

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

ARE THE COLLEGES SAFE?

Joe S. Warlick
Gospel Guide 1924

I have a letter from one of the most discriminating and careful students among all our preachers, in which he says he is getting to be afraid *of* the results of the work now being done in the Christian Colleges, so-called. I am wondering if we shall have to take the extreme position of the Sommer brethren in order to show those who are manipulating the schools and colleges among us, just what the more reflecting brethren are beginning to think about them and their work.

I have reason to be glad of one thing, and that is, I shall not have occasion to change my own position, or the position of the *Gospel Guide* from what I and it have always been, to some other way of thinking. I have said many times, not only in the *Guide*, but, in other ways, that I did not care much for the school idea, and shall not, but rather rejoice at any and all good done in the schools, but I have never felt that any other one among us besides the College at Henderson, Tennessee, was worth considering, and I am afraid the same is true yet, and that unless Bro. Freed be able to inject some of his school ideas into the school at Nashville, it will still remain as it has before been. I know the products of the Henderson school have been worth much to the cause of the Master wherever they have gone, and that the cause of New Testament Christianity has not in any way been impaired by their teaching and lives. But whether this much may be said for any other of the present schools I am not prepared to believe, but rather to say to a degree that is not helpful, but hurtful, the opposite has been the case. Reflecting, I think I can make one more exception, and that is the young school at Morrillon, Ark. I do not condemn it.

Let us watch the schools as we do the preachers, and support only those from which we hope to get real results for truth and righteousness.

Then there is Cordell. It appears that when a man gets to be a president of something, he takes what my father used to call the “spraddles” and loses his head and about all his regard for the plain truth, and the result is, his work helps the opposition rather than defeats it. I have never believed that products turned out of the Abilene college and the present work being done at Thorp Springs, will help the cause of truth as much as it will the cause of the Digressives. I have frequently said that when the students go from either of these schools out into the world, and find where they locate, it will be better for them individually, to line up with the digressives, they will not hesitate to do so.

They are not rooted and grounded in the faith of the Gospel, but rather trained to compromise where it is convenient, and they will be certain to make the compromise. I should not want a child of mine to be educated in either of these schools under the present management. I may be wrong in my impressions, but I have never had any occasion to doubt the conclusion reached long ago about such schools.

I am willing however, to stand by and watch and in the meantime offer notes of warning with some apology for fear I might be mistaken. I am for schools, Christian schools of the right kind, and have no patience with the idea of fighting them because of the school idea, the Christian school or College idea, being unscriptural; I know it is not. Though the majority of the churches go wrong, it is not right to say that the church idea is wrong. Though most preachers preach anything but the Gospel, yet it would hardly be right to say that preaching is wrong therefore—so of the school idea. Let us watch the schools as we do the preachers, and support only those from which we hope to get real results for truth and righteousness.

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

Editorial...

“THE SCHOOL IDEA”

In our lead article in this month's *CFTF* the late Joe S. Warlick in 1924 referred to the schools operated by the brethren as “the school idea.” Warlick understood that “the school idea” benefited Christians *only* so long as it served to expedite the work of the home in bringing up children “**in the nurture and admonition of the Lord**” and “**Train[ing]**” them “**in the way they should go**” (Ephesians 6:17; Proverbs 6:22). “The school idea” must be advantageous to parents in helping them discharge their obligation to God in bringing up children as God has ordained or it becomes a disadvantage. Thus, it is not the schools’ responsibility to rear children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but the parent’s singular responsibility so to do.

“The school idea” is one option that parents may chose to aid or help them in discharging part of their duty to God toward their children. “The school idea,” therefore, is nothing more or less than a tool that parents may use to assist them in discharging part of their obligation to God regarding their children. Thus, in order for “the school idea” to be a tool worthy of the use of Godly parents to aid them in discharging some of their obligation to God in rearing their children, only faithful members of the church of Christ must make up the board, administration, faculty and staff of these tools. This is the only way a Godly environment may be attained and continued. Every subject must be taught in the light of the Bible. The truth pertaining to New Testament Christianity must be faithfully taught and practiced. All things contrary thereto must be refuted and repudiated. Accrediting agencies must never be allowed to be the final authority of how these schools are conducted—who teaches what in them, how they are operated and the like. Schools must not become and end within themselves. Moreover, no attempts should be made to “ape” the secular and denominational schools of like nature. And, no matter who attends these schools they have the right to expect things done as previously noted. Of course, it is really past time for most of the things previously mentioned to be done in the schools operated by members of the church of Christ.

“EXPEDIENTS” THAT NO LONGER EXPEDITE

Warlick revealed his lack of enthusiasm for most of the schools of his day—80 years ago. But, he did speak well of “the College at Henderson, Tennessee.” However, in our day, where is the university operated by members of the church of Christ that upholds the Bible, the gospel, the authority of the New Testament, the church in her organization, work, worship and Godly living, as “the College at Henderson, Tennessee” did when Warlick wrote in 1924? Today, where is the university that routinely opposes denominational error? What university is in the forefront of the fight to expose, refute and repudiate any and all false teachers in

the church?

Unless children are very well grounded in the faith before they get to such universities today, the likelihood is very great that they will be piloted into some sort of false doctrine or at best weakened to the point where they are worth little as soldiers of the Lord. Young people at times are led astray regarding the nature of truth, the plenary verbal inspiration of the Bible, Bible versions, marriage, divorce, and remarriage, baptism, the Holy Spirit's work, miracles, grace, the church in her organization, work and worship, who is a Christian, and no telling what else. At least one sad part about this is the fact that many parents and not a few preachers and elders at this late date in this present apostasy, do not have a clue regarding the authority for such institutions to exist, their relationship to God's people, and what is really going on in the schools. Moreover, how many of them are willfully ignorant of such teaching going on in the schools? It is the exception rather than the rule that the graduates of these schools are strong in their respect for Bible authority and have a correct understanding of New Testament Christianity.

PERPETUATING THEMSELVES

The universities of which we speak have reached the stage of existing for the purpose of perpetuating themselves. Yes, they are tools, but not tools to assist parents and others in grounding their students in New Testament Christianity. They are tools for the "change agents" whose goal is to destroy the church of Christ as that term is defined and used in the New Testament. They fully intend to change the Lord's church into some sort of community, "holy roller," sectarian denomination. And, they are succeeding at an alarming rate. The fervent spirit of David, his deep faith in God and the courage of his convictions—those things necessary to spur him forward to meet and defeat Goliath—are rarely seen in the products of today's Bible department faculties. And, that is the way these "gentler kinder" characters fully intend it to be.

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

In the January and now in the March issues of *CFTF* we are spot lighting OC University. The Lord willing, we will do more along that line in coming issues. Especially take note of OC University President Mike O'Neal's January 29, 2004 letter to me and my February 12, 2004 response to his letter. To date he has not responded to my February letter to him, which letter was sent by email to his personal email address.

