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Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

WHAT SHOULD FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN PARENTS EXPECT THEIR CHILDREN TO BE TAUGHT IN THESE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING?

(PART 3)

Dub McClish

By “faithful Christian parents,” we have in mind those who are generally well versed in the Bible and who respect its authority. These would likewise be parents who have some knowledge of brotherhood currents and issues and who realize and are deeply concerned about the great inroads of liberalism and compromise in the church over the past few decades. They do not want their children to be swept away by these elements.

Before considering the expectations of faithful parents, however, let us consider some other categories of “Christian parents.” The church today is composed of a multitude of “nominal Christians,” among whom are many parents. In stark contrast with the aforementioned faithful Christians, such parents know little of the Scriptures and less about the rampant malignancy of liberalism that increasingly afflicts the church. Parents of this sort apparently have a simplistic confidence that the aforementioned institutions and their academic sisters will provide their children with an environment that will strengthen their faith and increase their love for the Lord, His Word, and His church as they prepare to take their places in the world.

Biblical ignorance and apostasy are at least first cousins, if not more closely related. The liberalism that, to a

greater or lesser degree, has captured hundreds of congregations (including the vast majority of those numbering two hundred or more members) has been able to make such great inroads only because of rife Biblical ignorance among brethren. This ignorance has worked to the advantage of the school administrators who are bold and aggressive liberals, allowing them to stamp their influence on the schools they control.

To be fair, some administrators were/are not such active change agents, but have nevertheless allowed themselves to be swept evermore leftward with the current. The schools they operate have naturally moved in the same compromising direction, only not as swiftly and radically (at present) as those with radical, agenda-driven administrators. At whatever degree of liberalism a given school has arrived, general Biblical ignorance among brethren has been a great contributor to said arrival.

Also, to be fair, we must call attention to the culpability of the trustees, as well as to that of the administrators of these schools. The board of trustees of any institution is charged with seeing that its charter is fulfilled. The charter is the school’s constitution. The charter’s articles define the

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder
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Editorial...

THE SPROUTS AND TREES OF LIBERALISM

The book, *Voices of Concern*, was published in 1966. It is composed of essays by seventeen writers. They criticize what they call “Church of Christism.” All of the writers did not hesitate to declare their educational sophistication, deep analytical thinking, future oriented perspective, anti-coercion approach to religion, thirst for knowledge, and freedom from dogma. Moreover, since such thinking does not instantaneously appear, this would imply that the views presented therein were not new. However, these writers point out that those guilty of “Church of Christism” are uneducated, legalistic, backward, outdated, bigoted, authoritarian, superior, and exclusive in their narrow-mindedness. Notice how they purr over themselves and snarl at their lesser brethren.

These writers are quick to inform us that they have grown beyond doctrine and argumentation. They have had some sort of religious experience. Thereby they confirmed their positions set out in *Voices* to be from God. This spiritual growth and development gave them what they could not find in “Church of Christism”—inner peace and oneness with God. By this “better felt than told” experience (whatever it is), the writers certified their beliefs to be Godly. Their personal “witness for Christ” was all they needed. “Sharing Christ,” not teaching and defending the gospel, was their goal and practice.

They tell us if one manifests this sweet spirit of peace and tranquility he is a brother in Christ. It is unloving, unkind, uncaring, harsh, rude, mean spirited, arrogant, and hateful to insist that all things be measured by the absolute objective standard of truth (the Bible). To do such is “Church of Christism.” To these *Voices*, this doctrinal mentality must be left far behind if one is to mature spiritually.

WHAT THOSE “VOICES” REALLY MEANT

Today the children of those *Voices* are many. They are the fruit of those sprouts now grown into trees. They openly fellowship denominations and the multitudes love to have it so. The “pious unimmersed” are acceptable to them. They despise the New Testament distinctives that make the Lord’s church different from the denominations. In his book, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), Adolph Hitler set out exactly what he intended to do and did in Germany. As Hitler did in his book, the writers of *Voices of Concern* did for the church of Christ, but the church would not listen. Those *Voices* now control or have great influence in the schools of higher education (and certain preacher training schools) operated by members of the church of Christ. Most of the numerically larger churches are dominated in their thinking and practices by the sentiments expressed in *Voices of Concern*. Others are tainted by their false doctrines. Swiftly they are ceasing to be the Lord’s church. However, to this day some do not know such a book as *Voices of Concern* ever ex-

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school's purpose, direction, and aims as well as the provisions for guarding and preserving same. Trustees, by definition, are entrusted with the serious business of seeing that their respective schools are operated according to their charters. Trustees employ administrators (i.e., presidents, chancellors) and delegate to them the responsibility of the daily operation of the school. Administrators employ the faculty.

