause us to produce His fruit (Gal. 5:22–23)? Please bear in mind that however the Spirit leads, He leads not a few, many, or most, but all of us, according to Romans 8:14.

In the first century, miraculous power was given to the apostles, and they were able to impart it to others for the purpose of revealing and confirming the Gospel (Heb. 2:3–4). However, so far as we can discern, the New Testament neither explicitly nor implicitly teaches that every Christian possessed miraculous gifts. On some occasions, the Spirit directly told someone to go to a certain place and to do or not do a certain thing (e. g., Acts 8:29; 10:19–20; 16:6–7; et al.). However, it is readily observable that such direct messages and instances of guidance, even in the days of miracles (long since ended [1 Cor. 13:8–10, et al.]), were not the ordinary, but the extraordinary occurrence. Since even these miraculous incidents of the Spirit’s leadership were exceptional and were confined to only some or perhaps even a few individuals, it is manifest that such miraculous leadership was not in Paul’s (or the Spirit’s) mind in Romans 8:14. The kind of leadership of which Paul wrote is that which the Spirit gives to every Christian, implying that it is not occasional and extraordinary, but constant and ordinary.

How then are sons of God led by the Spirit? We repeat that until very recently, faithful brethren, whether they held a personal or a representatively-only view of the Spirit’s indwelling, answered almost unanimously as follows: “We are led by the Spirit when and as we obey the Word of the Spirit.” Paul commanded: “Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). Surely none would deny that to “walk by the Spirit” is to be “led by the Spirit.” Im-

mediately after His statement just quoted, the Spirit (through Paul’s inspired pen) leads us to understand what the “works of the flesh” are and what the “fruit of the Spirit” is (Gal. 5:19–26), with the implied obligation to shun the former and produce the latter. There is not the slightest hint that Paul had in mind any idea that the Spirit apart from or in addition to the written Word would somehow directly produce this beautiful and everywhere-lawful fruit in us.

Our conviction is that there is only one way in which any man (whether alien sinner or God’s child) is “led by the Spirit”: it is by obeying the Word of the Spirit. Any other claimed leading of the Spirit degrades and even nullifies His written Word by which He leads us. After all, if the Holy Spirit directly produces the fruit of the Spirit in us, what need have we for the instructions and urgings of the written Word? Yet, it is that very written Word (“Scripture”) which is profitable for our every spiritual need and craving and which, if followed, will bring us (without any extra direct assistance of the Spirit) to full spiritual maturity (2 Tim. 3:16–17). Only as we read, understand, and obey the Word does the Spirit lead, direct, teach, and work in us. Any other view of the Spirit’s work in us is an aberrant view in light of both the Bible and the almost-unanimous convictions of generations of earnest brethren in modern times.

So long as brethren are united on this bedrock foundation of Biblical principle, we cannot see why the manner of the Spirit’s indwelling the Christian should ever be considered a divisive issue. We therefore appeal to all brethren (whether they are believers in the representative or in the personal indwelling) to earnestly join hands and hearts concerning the work of the Spirit on the hearts of men through His Word alone. As one man let us go forth to face the change-mad liberal heretics within and the many and mighty Satanic foes without who are attacking Zion from every direction.

—908 Imperial Drive
Denton, TX 76209



You Can Still Find the Church of the Bible

G. K. Wallace

In 1942 when I was in Kansas City, someone stole my car. I had a new 1942 model NASH automobile. My car was gone! I did not know which way to turn. So I called the police. When they came they began to ask questions. They asked, “What kind of car is it? What is the name of the car?”

Suppose I said, “It doesn’t make any difference about a name. Just go find me a car.” They asked, “What model is it? When was it made?” Suppose I said, “It doesn’t make any difference when it was made. Just get me a car. The model is immaterial.” Suppose that they had come back with an old

1914 model. I would have decided it did make a difference, would I not? I suspect that if I had talked to those policemen like that, they would have said, “He is drunk; we had better lock him up.” Yet I can talk to the world about the church and say, “It does not make any difference about the name, makes no difference when it was started, no difference what it does,” and the world says I’m a scholar. If I had talked that way to the police, they would have said I was a drunk!