As you will notice in reading his letter to me, among other things, President O'Neal wrote: "Though this letter is intended as a private communication, if you wish to use part or all of it in any communication or publication I would appreciate the courtesy of a specific request to do so." With regard to O'Neal's previous sentence, over the years I have noticed similar efforts by different people. *Such attempts as President O'Neal's*

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are efforts to bind me to an agreement without prior consultation with me or to which I was not privy before the fact. Please notice that President O’Neal states if I intend “to use part or all of it in any communication or publication” he would “appreciate the courtesy of a specific request to do so.” Where is President O’Neal’s courtesy to me? Why did he not obtain such an agreement from me before the fact? Why did he and others who operate as he does attempt to bind my hands after they have had their say? There is nothing Christian about such conduct.

Not along ago I received a request for certain information. I did not desire that information to go further than the one who had requested it. But unlike O’Neal and certain others, before sending the information I wrote the requesting party and stipulated that unless the said party agreed prior to my sending said material not to release it to anyone else I would not send it. The requesting party wrote back to me, agreed to the stipulation and signed it. Now, that is the way it should be done. Biblical, ethical, and legal agreements between parties are reached before the fact. One would think that a university president and certain others would know that.

I know of at least one instance where not only did the author of a letter forbid the ones to whom it was

addressed from showing it in any form or fashion to anyone else, but copyrighted said letter. We have previously seen that Biblically, ethically, and legally no one can be held to an agreement to which, before the fact, one did not agree. However, it is also very important for people to understand that while the writer of said letter owns the copyright with all the protection thereof, the one to whom it was written owns the letter and, therefore, may show it to whomsoever he or she desires. Moreover, it may be quoted as any other copyrighted document without doing violence to the copyright.

WHERE WE STAND

In each issue of *Contending for the Faith* in the side bar on page two is the following sentence: “Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write.” This information is a public declaration. It is available before the fact so that all will know how we view material sent to us.

Why cannot people be open and above board? Also, why do people attempt to deal with matters of public record as if they were private and personal? And, if who teaches and what is taught to the students in a university operated by members of the church of Christ is not public, who or what would be?

—David P. Brown, Editor

Assistant Editorial...

HOLY SPIRIT OR HOCUS POCUS?

Ignorance is certainly fertile ground for confusion on a myriad of subjects. The rise of false teachers and strange doctrines has been a consistent element of religious history. Most “successful” false doctrines are driven by two realities: (1) a motivated proponent (false teacher), and (2) an ignorant audience. As we study the history of the Catholic Church we are usually amazed at the widespread acceptance of doctrines totally lacking in biblical support.

The Protestant reformation in similar fashion preyed on the biblically unlearned. While the intent of most of these men was admirable (men like **Zwingli, Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin**), the result was the same. Men of great ability, but lacking in clear understanding of the Bible, did much harm to the cause of the Christ they claimed to serve. We in the church still have to fight against the false notions and teachings of these gifted, yet misguided, men.

Several years ago **Mac Deaver** preached on a lectureship I directed in New Braunfels Texas. He was presenting a review and exposure of the book, *Free in Christ* by **Cecil Hook**. While discussing false teachers (referring to Hook) Mac stressed that most false teachers do not see themselves as being false. He even

pointed out that for the most part they are not trying to be false teachers. Ironically, this concept currently can be applied to him. While attending preaching school at Southwest School of Bible Studies, Deaver (an instructor at the time [**David P. Brown** was the director]) taught us that novel doctrines require novel definitions of terms. Unfortunately, Deaver has become a master in the art of redefining terms as well. He was also adamant in teaching us the difference between affirming a point and proving that point to be true. With this being said as background material let’s turn our attention to one such portion of his “Direct Operation” conglomeration.

In the Deaver-Lockwood debate, Deaver labored tirelessly to avoid the real issue (the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of man without means). In fact, he successfully diverted the bulk of the discussion to a debate on the nature of providence. Several charts and questions were used to argue about providence (again not the real point of the contention). Many of those in attendance (ignorant of the real doctrinal question that should have been answered) were swayed toward his position due to his “bait and switch” tactic. He argued strongly for providence then affirmed he

had proven his direct position. As I witnessed the debate (I attended each session and stayed in the home of one of the Robertson County elders) it seemed apparent that Deaver was more than willing to stay with this ploy in an attempt to score some points with the public.

It is this line of reasoning used concerning the Holy Spirit's role in providence I am going to examine in the remainder of this article. The title of this piece is *Holy Spirit or Hocus Pocus?*, I chose this title for a reason. A good magician is able with sleight of hand to work (pull off) many tricks before the untrained eye. I affirm that this is basically what Deaver has done. He has used his ability of persuasion, and command of both the English language and debating skills, to perform many "tricks" before the untrained eye. It should be noted that from the inception of this controversy, many (most) faithful preachers have seen the folly of his efforts. While it is true, many could not quite put their finger on where he had missed it, they still knew that he had. Again, I can know a magician did not really make the girl disappear, though I may not initially know how he did it.

His strong affirmations concerning the Holy Spirit's work in the area of providence is nothing more than smoke and mirrors. Does providence demand a direct operation of the Holy Spirit? No. By "general providence," we mean that Deity has set in order natural events that happen to all men regardless of their relationship to God. By "special providence," we mean that God can also actively participate in the affairs of men today; and that through natural means (natural law) God can affect events to bring about His will in the lives of people. It has been asserted that we must believe in the direct operation of the Spirit on the human spirit to believe in providence. But, there is no ontological connection between providence and the Holy Spirit acting directly on the human spirit. In the aforementioned debate (1998) the assertion was repeatedly made that to deny the direct operation was to deny providence. A series of questions shows this reasoning to be flawed.

The proponents of this doctrine cannot deny that God worked providentially in the lives of the patriarchs. The Old Testament is full of examples of God working through non-miraculous means to bring about His will in the lives of various people. Men and women like Joseph, Job, Esther, and dozens of others, stand as proof God can work providentially in the lives of people who were not "literally indwelt" and therefore not "helped directly." Based on these points if their original contention is true (there is no providence without direct operation) then there was no providence in the Old Testament. It is false that there was no providence in the Old Testament. Therefore, it is false that a direct connection exists between the Holy Spirit acting on the human spirit and providence. Deaver can make wild assertions until his little heart is content, but the fact remains, providence "predates" his idea of a personal indwelling with

some direct influence on the hearts of men.

As we read and listen to Deaver's material along this line of reasoning it is difficult not to notice that most of his position is based on assumption. There is a huge difference in assumption and proof. There is no inherent connection or need for the Spirit to be directly involved in order for God's providence to be carried out. We must always remember, there is a vast difference between what the Spirit does for me and what He does to me.