When an instructor apostatizes, administrators have the responsibility to remove him if he will not repent. If the administrator fails or refuses to make the correction, the trustees then have the responsibility to call their administrator to account. If the administrator refuses to carry out their will, the trustees will replace him if they are true to that which is entrusted to them. The proverbial "buck" stops with them. If they fail to so act, they are derelict in their duty, failing in their primary obligation. Schools have embraced and are disseminating liberalism, not merely because they have some liberal teachers and administrators, but because compromising (if not outright liberal) trustees now occupy seats on these boards.

Even in cases where trustees may not be rank liberals, one gets the distinct impression that most of them have been appointed more because of their personal wealth and/or business acumen than their knowledge of the Bible and their depth of dedication to the old paths. Their eyes apparently are primarily on financial "bottom lines," increasing enrollments, and erecting buildings. Faithfulness to Scripture has fallen somewhere further down the priority list. In some cases, it appears that the trustees are little more than figureheads who are all too willing to rubber stamp whatever their administrator sets before them, regardless of the mandate of the school charter. In what other way can one explain how error has captured, to one degree or another, all of the schools our brethren operate?

B. F. Leonard's words from the 1870s, quoted earlier, ring hauntingly true as we study these matters: "One charge that I have to bring against them ["Bible colleges"] is that... they are worldly. Like all other colleges, they are founded on money, not on the Bible." Although Leonard overstated the case in saying they are not founded "on the Bible" (we've seen that all of them were), sooner or later the need for money has become a cruel master that demands submission above all others.

It is good to have men wise about matters of commerce on boards that handle vast sums of money (and that never cease to beg for more). However, surely it must be possible to find enough men who know and will stand for the Truth without compromise, but who also know how to manage money. Although there is enough "blame to go around," ultimately, the sad spiritual condition of the schools must be blamed on their boards of trustees. Some have failed so

miserably to maintain the requirements of their charters that, if someone had the money and the courage to file suit, such boards might be found liable in the courts for malfeasance regarding their trust.

In the vein of the hypnotic serpent, "Kaa," from the classic children's movie, *Jungle Book*, the schools for at least two generations have enchantingly sung, "Trust in me, just in me..." Like young Mowgli before Kaa, unsuspecting, spiritually naïve, and stupefied parents have fallen under their spell, sending them their children and their money without question or concern. Fortunately, Mowgli, with some help, "snapped out of it" in time to escape. Unfortunately, many ho-hum, nominal Christian parents and their children are sucked in by the siren song of the schools to buy their children a "Christian education," and they scoff at those of us who try to awaken them to what the schools have become.

Parents thus continue to offer up their children to these institutions by the thousands as sacrificial lambs. When their children come home declaring that the church is just another denomination in the "invisible church," instrumental music in worship is merely a matter of conscience or opinion, and baptism may be either because-of or in-order-to-receive remission of sins, they should not be surprised (assuming this class of parents would even notice or be concerned). Nor should they be shocked if their youngsters leave these schools with doubts about such fundamental doctrines as the Genesis account of creation, the virgin conception and birth of Jesus, and the verbal inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. Perhaps some of these parents are such spiritual pygmies that they view these "different" convictions in their children (which equal a loss of their faith) as minor considerations. "After all," they seem to reason, "Was it not brethren—'scholars' no less—in the Bible and in other disciplines, who taught them? Who are we to question them?"