Yes, they have destroyed every identification mark of the church. But let me tell you, you can find the church that Jesus built, if you will get out and look for it in as sensible a manner as those police looked for my car.

—Deceased

Seven Musts Mentioned in Scripture

Jess Whitlock

Many times we find the word MUST in God's Word. Many more times that word is certainly implied. W. E. Vine defines this Greek word, *dei*, as "an impersonal verb, signifying 'it is necessary' or 'one must,' 'one ought.'"; Let us note the full thrust of this little word in seven powerful passages of the pages of Holy Writ.

John 3:14: "**And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the son of man be lifted up.**" If the serpent had not been lifted up in the wilderness the people would have had no cure for the deadly snakebite. In like manner, if God had not allowed His only begotten Son to be lifted up on the cross, we would be without a cure today for the problem that confronts all mankind; that is, sin! Notice John 3:16, "**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**" Christ Jesus is the Savior of the world (Luke 19:10); He is the only Way to salvation (John 14:6); He is the author and finisher of faith (Heb. 12:2). Christ was/is the only way we could have redemption.

Acts 4:12: "**Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we MUST be saved.**" We are reminded of Peter's preaching in Acts 2:36-38. Peter affirms that every person who is saved MUST be saved by obedience to the authority of Jesus Christ as Lord. "**And having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation**" (Heb. 5:9). He is our High Priest (3:1).

Hebrews 11:6: "**But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God MUST believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.**" Trust is a Must! We cannot be pleasing to God without that trust, that belief. I recall the words of a hymn that I have sung since childhood: "Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." Do not forget the definition of this word "MUST," i.e., "it is necessary...one must...one ought." Robinson gives this definition: "It is binding on anyone, it behooves one to do, i.e., one must, one ought."

Acts 16:30: "**And [the Philippian jailor] brought [Paul and Silas] out, and said, Sirs, what MUST I do to be saved?**" There is no greater question that any man can ask today. Remember the imperative force and thrust of that little word, *must*. Notice what happens in this context: "**And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved**" (vs. 31), "**and [he] was baptized, he and all his**" (vs. 33) "**and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house**" (vs. 34). They had to hear the Word of the Lord

and obey the Lord's Word; likewise, man MUST do so today! There is no other way!

John 3:7: "**Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye MUST be born again.**" This is the Lord's direct instruction to Nicodemus. In the context of John chapter 3 we note that one cannot enter into the kingdom of God unless one is born again. Earlier in this narrative Christ had stated, "**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" (Two more words are worthy of notice: *except* and *cannot*!) The new birth and being born anew, both refer to the one baptism of the New Testament. This MUST is just as imperative today as it was when first commanded by Jesus Christ.

John 4:24: "**God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him MUST worship Him in spirit and in truth.**" We MUST worship God with the right attitude and with the right authority (dare we say, pattern?)—yea, verily! Our worship to God MUST conform to the powerful, precious truth of God! The late, beloved brother Guy N. Woods has well stated: "the three simple, but vitally important aspects of true worship are set out: (1) We must worship God; (2) we must worship God in spirit, i.e., rationally and sincerely; (3) we must worship God in truth, as His word directs (Col. 3:17; John 17:17)."

2 Corinthians 5:10: "**For we MUST all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to all that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**" All mankind will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and all will be judged. Quicker than you can say, "Tiger Woods," the whole world will be judged by God. The eternal destiny of all mankind will be based upon our obedience or our disobedience to the will of God (Heb. 9:27; Ecc. 12:13-14; Mat. 7:21-23; Rom. 14:12; et al.).

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THE OLD PATHS PULPIT

Sermon Outline

Danny Douglas

REMEMBER SHILOH

Jeremiah 7



Introduction

1. Albert Barnes commented:

The ark, Jeremiah shows, had not always been at Jerusalem. The place first chosen, as the center of the nation's worship, was Shiloh, a town to the north of Bethel, situated in the powerful tribe of Ephraim (Jos. 18:1 note). The ruin of Shiloh is ascribed (Psa. 78:58-64) to the idolatry which prevailed in Israel after the death of Joshua; a similar ruin due to similar causes should fall on Jerusalem (Jer 7:14) [Albert Barnes Commentary].