Does God work providentially in the lives of non-Christians? Yes. The fact that God acts through providence to carry out His will in the lives of non-Christians is another proof that there is no need for a direct Holy Spirit intervention for providence to exist. God worked providentially dozens of times in the Old Testament in connection with using various nations to punish Israel. These heathen kings and nations certainly were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We have preached forever (and so have these "new" direct operationists until lately) that if a man (non-Christian) seeks after God he will find Him. Acts 17 and Matthew 7 both teach that God will providentially reveal Himself to those who seek Him.

There is no reason for one to hold the idea that providence necessitates some direct operation of the Holy Spirit in the lives of men. Deaver's arguments on this point are not only unproven, they are unprovable because they are false. May we all continue to give diligence in the study of what the Bible does teach relative to the Spirit and his work. Let us not run wild with assertions that are at odds with what the inspired scriptures do teach.

—Michael Light, Associate Editor

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VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

January 29, 2004

Mr. David Brown, Editor
Contending for the Faith
c/o Spring Church of Christ
1327 Spring Cypress Road
Spring, TX 77373.

Dear Brother Brown:

In today's mail, I received a photocopy of a portion of the January 2004 issue of "Contending for the Faith" and a CD titled "A Challenge to the Traditional View of Inerrant Inspiration." I am writing for two purposes: first, to provide background and clarification concerning Dr. Glenn Pemberton's course, and, second, to request that you immediately destroy any copies of the CD you have in your possession as these have been unlawfully reproduced and unlawfully distributed.

As you mentioned in your article, I will be hosting a meeting on February 13 to discuss concerns pertaining to the Lectureship. Consequently, I will reserve comment regarding the Lectureship until that time. In this letter, I will focus only on your statements regarding Dr. Pemberton's course and your offer to distribute copies of the CD.

I begin by stating unequivocally that every member of the Bible faculty at OC believes, upholds and teaches the inspiration of scripture as God's holy word and revelation to humanity. Our whole program is predicated on that belief, and that is what we teach. It is the inspiration of scripture that leads to its authority for all that we do in word, deed and belief both in our personal lives and in our lives within God's church. I cannot think of any school that holds to a higher view of scripture as the word of God than does OC and particularly the Bible faculty at OC.

One of OC's most distinguished faculty members, the late Dr. Raymond Kelcy, used to urge faculty to prepare young people to fight the battles of unbelief by preparing students both to know and be able to answer the arguments of critics, opponents of God and the Bible. He said that we do them no favors if we present only straw men, but that we should help them to learn how to answer the unbelievers' strongest arguments. We honestly seek to do that. Our faculty never present ideas with the intent of shaking students' faith or undermining the authority of scripture. On the contrary, faculty present ideas which students may encounter in order to prepare them to stand firm in their faith and to counter ideas which are contrary to the truths of scripture. We try to make our students aware of the types of beliefs and teachings that they will encounter. I think you will find that all Christian universities do that as preparation to face an unbelieving world. This is always done with deep conviction that scripture is the inspired word of God. As is true of all communication, any time a statement is removed from its context, there is a high likelihood of misinterpretation. That is what has occurred in this situation.

The circumstance of your inquiry must be fairly seen in that light. Because the context of the statements in question took a whole semester of fifteen weeks to establish, to lift a small portion from a final class discussion hardly paints a true or accurate picture of what took place. Lifting excerpts certainly does not accurately portray the intent of the teacher, who firmly believes in inspiration.

The university's primary reason for the copyrighting of all course materials is for just such circumstances as the one in question. Students in the course had the total context and understood that the teacher was helping them

think through several issues. From the first day of class the teacher explained that this course was intended to help them recognize critical issues they would need to be able to answer and help others with. It was in no way an attempt to undermine the doctrine of inspiration. Any effort to say otherwise or to imply otherwise based upon excerpts of a part of the course is not only inaccurate, but also unethical and irresponsible.

The matter in question was made available on a closed computer system that makes such material available only to students officially enrolled in the course because they have the total context of the course to understand what is taking place. A student unlawfully downloaded and unlawfully distributed the material. He neither requested permission nor was permission ever granted or implied. Thus I am officially notifying you that neither you nor anybody else has permission to quote any part of or the entirety of the copyrighted and unlawfully distributed material in question or to reproduce **it**. assume that you were not previously aware of this, so I will trust you to destroy all copies you have and to make no further copies. As a Christian brother I would certainly afford you that same benefit of the doubt and opportunity to do the right thing both under state and federal law and as a Christian.

By copy of this letter, we are making the same requests and demands of Brant Stubblefield, whom your publication states will make the CD available upon request.

We deeply regret that a student or any one of our brothers or sisters has misunderstood our belief in and commitment to the inspiration of scripture. We do not want anyone to think that OC is teaching anything contrary to the scripture. I am also deeply disappointed that you and other brethren who are concerned about this matter have not followed the instruction of scripture to come directly to your brother and seek clarification and/or correction. It is perhaps even more disappointing that there is no evidence of hesitancy to take actions designed to cause great harm to your brothers in Christ. I hope after further investigation of the facts, you will seek to undo the harm that may have occurred from this false and inflammatory publication.

May I conclude by again stating unequivocally that every member of the Bible faculty at OC believes, upholds and teaches the inspiration of scripture as God's holy word and revelation to humanity. It is the inspiration of scripture that leads to its authority for all that we do in word, deed and belief both in our personal lives and in our lives within God's church.

I pray that before you have any further damaging statements to say about your brethren at Oklahoma Christian University, you will approach us directly with your concerns in a spirit of love and gentleness. Though this letter is intended as a private communication, if you wish to use part or all of it in any communication or publication I would appreciate the courtesy of a specific request to do so.

You have my prayers and best wishes in your work for the Lord.

Your brother,
[signed] Mike O'Neal

cc: Mr. Brant Stubblefield
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Lindsey, OK 73052

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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February 12, 2004

President Mike F. O'Neal
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Oklahoma City, OK
73136-1100

Dear Brother O'Neal,

This is the first opportunity I have had to respond to your letter of January 29, 2004. I welcome the opportunity to do so.

I will first address the two purposes for which you wrote on page one, paragraph one of said letter. Your two purposes for writing are designated below as "A" and "B." You wrote:

A. "... to provide background and clarification concerning Dr. Glenn Pemberton's course..."

Any one can speak in generalities and that is what you have done. An example of which is "...that every member of the Bible faculty at OC believes, upholds and teaches the inspiration of scripture as God's holy word and revelation to humanity" (your 1/29/04 letter to me, page 1, paragraph 3). This statement clarifies nothing.

Indeed, why are you answering for Dr. Pemberton? Is he not capable of speaking for himself? However, since in your 1/29/04 letter to me you chose to answer for Dr. Pemberton, I am assuming that you absolutely know the beliefs of your faculty members at least in the area of which said letter is concerned. If my assumption is wrong, and you do not know what they believe at least in the area of which said letter is concerned, you may explicitly declare your ignorance of the same.