Yet another class of parents exists with its own expectations of the schools. These are parents who themselves are dedicated liberals and who are cheering on every effort of the change agents. Parents such as these in many cases are themselves products of one of these schools where they lost their faith in fundamental matters. They have helped apply pressure to administrators to move their schools ever more leftward. They conceive of the church as a denomination and they favor the broadening of fellowship; they want their children to be confirmed in these and similar heresies. They therefore relish the liberal campus atmosphere and have only praise for heretical professors and administrators who defend and promote them. To such parents, liberalism, compromise, and open fellowship constitute "real Christianity." They therefore rejoice in the availability of such schools that are operated by brethren. These parents have no problem finding schools controlled by brethren where their expecta-

tions will be fully satisfied. They expect and desire a liberal emphasis, and most of the schools are delivering in every respect.

Now, let us return to a consideration of faithful Christian parents. What should they expect their children to be taught in schools operated by brethren? By this question we refer to what they have a right to expect. Previously, we documented statements of various brethren who founded and/or served as administrators in the early history of several of the schools. We also quoted from some of the legal documents (e.g., deeds, charters) that were drafted so as to make the intentions of the founders unmistakable regarding respect for Biblical authority in doctrine and practice. The noble aim of these faithful men was to provide an academic environment in which the students' faith in God and His Word would be fortified as they pursued their studies in secular fields. Further, it is clear that the design of these founders and founding documents was not merely to give the respective schools a faithful inception, but to preserve and protect their faithfulness in perpetuity. As already noted, this solemn obligation rests principally upon the shoulders of the trustees of these schools.

On the basis of a summary of these aims and purposes of school founders and the defining legal documents describing these aims and purposes, dedicated Christian parents have the right to expect the following:

1. Trustees who exalt the Bible and believe it is the verbally inspired, inerrant revelation of God to men;
2. Trustees who know and understand the purpose of the founders as stated in the school charter and who are dedicated to keeping their school in harmony with said purpose;
3. Trustees who therefore will govern the school in harmony with Biblical authority;
4. Trustees who are not ashamed to identify faithful churches of Christ with the church set forth in the New Testament rather than with religious denominations of human

origin;

5. Trustees who are not only members "in good standing" of a church of Christ, but who are members "in good standing" of a church of Christ that is "in good standing" with the Lord and His Word;

6. Trustees who will employ and keep employed only a president who meets all of the foregoing criteria for the trustees;

7. Trustees who have the fortitude to dismiss without hesitation a president who fails or refuses to meet these criteria

8. A president who will secure and maintain faculty members who have unquestionably sound Biblical convictions and who will communicate these convictions to the students, whether in Bible, science, math, literature, history, physical education, or any other fields of learning;

9. A president who has the fortitude to dismiss, rather than defend, without hesitation any faculty member who fails or refuses to exhibit such unquestionable soundness;

10. Guest speakers invited to the campus for chapel, lectureships, and other special occasions who are likewise unquestionably sound in the faith (unless they have been invited for the specific purpose of refuting their errors).

Already, we have made mention of the outright apostate condition of many of these schools and the position of compromise of those not yet in full-blown apostasy. These woeful conditions are what faithful Christian parents will actually find if they give serious consideration to existent brotherhood schools, as we shall document in part in the following section.

— 908 Imperial Drive
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*[In the fourth installment in this series on higher educational institutions operated by members of the church of Christ, brother McClish will continue this study under the title, **What Higher "Christian" Education Is Delivering and Has Produced?**—Editor]*

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isted. In their willful ignorance, they are blind to what certain lying men in cunning craftiness intended to do, told us they would do, and did in and to the church of Christ in the last 50 years of the 20th Century. Is it nothing to all you that pass by?

[The foregoing was my editorial for the February 2000 issue of CFTF. Between then and now the digression from primitive, pure, New Testament Christianity has deepened, widened, and further entrenched itself in the churches, universities operated by apostate brethren, and the weak and insipid brethren who are involved with the preacher training schools. On the basis of their financial supporters and friends, they determine who they will and will not fellowship, giving only lip service to 2 John 9-11. It will take more time, but as they have already

done, they will continue to gradually move closer to their wicked sisters, the universities.

The premise by which they determine who they fellowship is "unity in diversity" in obligatory matters. True, by them it is used on a lesser scale and arbitrarily than is characteristic of their apostate higher education sisters. However, it is only a matter of time and the changing of those involved with the preacher training schools before they too become like their bigger apostate sisters. When that happens, what appreciable difference will exist between the graduates of these schools?]