2. Concerning Jeremiah 7:12 Barnes wrote:

[At the first] In the first stage, the first period of the existence of the Jewish commonwealth, Shiloh was to the Judges what Jerusalem subsequently was to the kings; and as the fall of Shiloh through the wickedness of Eli's sons marked the period when the government by Judges was to pass away, and the second stage begin; so the power of the kings perished at the fall of Jerusalem, and left the way clear for the third stage of Jewish polity, government by the scribes] (Albert Barnes Commentary).

3. God set the ark of the covenant, the Tabernacle, and Israel's center of worship at Shiloh at the first (Jer. 7:12), but then, because of Israel's disobedience God allowed the Philistines to destroy it; to take away the ark; slay Eli's two sons, and thirty-thousand Israelites (1 Sam. 4:1-11).

4. Now, Judah is in the same deplorable condition. Jehovah urges the people to go back to Shiloh, i.e. Remember Shiloh! They needed to remember, repent, and return to God! (Jer. 7:11-15).

5. God calls the people of Judah back to the **“old paths, where is the good way”** (Jer. 6:16), but they refused.

6. Jeremiah is the **“weeping prophet”** (Jer. 9:1, 10). He loved God. He loved God's word. He loved righteousness. He loved his people. He put the truth before himself!

Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! (Jer. 9:1).

For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of

the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone (Jer. 9:10).

7. The people were set on idolatry and going after their own way:

This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing (Jer. 13:10).

8. To get the context of the message read the following scripture:

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word: If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD (Jer. 26:1-9).

I. God's Command.

A. The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD** (Jer. 7:1-2; cf. Jer. 26:1-2).

B. Why would God warn people going to worship?

That warning is needed Today (Acts 20:28-32; Col. 1:27-29).

II. Amend your ways and your Doings!

A. Hear the words of the prophet

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these (Jer. 7:3-4).

1. “*amend*”—OT:3190 *yatab* (yaw-tab’); a primitive root; to be (causative) make well, literally (sound, beautiful) or figuratively (happy, successful, right): (*Strong*).

2. [to be good, to be pleasing, to be well, to be glad, i.e. to do good, to do right, to be good, to be pleasing—(*Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*).]

3. Many today among God’s people and in our land need to hear this—“Amend your ways and your doings”! (Pro. 14:34; Eph. 5:25-27).

4. They were going to the LORD’s house to worship the LORD. Yet, they still needed to amend their ways and their doings. Apply to the church of today!

B. Jesus warned His people and wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). We need preachers and elders like Jeremiah and Jesus!

III. What Will Happen if You Do Not Repent?

A. God warns what will happen if they do not repent and amend their ways:

Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD. But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim (Jer. 7:11-15).

C. God will destroy this place like He did Shiloh.

...amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God...” ! “Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you (Jer. 26:13).

E. Time after time God has warned them, but time is running out:

I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets,

rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me (Jer. 35:15).

IV. They had a False Sense of Security—Like those at Shiloh!

A. “Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these” (Jer. 7:4).

1. They had fixated on the temple as their security, as was the ark when Shiloh was destroyed (1 Sam. 4:3). The Philistines smote Israel (30,000 Israelites were slain) [1 Sam. 4:3, 10].

2. “**And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain**” (1 Sam. 4:11).

3. Concerning Jer 7:4—

[The temple of the LORD] Thrice repeated, to emphasize the rejection of the cry ever upon the lips of the false prophets. In their view the maintenance of the temple-service was a charm sufficient to avert all evil. [These] The buildings of the temple, to which Jeremiah is supposed to point. The Jews put their trust in the material buildings (*Albert Barnes Commentary*).

B. They needed to thoroughly amend their ways and their doings:

For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit (Jer. 7:5-8).

C. Jeremiah’s words aroused the indignation of the people:

Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house. Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is

worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears” (Jer. 26:8-11).

1. If you do not amend your ways, then you will be led into Babylonian captivity:

For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword. Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon (Jer. 20:4-5).

2. They did not repent, so they were carried into Babylonian captivity.

a. There were 3 carryings away under Nebuchadnezzar over about a 20-year period.

b. The last one (ca. 587 B.C.) followed the destruction of the Temple, in which they had trusted! (Jer. 52:11-14).