In view of your willingness and readiness to speak for your faculty members regarding what they believe at least in the area of concern in said letter, you surely will welcome the opportunity to answer the following true/false questions and will have no problem answering them. Remember you wrote:

May I conclude by again stating unequivocally that every member of the Bible faculty at OC believes, upholds and teaches the inspiration of scripture as God's hoily word and revelation to humanity. It is the inspiration of scripture that leads to its authority for all that we do in word, deed and belief both in our personal lives and in our lives with God's church (paragraph 10, p. 2, your 1/29/04 letter to me).

Now let us get down to specifics.

1. T F By His Holy Spirit (the Third Person of the Godhead) God revealed each one of the original words of the Old Testament directly to the minds of the humans who wrote it.
2. T F By His Holy Spirit God caused the human writers of the Old Testament to infallibly record each word He directly put into their minds.
3. T F By His Holy Spirit God revealed each one of the original words of the New Testament directly to the minds of the humans who wrote it.
4. T F By His Holy Spirit God caused the human writers of the New Testament to infallibly record each word He directly put into their minds.
5. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit revealed each one of the original words of the Old Testament directly to the minds of the humans who wrote it.

6. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit caused the human writers of the Old Testament to infallibly record each word He directly put into their minds.
7. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit revealed each one of the original words of the New Testament directly to the minds of the humans who wrote it.
8. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit caused the human writers of the New Testament to infallibly record each word He directly put into their minds.
9. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit revealed each one of the original words of the Old Testament book of Genesis directly to the mind of Moses.
10. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that Dr. Glenn Pemberton believes that the Holy Spirit directly caused Moses to infallibly record each one of the original words of the Old Testament book of Genesis.
11. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that the OC Bible faculty believes that the Holy Spirit revealed each one of the original words of the Bible directly to the minds of the humans who wrote it.
12. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that the OC Bible faculty believes that the Holy Spirit caused the human writers of the Bible to infallibly record each word He directly put into their minds
13. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that all of the OC Bible faculty believes that part of God's word is omitted in versions of the Bible that leave out Mark 16: 9-20.
14. T F I, Mike E. O'Neal absolutely know that the OC Bible faculty can prove conclusively that Mark 16:9-20 is a part of the Bible as the Holy Spirit originally revealed it.
15. T F Those members of the early church who were faithful to Christ might have considered Max Lucado an inspired writer.
16. T F Linguistically, I know and can prove that the Hebrew word "alma" in Isaiah 7:14 can be only correctly translated "young woman."
17. T F Linguistically, the OC Bible Faculty knows and can prove that the Hebrew word "alma" in Isaiah 7:14 can be only correctly translated "young woman."
18. T F Linguistically, some one on the OC Bible Faculty knows and can prove that the Hebrew word "alma" in Isaiah 7:14 can only be correctly translated "young woman."
19. T F Linguistically, Dr. Glenn Pemberton knows and can prove that the Hebrew word "alma" in Isaiah 7:14 can only be correctly translated "young woman."
20. T F Linguistically, some OC Bible faculty member knows and can prove that the Hebrew word "alma" in Isaiah 7:14 cannot be correctly translated "virgin."
21. T F The church of Christ is not a sectarian denomination.
22. T F The Quail Springs Church of Christ is a faithful congregation of God's people.
23. T F There are faithful children of God in the denominations, such as any of the following—Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Christian, Community Churches and such like.
24. T F It is a sin against God for Christians to observe the Lord's Supper on any day other than the first day of the week.
25. T F If one uses any other music other than singing in the worship of God one sins against God.
26. T F The Bible does not furnish enough information for me to know whether Max Lucado is a faithful child of God or not.
27. T F Max Lucado is a faithful child of God.
28. T F Bible Truth is objective.
29. T F Bible Truth is absolute.
30. T F Bible Truth is humanly attainable.

Re. Raymond Kelcy—The late Dr. Raymond Kelcy's beliefs are not being questioned regarding the matters of which you wrote (paragraph 10, your 1/29/04 letter to me). Certain beliefs of Dr. Glenn Pemberton are being called into question. But since you introduced Dr. Kelcy into the matter in said letter, I will say something about him. Dr. Kelcy taught error on marriage, divorce and remarriage. Is it not true that Dr. Hugo McCord opposed Dr. Kelcy's doctrine on MDR in an open forum during an OC lectureship many years ago? Dr. McCord is alive and can speak for himself, why not ask him about it?

What did the university do about Dr. Kelcy? Not one thing. On the basis of past performance I have no reason to believe that the school will conduct itself any differently on these matters than it did on the matter of Dr. Kelcy's error on MDR.

I emphasize that I know of no "circumstance" or "context" (your words in said letter) that would make it wrong to say, "Moses wrote in Genesis chapter 5..." (*CFTF*, January 2004, column 1, page 9). If you know of such a context, please give me an example.

You also wrote:

B. "to request that you immediately destroy any copies of the CD you have in your possession as these have been unlawfully reproduced and unlawfully distributed."

I do not have and never had in my possession the CD of which you speak. However, I will respond to some of what you wrote in said letter to me regarding copyrighted materials. You wrote:

The university's primary reason for the copyrighting of all course materials is for just such circumstances as the one in question. Students in the course had the total context and understood that the teacher was helping them think through several issues. ... Any effort to say otherwise or to imply otherwise based upon excerpts of a part of the course is not only inaccurate, but also unethical and irresponsible. (Paragraph 6, pp. 1, 2 of your 1/29/04 to me).

On the basis of what you think is best evidence as well as what you think the Bible teaches is a part of Christian conduct, obviously you think you have an official as well as a personal responsibility from the motive of love (I assume love is your motive behind your thoughts and actions) to judge others to be "unethical" and "irresponsible." Furthermore, you do not hesitate to label them accordingly when you think you have evidence that warrants such absolute conclusions on your part about them. Am I also correct in concluding that you consider the words "unethical" and "irresponsible" (words that you deliberately chose to employ and apply to certain persons—your brethren) to be harsh or at least hard terms, but proper to use when they are correctly applied to those who deserve to be labeled accordingly? I think the answer to the preceding question would be in the affirmative because I believe you wrote what you meant and you meant what you wrote.

Remember you wrote: "It is the inspiration of scripture that leads to its authority for all that we do in word, deed and belief both in our personal lives and in our lives with God's church" (paragraph 10, p. 2, your 1/29/04 letter to me). Thus, you must think that the scriptures authorize you to employ certain words to describe others' actions when you think the evidence warrants their proper use. What the last sentence describes your mind doing requires you to take in what you consider to be adequate evidence, reason with it and draw a conclusion (make a judgment) that you think is true. Am I wrong when I conclude by the same rational process that you lovingly judged and labeled *CFTF* with **harsh** or **hard** terms as "this false and inflammatory publication" (paragraph 9, p. 2, your 1/29/04 letter to me)? If I am wrong please show how my facts are incorrect, my reasoning is invalid, and therefore my conclusion is wrong.