—David P. Brown, Editor

NEVER TO KNOW GOD'S RULE

Lee Moses

Why is it that there are some people who are absolutely adamant about removing “under God” from the words of the Pledge of Allegiance? It is difficult to know their exact reasons. Certainly, it can be agreed that the United States as a nation has never submitted itself fully to God. However, in the main, those who are making this push are not desirous of honesty concerning the nation’s relationship with God. Some people are terrified of the thought of a God in heaven. As Creator of the universe, God is entitled not only to rule over this nation, but over the universe. But many people wish never to know God’s rule. So some wish away their own perception of the evidence for God, and are able to delude themselves into thinking that there is no Lord to Whom they must submit. Others reshape God into a less imposing god, one to whom they need not worry about submitting themselves. Such people think it is a blessing not to be hindered in their lifestyle pursuits by an all-seeing and all-knowing God; for God knows all their deeds, thoughts, and motives, and does not forget (except figuratively and by His own choice). They think it is a blessing not to be hindered in their lifestyle pursuits by an all-just and all-powerful God; for God must hold them accountable for their actions, and has the power to administer the according punishment for the most serious offender. But is it truly a blessing never to know God’s rule? The following lament of the people of Israel is preserved for our learning: **“We are become as they over whom thou never barest rule, as they that were not called by thy name”** (Isa. 63:19, *ASV*—1901). Of course, the people of Israel had been called by the name of God (Deu. 29:13). They had been ruled by God (Jud. 8:10; 1 Sam. 12:12). And now, as affliction upon affliction beset them, they wished that it were still the case that they were still manifestly under the rule of God. Is it wise to wish never to know God’s rule?

ONE WOULD NEVER KNOW THE INSTITUTIONS OF GOD

While there are many human institutions, there are only three Divine institutions on the earth: civil government, the family, and the church. While many people feel that government is too intrusive, can you imagine the world without any civil government at all? What would hinder murderers, rapists, and thieves from plying their craft? Without an enforceable common standard, crime could no longer be considered crime, and absolute anarchy would reign (cf. Jud. 17:6; 21:25). God placed the institution of government upon the earth as **“a minister to thee for good . . . a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil”** (Rom. 13:4).

What if there were no families? God created the family for the protection of its members, for the perpetuity of

the race, and for the ability of parents to instill values in children. While government provides justice, the family provides prevention as proper values are instilled. Yet there are efforts being made as you read this to redefine what a family is. Would the world be better if children lived by “the law of the jungle” from their birth? Do we wish to deny the world the loving attachments of a family?

If the church did not exist, mankind’s means of reconciliation to God would not exist (Eph. 2:16; cf. 1:22-23). By means of the church, God is glorified (3:21). By means of the church, the angels are made to know the manifold wisdom of God (3:10)—and we can see the wisdom of God by means of the church as well.

ONE WOULD NEVER KNOW THE DIRECTION OF GOD

The course for each man and woman to pursue through life is uncertain without God. People search for direction in life, as seen by the myriad of different religions and cults professing to offer some sort of meaning or direction. However, man has an utter inability to direct his own steps (Jer. 10:23; Pro. 14:12; 16:25). Without God, there can be no direction in life. The furthest we can see with our own eyes is death, and none of us has any idea when that will be. God has the ability to see infinitely beyond our limited tunnel of awareness. If we do not know the direction of God, all we can do is stumble in the dark as we make our way toward death. When Moses reiterated the law for the Israelites, he ebulliently asked,

For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day (Deu. 4:7-8).

God had blessed them with direction. The very reason for the later plight of the people of Israel was that they had left the “ways” and “fear” of the Lord (Isa. 63:17). However, when one knows the rule of the Lord he has both direction and meaning in life. As wise Solomon completed his search for the meaning of life, he realized, **“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole (duty) of man”** (Ecc. 12:13).