V. Many important Lessons.

A. Although Worship is important, if we do not live according to God’s will, our worship is vain (Mat. 15:7-9).

B. Although membership in the church is important, if we do not live as members of the body of Christ should live, then being a member of a congregation will not

save us! We must live as citizens of the kingdom of God (Phi. 3:19-20).

C. Many have a form or semblance of godliness, but are not truly godly people (2 Tim. 3:5).

D. Although baptism is essential (Gal. 3:27; Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16), if we are not faithful to God after baptism we will be lost anyway!

E. Bible knowledge is important (2 Tim. 2:15), but if we don’t obey the truth we will be lost anyway! (Luke 6:46; Mat. 7:21).

F. We must continue in Christ’s doctrine (2 John 9).

G. Some trust in the church building, but are not faithful as members of the Lord’s spiritual house—the church (1 Pet. 2:5; 1 Tim. 3:15).

H. Simply being religious, like many in the Catholic Church and the denominations are, is not sufficient. We must obey the will of God (Mat. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9).

1. *Plan of Salvation:* Hear the word of God (Rom. 10:17); Believe the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16; Acts 18:8); Repent (Acts 2:38; 17:30); Confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37); and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38—Mat. 26:28; Acts 22:19—Rev. 1:5; Acts 8:35-39; Gal. 3:27).

2. Unfaithful members of the church need to repent, confess their sins, and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22-24; Jam. 5:16; 1 John 1:9).

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Dub McClish, Gospel preacher



Dub McClish



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I remember how I really loved to listen to my favorite professors—Terry Hightower, Jackie Stearsman, William Woodson, Dowell Flatt, Earl West, Jack Lewis, and many lectureship speakers—and how they talked about the old preachers, and the issues that sparked the Restoration Movement in America. I also remember how painful it was to dig out these jewels of history; how you had to go to a College library and find the bound volumes of each journal. Few indexes were available so if you wanted to be comprehensive in your search, you just had to go page by page. Even though it was time consuming, I enjoyed all those hours. I tracked controversial issues through the decades going page by page.

Now, we have a way to use the computer to scan all those pages and search what we want to see. You can sit at the feet of Alexander Campbell, Moses Lard, Barton W. Stone, and John W. McGarvey. Don't forget that the *Firm Foundation* covered 125 years—many generations of great preachers and Bible Scholars. All the issues are covered as they had to deal with the same troubles we have today. The schools, the churches, the mission points, and world missions are all chronicled here in the *Firm Foundation*. This is the paper missionaries reported their news and needs. The *FF* is really the “who is who” of the Restoration Movement. Biographical sketches of current and future preachers, teachers and editors are all here. It is possible that the history of your home congregation is here too!

As I started this project (*The Firm Foundation Preservation Project*), I had to learn the computer skills, acquire the right software, and scanners, and then I had to track down all the issues. I travelled thousands of miles, talked to the helpful and not so helpful, and managed to gather up thousands of loose issues. You would think that one complete copy would be enough, but no. Many times I would find a missing page or issue in a “complete” set and have to go looking again. I even had to use microfilm for 1886-1929 because those who had these issues were not willing to let me scan them. It was an amazing journey but worth it. You would think that brotherhood librarians would be the best source for information and assistance. Some were extremely helpful... others were indifferent... and still others were downright mean. Go figure that out.

Order online from **AMAZON.COM** (type in the search line “Firm Foundation Preservation Project”), or write me (**704 Red Oak Drive, Orange, TX 77632**), or phone **409-670-1675**.

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Also, you can order the *Millennial Harbinger*, *Christian Baptist*, *Lard's Quarterly*, and others. ***All are unrestricted pdf files.*** The other titles are \$1.00 per year as well. Special thanks to John Prophet and the *Firm Foundation* for granting me permission to do this worthy project.

2013 SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST *CFTF* LECTURESHIP

CHRIST—THE GREAT CONTROVERSIALIST

The lectureship was presented from Wednesday, February 20—Sunday, February 24 in the facilities of the Spring Church of Christ. The congregation is superintended by elders: Kenneth D. Cohn, Buddy Roth, and Jack Stephens. David P. Brown is the evangelist working full time with the church. He is also the director of the annual lectureship and editor of the book.