However, I must admit that it is finally good to find someone in your position who understands the teaching of the Bible on such things as well as the rational process by which we determine anything. Thus, because you are honest, consistent and opposed to hypocrisy you will have no problem when I by the same biblical authority and rational process respond to you and OC in kind.

Previously in this letter I have pointed out to you that "I know of no 'circumstance' or 'context' (your words in said letter) that would make it wrong to say, 'Moses wrote in Genesis chapter 5...' (*CFTF*, January 2004, column 1, page 9). Again, if you know of such a context, please give me an example." Since you introduced the matter in said letter you have the responsibility to provide proof of such. The same is true for you regarding the other excerpts from OC classes appearing in said issue of *CFTF*.

While I cannot help think that you already know these things I am directing you to the following Web site of

Temple University Press. The address is:

[http://www.temple.edu/tempress/downloads/Fair Use.pdf](http://www.temple.edu/tempress/downloads/Fair%20Use.pdf).

Please note the exemplary article by Diane Brinson, "Multimedia and Fair Use of Copyrighted Material," Desktop Publishers Journal 7.12 (December 1995): 24 appearing at the previous Web address. It is very obvious from Brinson's article, as well as the abundant legal information regarding the use of copyrighted material found in various places on the Internet and elsewhere, that the "fair use" legal guide lines for copyrighted material is some what ill defined and the courts have deliberately left it that way. That being the case, I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW HOW THE CD REFERRED TO IN THE JANUARY 2004 *CFTF* VIOLATES COPYRIGHT LAW—PLEASE BE SPECIFIC.

BROTHER O'NEAL WHY ARE YOU BRETHREN SO AFRAID OF PEOPLE FINDING OUT WHAT IS TAUGHT IN YOUR CLASSES? WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO HIDE? TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT YOUR LETTER. YOU ARE CRYING "FOUL" BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU CONSIDER TO BE A VIOLATION OF THE "FAIR USE" OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT OC DESIRES TO ALLOW THE PUBLIC TO KNOW ONLY WHAT YOU WANT IT TO KNOW REGARDING WHAT IS TAUGHT IN YOUR CLASSES. YOUR LETTER IS FULL OF VEILED (AND SOME NOT SO VEILED) THREATS OF LEGAL ACTION. AND YOUR LETTER IS NOT THE FIRST OCCASION YOUR PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN THIS APPROACH IN ATTEMPTS TO STOP THE PUBLIC FROM KNOWING WHAT YOUR TEACHERS BELIEVE AND TEACH.

The quotes from the OC classes printed in the January 2004 *CFTF* are no lengthier than those herein quoted or some found in many research papers, and theses required by the teachers at OC and other institutions of higher learning. Moreover, what about the quotations found in the various dissertations written by the men and women who hold doctorates and teach in OC—including your own dissertation—if it is the case that your doctorate program required one?

Last, but certainly by no means least, is your comment in paragraph 9, p.2, in said letter. You wrote:

I am also deeply disappointed that you and other brethren who are concerned about this matter have not followed the instruction of scripture to come directly to your brother and seek clarification and/or correction. It is perhaps even more disappointing that there is no evidence of hesitancy to take actions designed to cause great harm to your brothers in Christ. I hope after further investigation of the facts, you will seek to undo the harm that may have occurred from this false and inflammatory publication.

I am assuming that Matthew 18:15-17 is the passage you have in mind when you say we "have not followed the instruction of the scripture..." in the way *CFTF* handled said matter. If that is what you think this passage teaches you could not be more wrong. However, I am afraid it evidences not only the caliber of your Bible knowledge, but it also reveals the same for at least some of the teachers in the Bible department at OC. However, it does not surprise me that you should attempt to employ it in an attempt to place the blame somewhere other than where it belongs.

Matthew 18:15-17 begins with one person trespassing against another person (verse 15). In this passage of scripture, the first step to correct the matter requires the person trespassed against to go privately to the person who committed the trespass. In this meeting the one against whom the trespass was committed is to bring the trespass to the attention of the trespasser for the purpose of bringing the one guilty of the trespass to repentance. It is obvious that your understanding of the meaning of the passage and therefore your application of it is flawed because you took it out of context. That being the case how is it that you have the audacity to accuse others of taking material out of context?

Said matters of concern at OC did not begin with one person trespassing against another person. The said OC matter dealt with in the January 2004 issue of *CFTF* is public in nature. Are you taking the position that if one of your speakers at the OC Lectures taught false doctrine; that said speaker could not be dealt with publicly until every person who heard him speak went to him privately to seek a resolution to the problem created by the speaker when he publicly advocated the false doctrine? It is a strange doctrine indeed that permits one publicly to advocate error, but prohibits and condemns one who exposes, rebukes and corrects said error and its teacher in the same arena. Is that what you think Matthew 18:15-17 teaches? By your comment in your 1/29/04 letter to me on page two, paragraph nine your answer to the preceding two questions can only be in the affirmative. I would like to know by what principle(s) of biblical interpretation you employed in your approach to understanding what Jesus taught in Matthew 18:15ff? If you will stay with the context of Matthew 18:15-17 you will not be found

erroneously applying a passage to a situation to which the Lord never applied it.

Besides the aforementioned, OC teachers, regardless of their position at OC, do not check with any other member of the Lord's church before they teach whatever it is they desire to teach; some of which is done on the CD herein mentioned. You people are quick to talk about us doing harm to brethren. But you and your people, at least through such teaching as evidenced in what we quoted from said CD, work toward the destruction of the church. And, in reality that is the real reason you do not desire said CD or any other material of like nature to be circulated. That being said it will be interesting indeed to see just how "open and above board" your February 13 meeting that is scheduled to address these matters will be.

I am also afraid the following quote centers in on what is all too often the problem with some. And we are also reminded of Lord Darlington's remark to the Duchess in *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

The Duchess: "Do, as a concession to my poor wits, Lord Darlington, just explain to me what you really mean."

"I think I had better not," answers the lord; "nowadays to be intelligible is to be found out."

(Lionel Ruby, *The Art of Making Sense*: (New York: J. F. Lippincott Co., 1954), P. 57.

Brother O'Neal you have indicated in your 1/29/04 letter to me that "after further investigation of the facts" we would be willing to correct any wrongs we have done OC. That remark presupposes that you and yours are free of error and we are guilty. If that is the case, in this ongoing investigation of which you have written that we should continue in it, answering the questions found in this email would go a long way toward finding out what you and your Bible faculty believes. Indeed, since in your 1/29/04 letter to me you authorized me as well as others to continue our investigation of what the OC Board, administration, staff and faculty (especially the Bible faculty) believe we must conclude that OC will be cooperating with us in our investigation. I trust that the OC board, administration, staff, student body and faculty will understand when we pose questions to them to learn what they believe and practice, that we are only acting by the specific authorization of their President's directive to us.