ONE WOULD NEVER KNOW THE HOPE OF GOD

Assume for a moment that the universe was created as the atheists hope it was. They hope that rocks and dirt collided in such a way as to create life (no one has exactly fig-

ured out yet from where the rocks and dirt came, and life has never come from non-life). They hope that we are the result of that creation of life that occurred. And they hope that when our earthly life is ended our eternal existence will be nothing more than that of rocks and dirt. Is there really any hope at all in such a scenario?

Contrary to the above scenario, God is not a product of over-imaginative and under-realistic thinking. As hope is defined as desire plus expectation, where there is no reality there can be no hope. God is real, and God extends hope to all of mankind. God has promised eternal life to the faithful, a promise certain and unwavering (Tit. 1:2; cf. Heb. 6:18-19). This is true hope, which can carry us through the most trying times of this life and into the next life. Yet, many hope that there is no God at all.

CONCLUSION

If one never knows God’s rule, he will never know His

other blessings. And His rule itself is an incredible blessing. As Israel was able to rejoice, **“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance”** (Psa. 33:12). Now it is spiritual Israel, the church, who is God’s chosen nation (Gal. 3:26-29; 6:15-16; 1 Pet. 2:9). But we can certainly appeal to the civil nation in which we live to govern itself by Biblical principles. These are the principles on which America was built and made great by the blessing of God. The people of Israel lamented that they had become as those who had never known God’s rule. Contrariwise, it seems as though the number of people desiring to be completely rid of God’s rule is growing greater each day in the United States. But remember the old saying: “Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it.”

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WHEN DID MAJORITY VOTE BECOME THE DETERMINING FACTOR?

Jess Whitlock

Years ago, a bulletin crossed my desk with a cartoon designed to teach a valuable lesson. It pictured a business meeting in some man-made church. The chairman is speaking to a group of men seated around a large table. The caption read, “So, it is determined that the will of God cannot be overturned without a two-thirds majority vote.” At the time, it was thought to be funny. However, how many thought that such thinking would ever invade the church for

which Christ died? Christ died for His church which is the “one body” (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Matt. 16:18).

During that time we had a group of young people taking part in a Bible Bowl competition in the Oklahoma City area. One of the men brought to my attention that the coordinators had decided to change the basis for the questions from the *King James Version* to the *New International Version*. We wrote to inquire as to why such a change had been made? We were informed by letter that the change had been made to the *NIV* for the Bowl “because it was by landslide the choice of the sponsors” for the Bowl. I asked if the sponsors voted by “landslide” to bring in the *Baptist Manual*, the *Methodist Discipline*, or the writings of Premillennialism what would happen? They informed me that such could (would) never happen.

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It was then that I explained that the doctrines of total depravity, unconditional election, salvation by faith alone and the doctrine of once saved, always saved are all taught in the pages of the *NIV*. Not only that, the *NIV* denies that Jesus Christ is God's "only begotten Son" (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1John 4:9). Do not take my word for it, look up each passage in the *NIV* text and the Greek word *monogenes* is half translated.

Christ warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Mat. 7:15). Every copy of the *NIV* that I've ever seen says somewhere on it, "Holy Bible." But, does God's inspired Bible teach that man can be saved by faith alone, that Christ is going to return to earth and set up a reign in literal Jerusalem, that we can use mechanical music in worship to God, that Christ is not deity, or that man comes into this world with a "sinful nature"? Yet, the *NIV* advocates these false doctrines plus 101 others.

Needless to say, our young people did not attend any more of those Bible Bowls. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil..." (Exo. 23:2a).

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Dub McClish



Lavonne McClish



Andy McClish

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-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. Contact: Inside the U.K.: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Postal/mailling 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. <http://www.bellviewcoc.com/>

-Montana-

Helena—Mountain View Church of Christ, 1400 Joslyn Street, Helena, Mt. 59601, Sun.: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Matt Bidmead (406) 461-9199.

-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.

-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., 6:00p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.,

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) 218-2892; dubmclish@gmail.com.

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. www.churchesofchrist.com.

Huntsville—1380 Fish Hatchery Rd. Huntsville, TX 77320. Sun. 9 a. m., 10 a.m., 5 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. (936) 438-8202.

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

San Antonio/Seguin Area—Nockenut Church of Christ, 2559 FM 1681, Stockdale, TX 78160, Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., nktchurchofchrist.org