Secretary: Sonya West ♦ E-mail: sonyacwest@gmail.com ♦ Office Phone: (281) 353-2707

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST ~ PO BOX 39 (Mailing address) ~ 1327 SPRING CYPRESS ROAD, SPRING, TX 77383

David P. Brown: *Christ—The Great Controversialist*

Gary Summers: *Christ Confronted Satan*

Michael Hatcher: *Christ Confronted Religious Traditions*

Ken Chumbley: *Christ Confronted Error About Truth*

Don Tarbet: *Christ Confronted Error About Repentance*

Gene Hill: *Christ Confronted Error About the End of Time*

Daniel Denham: *Christ Confronted Errors About Miracles*

Charles Pogue: *Christ Confronted Error About Unity and Fellowship*

Lester Kamp: *Christ Confronted Error About Himself*

Skip Francis: *Christ Confronted Error About Materialism and Money*

Geoff Litke: *Christ Confronted His Disciples' Errors*

Wayne Blake: *Christ Confronted Worry*

Daniel Denham: *Christ Confronted Error About the New Birth*

Charles Pogue: *Christ Confronted Pride*

Danny Douglas: *Christ Confronted Error About Worship*

Don Tarbet: *Christ Confronted Error About Forgiveness*

Terry Hightower: *Christ Confronted Error About Civil Government*

Ken Chumbley: *Christ Confronted Error About Love*

Rheba Stancliff: *Christ Confronted Error About Women*

Danny Douglas: *Christ Confronted Hypocrisy*

John West: *Christ Confronted Error about His Kingdom*

Bruce Stulting: *Christ Confronted Error About Salvation*

Lynn Parker: *Christ Confronted Error About the Nature of Man*

Lester Kamp: *Christ Confronted Error About Faith and Knowledge*

Gary Summers: *Christ Confronted Error About Heaven and Hell*

Terry Hightower: *Christ Confronted Error About the Father*

Michael Hatcher: *Christ Confronted Error About the Holy Spirit*

Dub McClish: *Christ Confronted Error About Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*



Videos of the lectures are archived at the following web address: www.churchesofchrist.com.

LECTURESHIP BOOK: The book is **\$17.00** per book plus **\$4.00 S&H**. Book stores and dealers ordering five or more books get a 40% discount.

CD OF LECTURESHIPS: A CD of ALL the Spring Church of Christ lectureship books from 1994–2013 is available. This is in PDF format and is searchable. The price is **\$50.00 per CD**. If you have purchased a CD previously, you can upgrade for **\$5.00** to the current CD (1994-2013). We ask that you return your old CD when you purchase the new one.

AUDIO AND VIDEO: Audio and video recordings of the entire lectureship are available in CD (MP3), DVD, and Blu-ray formats. The cost is: CD set—**15.00 plus S&H**; DVD (standard definition) set—**30.00 plus S&H**; Blu-ray (high definition) set—**40.00 plus S&H**. *Texas residents must add 7.25 percent tax.*

ORDERING: To order the lectureship book, the CD of the lectureship books, or audio/video recordings contact *Contending For The Faith*, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, TX 77383-2357, or (281)350-5516, or dpbcftf@gmail.com.

38th Annual Bellview Lectures

INNOVATIONS

No Eternal Punishment

Dub McClish

Bible Authority

Daniel Denham

Silence of the Scriptures

Dub McClish

Dedicating Babies

Danny Douglas

Special Services (Easter, Christmas)

Michael Hatcher

Kitchens in the Building?