Also, since you mentioned in said letter to me that someone only sent you a partial copy of the January 2004 issue of *CFTF*, I will be happy to send you a complete copy of that issue by regular mail. Moreover, please notice on page 2 of *CFTF* (this statement appears in every issue), in the first paragraph of the side bar the information concerning correspondence sent to us.

In closing thank you for taking the time to read this lengthy reply to your letter to me of 1/29/04. Please feel free to distribute my entire letter to anyone you desire. I wish you and yours well in every good endeavor.

In His Service,
[Signed]
David P. Brown

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Second Annual...

Contending

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Cane Ridge Lectureship

"Restoration Preachers Contended For Bible Authority" May 14–15, 2004

Friday, May 14

9:00 A.M.	"Cane Ridge Story"	Gary Puryear
10:00 A.M.	"Tour"	Paul Vaughn
7:00 P.M.	"Contending for the Authority of Scriptures"	David P. Brown
8:00 P.M.	"The Restoration Leaders Had A Proper Attitude Toward Authority"	Kent Bailey

Saturday, May 15

9:00 A.M.	"The Influence of God's Word In The Lives Of Early Restorers"	Virgil McIntosh
10:00 A.M.	Thomas Campbell: Declaration And Address"	Billy Bland
11:00 A.M.	"Mechanical Instrumental Music Rejects The Authority of The New Testament"	Michael Hatcher
1:30 P.M.	"Missionary Society Rejects The Authority of The New Testament"	Russell Kline
2:30 P.M.	"Alexander Campbell's Teaching On Authority"	John M. Brown
3:30 P.M.	"Results of Rejecting The Authority of The New Testament"	Rob Whitacre

To be held at the old Cane Ridge Meeting House, Bourbon County, Kentucky. For information contact David Brown at (281) 350-5516 (email: jbrow@charter.net) or Paul Vaughn at (270) 295-7868

David P. Brown and Paul Vaughn, Lectureship Directors

Directions to Cane Ridge

Directions to Cane Ridge:

Take U.S. 60/27 (Paris Pike) from Lexington to Paris (approximately 17 miles). Although posted signs for "Cane Ridge Shrine" bypass Paris, the more direct route leads directly through downtown.

Continue on U.S. 60 until reaching the intersection of U.S. 450. This route may be identified by the Shell gas station which directly precedes the turn.

Continue on U.S. 450 for approximately 1-2 miles until you reach Ky Route 537. This narrow road leads directly to Cane Ridge.

The building rests on the left side of the road.

In case of difficulty, several highway signs around Paris direct to Cane Ridge.

The drive from Lexington will take approximately 30 minutes.

TOTAL COMMITMENT

By Tom Moore

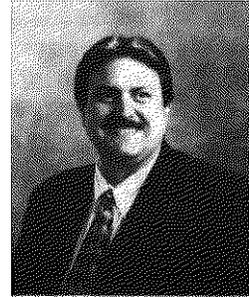
INTRODUCTION

A. Illustration: In the 1976 Summer Olympics, Shun Fujimoto competed in the team gymnastics competition for Japan. In a quest for the gold medal, Fujimoto suffered a broken right knee in the floor exercise. But this injury did not stop him, for during the next week he competed in his strongest event, the rings. His routine was excellent, but he astounded everyone by squarely dismounting with a triple somersault twist on a broken right knee. When asked concerning his feat, he said, "Yes, the pain shot through me like a knife. It brought tears to my eyes. But now I have the gold medal and the pain is gone."

1. Here we have one who was truly committed to his sport and his country.
2. So committed was this man that he would let nothing stop him short of his goal.

3. We need this same type of commitment today in the Lord's church!

4. Paul tells us that we need to be **"fervent in spirit; serving the Lord"** (Romans 12:11).



B. Illustration: A hen and a pig came upon a church building and read the advertised sermon on the billboard out front, which read, "What can we do to help the poor?" Immediately the hen suggested they feed them bacon and eggs. The pig thought for a moment and said, "There is one thing wrong with feeding bacon and eggs to the poor. For you it only requires a contribution, but for me it requires total commitment!"

1. Many today are not willing to be totally committed to the Lord because it demands too much of them.
 2. Oh, we need to remember Romans 8:18.
 3. Total commitment is worth every effort.
- C. What is commitment?
1. A definition: a pledge to fulfill, an obligation, to obligate ourselves to a cause.
 2. Synonyms: responsibility, pledge, promise, vow, resolution, determination.

DISCUSSION

A. THE LORD WANTS TOTAL COMMITMENT

1. Matthew 19:16-22
 - a. This young man was not totally committed financially.
 - b. Totally committed means totally committed.
2. Matthew 10:34-39
 - a. We are to be totally committed—to put God above ALL people or things.
 - b. We are even to put God above our family.

B. TO BE TOTALLY COMMITTED WE MUST REALIZE WE HAVE A PERSONAL COMMITMENT

1. Deuteronomy 24:16
 - a. Parents cannot blame it on the children.
 - b. Children cannot blame it on the parents.
2. Job 19:4
 - a. Job knew he could not blame his sin on anyone else.
 - b. He was responsible.
3. Proverbs 9:12
4. Jeremiah 31:30
5. Ezekiel 18:20

C. EXCUSES SOME OFFER FOR NOT BEING

Eighth Annual...

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 (11 Peter 1:3-11)
April 23-25, 2004

Friday, April 23		
7:00 PM	"Faith"	Keith Mosher
8:00 PM	"Virtue"	Rob Whitacre
Saturday, April 24		
9:00 AM	"Knowledge"	Tim Childs
10:00 AM	"Temperance"	Keith Cozort
11:00 AM	"Patience"	Larry Gibson
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:00 PM	SINGING	
1:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
2:30 PM	"Godliness"	Rob Whitacre
3:30 PM	"Brotherly Kindness"	Matthew Price
Sunday, April 25		
9:30 AM	"Charity"	Keith Cozort
11:30 AM	"If These Things Be In You"	Keith Mosher

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TOTALLY COMMITTED

1. Personal incompetence.
 - a. This is what Moses did.
 - 1) Exodus 3:11, 13, 4:10
 - 2) Do we use these excuses
 - b. This is what Jeremiah did.
 - 1) Jeremiah 1:6-7
 - 2) Are we using these old worn out excuses?
2. Lack of social position.
 - a. Judges 6:15
 - b. Are we refusing to be committed to the Lord because we are poor or not of the social elite?
3. Too difficult.
 - a. Proverbs 22:13
 - b. Nothing of lasting value ever comes easy.
4. Hardness of the master.
 - a. Matthew 25:24-25
 - b. Think how hard the Master will be on us if we are not totally committed!
5. Do not see the need.
 - a. Matthew 25:44-45
 - b. Most of the time we do not see the need because we are not looking.
6. Pressure of business.