Jess Whitlock

Logic and the Bible

Terry Hightower

Modern Translations

Daniel Denham

Direct Operation of the Spirit

Johnny Oxendine

Voting on Elders

David Watson

Drama Teams/Puppet Ministry

Lee Moses

Special Ministers

Tim Cozad

Disaster Relief Organizations

David P. Brown

The Social Gospel

Lee Moses

Female Leaders

Bruce Stulting

Missionary Societies

Ken Chumbley

Ecumenism

Danny Douglas

Children's Worship/Divided Assembly

Bruce Stulting

Praise Teams

Ken Chumbley

Handclapping

Jess Whitlock

Any-Day, Any-Thing Lord's Supper

David Watson

Gymnasiums ("Family Life Centers")

Tim Cozad

House Church Concept

Lynn Parker

Mechanical Instruments of Music

David P. Brown

Fellowship Innovations

Johnny Oxendine

Theistic Evolution

Lynn Parker

Bellview Lectures Information

www.bellviewcoc.com

Books

The 38th annual 2013 Bellview lectureship book, *Innovations*, is available for purchase. The book contains 26 chapters and is a soft-cover book. You will want to purchase a copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

Books-on-CD

The Bellview lectureship books (1975-1976, 1978, 1988-2005, 2007-2013) will be available on CD in Adobe PDF. The price of the CD is \$37.50. The CD will also include the Defender (1970, 1972-2012), Beacon (1972, 1974-2012), and other material.

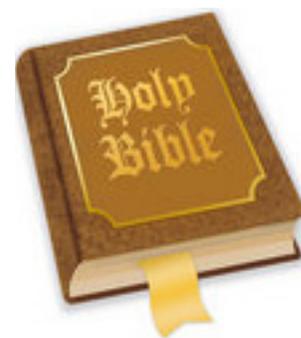


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Directory of Churches...

-Alabama-

Holly Pond—Church of Christ, 10221 Hwy 278, Holly Pond, AL 35083, Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., (256) 507-1776, (256) 507-1778.

-Colorado-

Denver—Piedmont Church of Christ, 1602 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 109, Denver, CO 80231, Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. www.piedmontcoc.net, Lester Kamp, evangelist. (720) 535-5807.

-England-

Cambridgeshire—Cambridge City Church of Christ, meeting at The Manor Community College, Arbury Rd., Cambridge, CB4 2JF. Sun., Bible Study--10:30 a.m., Worship-- 11:30 a.m.; Tue. Bible Study--7:30 p.m. www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk. Keith Sisman, Gospel Preacher. Contacts: Keith Sisman [By phone inside USA (281) 475-8247; Inside the U.K.: Cambridge (England): 01223-911243]; Alternative Cambridge contacts: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Postal/ mailing Address - PO BOX 1, Ramsey Huntingdon, PE26 2YZ United Kingdom

-Florida-

Ocoee—Ocoee Church of Christ, 2 East Magnolia Street, Ocoee, FL 34761. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7:00 p.m. David Hartbarger, Evangelist, (407) 656-2516,

Pensacola—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Michael Hatcher, evangelist, (850) 455-7595.

-North Carolina-

Rocky Mount—Scheffield Drive Church of Christ, 3309 Scheffield Dr., Rocky Mount, NC 27802 (252) 937-7997.

-South Carolina-

Belvedere (Greater Augusta, Georgia Area)—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, www.belvederechurchofchrist.org; e-mail belvecoc@gmail.com, (803) 442-6388, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Evangelist: Ken Chumbley (803) 279-8663.

-Oklahoma-

Porum—Church of Christ, 8 miles South of I-40 at Hwy 2, Warner exit. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. Allen Lawson, evangelist, email: allenlawson@earth-comm.com.

-Texas-

Denton area—Northpoint Church of Christ, 4224 N. I-35 (Greenway Plaza, just north of Cracker Barrel). Mailing address: 4224 N. I-35, Denton, TX 76207. E-mail: northpointcoc@hotmail.com. Website: www.northpointcoc.com. Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 1:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: (940) 387-1429; dubmcclish@gmail.com.

Evant—Evant Church of Christ, 310 West Brooks Drive, Evant, TX 76525. Office: (254) 471-5705; Jess Whitlock, evangelist (254) 471-5717.

Houston area—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (281) 353-2707. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of the Spring *Contending for the Faith* Lectures, and the internet school, Truth Bible Institute. www.churchesofchrist.com.

Huntsville—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. Huntsville, TX 77320. Sun. 9 a. m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (936) 438-8202.

New Braunfels—225 Saenger Halle Rd. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

Richwood—1600 Brazosport, Richwood, TX. Sun. 9:30; 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (979) 265-4256.