- a. Luke 14:18-20
 - b. Too many cannot commit to the Lord because they are too committed to making money.
- D. THINGS WE ARE TO BE COMMITTED TO
1. Committed to God.
 - a. Matthew 22:37-38
 - b. John 14:15
 - c. Matthew 6:33
 2. Committed to truth.
 - a. Jeremiah 6:16-17
 - b. Jude 3
 - c. 1 John 4:1
 - d. Titus 2:1
 3. Committed to each other.
 - a. Matthew 7:12
 - b. Matthew 22:39
 4. Committed to our family.
 - a. Ephesians 5:22-23
 - b. Ephesians 5:25
 - c. Ephesians 6:4
 5. Committed to purity and modesty.
 - a. Philippians 4:8
 - b. James 1:27c. Matthew 5:8
 6. Committed to souls.
 - a. Matthew 9:36
 - b. Matthew 28:19-20
 - c. Proverbs 11:30

CONCLUSION

- A. Are we totally committed to the Lord and his requirements for us, or are we just trying to get by?
- B. God does not want our second best, he has never excepted anyone's second best.

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Wayne Coats Books

We have had some excellent commendations from brethren who have read the two latest books which I have attempted to write. *Why The Church Is Not Growing* and *Sermon Thoughts For Funeral Occasions* can be ordered from Memphis School of Preaching, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125-2242. The cost will be \$5.00 each. If three or more copies are ordered, the price is \$4.00 each. Postage and handling for one book is \$1.75. For each additional book on the same order add \$.50 postage and handling.

THE EMOTIONAL EXCESSES OF THE EARLY CAMP MEETINGS

Paul Vaughn

Throughout history there has been many men and groups of men in denominations who have claimed the Bible as the only thing needed to direct man to God. However, these same men have started wars in the name of Christ, inflicted cruelties and excruciating punishment to achieve their objectives. These denominational adherents have advanced their creeds and doctrines of men above the teaching of God in the scriptures. In many cases, the only thing they were able to accomplish was to establish a class of tyrants who called themselves "Christian." A good number of denominational preachers and people generally in the last part of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century viewed religion as dead. It was in this atmosphere that the early Restoration leaders began to turn to the Bible as the true guide to God.

In the late 1700's the teaching of deism began to spread across Kentucky. Deists taught the existence of God, but they did not have faith in biblical authority. They believed that God created the world and its natural laws, but that he takes no additional action in its functioning. With the stagnation of denominational teaching and the expanding of deism, people in Kentucky were starving spiritually. This spiritual emptiness opened the way for the emotional eruption during the camp meetings.

The first of the camp meetings started in 1800 with the preaching of **James McGready** in Logan and Christian Counties, Kentucky. These meetings were located near the waters of the Gasper and Red Rivers. The people were concerned about their souls and the sins in their lives. McGready encouraged all men to repent and believe in God. In 1801 **Barton W. Stone** went to hear the preaching of McGready and witnessed the surge of emotion among the people. People would get the jerks, some would dance, some had what is called the barking exercise, while still others engaged in uncontrolled laughter and singing. It was not uncommon to see some falling on the ground as dead. The camp meeting revivals soon spread across the Cumberland Mountains to Knoxville and Nashville, Tennessee.

Before the advancement of the revivals to Tennessee, a small number of young people came together and were carried away with these emotional outbursts. In Fleming County, Kentucky, near Flemingsburg, in 1801 on the last Sunday of April, two young girls about twelve years old exhibited some of these emotional outbursts during a worship service. The next Sunday a congregation of Presbyterians on Cabin Creek in Mason County,

Kentucky, had twenty people with these outbursts of emotion. On Cabin Creek it started among the youth. The first was a twelve year old girl. This event set the stage for a large camp meeting on Cabin Creek.

It was on Cabin Creek that the next camp meeting took place on the 22nd of May, 1801. It lasted for four days and the scene was dreadful to see as many people began to fall to the ground and cry out in anguish. A few people tried to run from the event only to be caught up with emotions on the way of escape. During the third night many people began to fall as dead and some feared that they would be killed under the feet of the multitude, so they carried them to the meeting house and laid them out side by side on the floor. The number was so great that the floor could not be seen because of the bodies.

The third great camp meeting was on Eagle Creek, in what was then Adams County, Ohio. It started on June 5th and lasted for five days. There were not as many at the Eagle Creek meeting as there were at Cabin Creek in Kentucky.

The fourth and fifth camp meeting revivals took place at Pleasant Point, Kentucky and at Indian Creek in Harrison County, Kentucky. During the Indian Creek meeting, which began on 24th of July, the emotional outbursts did not take place until the third day when a twelve year old boy, standing on a log, started preaching convicting people of sin.

The sixth and largest of these camp meetings took place in August 1801. It was organized by **Barton W. Stone** who was the preacher at the Cane Ridge Presbyterian Church in Bourbon County. It is estimated that there was between twenty and thirty thousand people in attendance. The Cane Ridge revival is not only noted for the large public response, but also for the flood of people who were carried away by their emotions.

The spiritual emptiness and the teaching of deism opened the door for people to do many unusual things in the name of God. It only took a short time after the Cane Ridge revival for the restorers in Kentucky to bid their denominational creeds goodbye and seek the pure message from the New Testament.



Today the “religious world” is overflowing with emotionalism, while at the same time many people are viewing “Christianity” as dead and not relevant for the age. In the church of Christ there are some who are turning to emotions, while at the same time others are dead spiritually. The force that turned the religious world upside down in the 1800’s was not the emotionalism of the camp meetings, but the preaching of the gospel. This writer is convinced that the gospel still has the power to do the same today. If we preach it as the early church did, souls will be converted to Christ and

the church will grow. One must believe in the power of the word. Paul said, **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”** (Romans 1:16). It was all that was needed by the church one reads about in the new Testament. It was all the early restorers needed to advance the Restoration Movement. It is all we need today!

—1415 Lincoln Rd.
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

One Woman’s Perspective...

“SAY GOOD-BYE TO THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY”

Annette B. Cates

The above is the shocking subtitle to the October 20, 2003, issue of *BusinessWeek*’s cover story, “Unmarried America.” The article cites the most recent U. S. Census Bureau statistics showing that legally married couples make up only 50.7% of the population. The comparison to the figures from the 1950’s—80%—is given. The conclusions drawn from this trend are not good: increasing numbers of young singles delaying marriage for a “Sex and the City” lifestyle, the breakup of intact families through divorce, older Americans “shacking up” in order to retain a deceased spouse’s pension/insurance benefits, and those forming homosexual unions. None of these situations is scriptural!

From these figures we can see the influence of hedonism, materialism, Humanism, and atheism on America today. This is coupled with apathy and ignorance on the part of those who claim an adherence to Christianity. We have to stand up and speak out before this nation goes further into degradation. **“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”** (Psalms 11:3). It is certain that those who oppose the principles on which this nation was built are bent on silencing Biblical influences and are making their voices heard, thus are changing the face of our country, causing the disintegration of our homes, one of the foundations of a society. Indeed there are those who are intent on destroying even Christianity itself. What does the Bible say about the four lifestyles described in this article?

In a time of situation ethics and no absolute standard, America needs to realize that only **“Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people”** (Proverbs 14:34). This principle is emphasized also in Proverbs 29:2, **“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the**

wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.” It is truth that will keep us free (John 8:32); God’s word is truth (John 17:17), and it IS the absolute standard. The word **“is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”** (Hebrews 4:12) and shall judge every person at the last day (John 12:48; Romans 14:11-12; II Corinthians 5:10). The necessity of maintaining traditional families is a Biblical absolute!



It is absolutely wrong to live the promiscuous lifestyle. If you believe what you see on television and in movies, you will think that this is the only way to live as a young adult. The impact of such programming can be seen in the very young teenagers that are engaging in sexual activity. Also involved are drug abuse, drinking, and smoking. Is it any wonder that sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy outside marriage, and murders of unwanted babies through abortion are occurring with mind-boggling and ever-increasing frequency? To Christians who lived in the extremely secular and immoral city of Corinth, Paul wrote: **“...to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband”** (I Corinthians 7:2). The Hebrews were told **“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers [fornicators] and adulterers God will judge”** (Hebrews 13:4). By the time those who have followed this way of life decide to settle into a monogamous relationship (often still outside marriage) the damage is done. There is no reason for trust and commitment. The union can be easily dissolved, and each return to the former life-style. We must teach our young people the importance of marriage and the ne-

cessity for self-control (and not getting into situations where the will is tested) prior to marriage.

It is absolutely wrong to divorce for any cause other than unfaithfulness on the part of the spouse. In answer to those Jewish leaders who thought that all it took to divorce a wife was that he “give her a writing of divorcement,” Jesus responded, **“But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery”** (Matthew 5:31-32). He reiterated this absolute in Matthew 19:9: **“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”** Marriage is a life-time commitment. God never intended for families to be split up by divorce (Matthew 19:6). There can be no stability when homes are torn apart and children are shuttled back and forth, wearing a confusion of differing last names, and coping with a myriad of “step” situations. (It is heart-breaking to see children flying cross-country alone to spend a season with one parent or the other!) How can homes of the future have any hope when this is the way today’s children are growing up? We must apply to ourselves and teach our young of the sanctity and permanency of marriage.

It is absolutely wrong to live together outside marriage regardless of age. There is an expression that there is no fool like an old fool. If two people truly love one another, they will commit themselves to one another through marriage. I see two problems with those who live together rather than marry in order to retain spousal benefits. The first is a matter of ethics and honesty. It is just as wrong as to underreport our income for tax purposes. Love and commitment cost financially. What is more important—the money or the soul? **“Provide things honest in the sight of all men”** (Romans 12:17). The second problem is a moral one. As noted earlier, being unmarried and living together is fornication, and fornication is sin. Not only do we have to teach the young about moral purity, now we have to teach the older generation!

It is absolutely wrong to practice homosexuality. **“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination”** (Leviticus 18:22). Leviticus 20:13 repeats this statement and adds that the participants **“shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.”** These verses are accompanied with equal condemnation for bestiality and incest, showing the seriousness of the sin of homosexuality.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 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 recompense of their error which was meet (Romans 1:26-27).

Scripture cannot be more clear and absolute than by calling homosexuality an abomination worthy of death. We must keep our young informed that regardless of how “acceptable” this life-style is supposed to be, it is heinous in God’s sight.

It seems that morally our nation continues to sink. We cannot survive as a free people if we do not reverse this trend. We are allowing evil to take over, and we will be destroyed for having done so. In the days of Jeremiah, appeasers cried peace when there was no peace.

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls (Jeremiah 6:14-16).

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Moral Issues
April 16-18, 2004**

Friday

7:00 pm	Gambling	B.J. Clarke
8:00 pm	Abortion/Euthanasia	Tyler Young
9:00 pm	Fellowship/Refreshments	

Saturday

8:00 am	Fellowship/Refreshments	
9:00 am	Homosexuality/"Gay" Marriages	Tyler Young
10:00 am	Pornography	B.J. Clarke
11:00 am	Situation Ethics	Jerry Brewer
12:00 pm	Lunch Served	
1:30 pm	Humanism	Dub McClish
2:30 pm	Materialism	Jerry Brewer
3:30 pm	Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs	Ryan Kepke
4:30 pm	Fellowship/Refreshments	

Sunday

9:30 am	Pure Speech	David Watson
10:30 am	Marriage/Divorce/Remarriage	Dub McClish
12:00 pm	Lunch Served	
1:30 pm	Dancing/Immodest Apparel	Ryan Kepke
2:30 pm	Carnal Warfare/Capital Punishment	David Watson

3:30 pm Fellowship/Refreshments

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THE APOSTASY/HYPOCRISY IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Paul Curless

At one time the state of Tennessee was part of what was commonly referred to as “The Bible Belt.” But unfortunately today when one looks around at the majority of the churches of Christ congregations it is apparent that the verbally inspired, inerrant, word of God (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:21) has very little influence upon them, as far as being their guide in religious matters (John 12:48).

It saddens my heart to see the decline in faithful congregations. Thirty to forty years ago one could usually stop at a church building which had the name Church of Christ on the sign and find Christian people who were concerned about the blood-bought spiritual kingdom (Acts 20:28) where salvation is found (Ephesians 1:3; Romans 16:16) and desired only to teach and preach Bible truth and worship as the New Testament authorized (Colossians 3:17). Seemingly those days are long gone. Evidently some of the reasons why so many congregations (especially the larger ones) are no longer abiding in the truth are:

1. They, like the Jews of old, want to be like their religious neighbors, the denominations. I fear some would like us to become just another denomination.

2. The so-called “Christian Universities” are not consistent in teaching Bible truth any longer. They seem to be more concerned about money than they are about training men to teach Bible truth in order to convert the lost to Jesus Christ. I know of no Christian University in our state that does not have liberals/false teachers on their faculty and board of directors. Unfortunately, this has an adverse effect upon congregations in Tennessee. Yet there are some preachers who would not think of missing one of their lectureships but instead boast about going. These brethren seem to be more dedicated to their Alma Mater than to God and his word. Some preachers have compromised the truth in favor of what their school teaches over what the Bible says.

Example: One faculty member of Freed Hardeman University taught the Q theory, which is just another way of denying the inspiration of the Bible. One preacher who received his MA degree there exposed this error. The university hierarchy pounced upon him and he compromised truth by retracting his statement.

3. Many congregations have appointed men to serve as elders because of their social standings or their

longevity, rather than meeting the qualifications God has set forth in I Timothy 3:17; Titus 1:5-9. Several men from where I preach met with one such eldership about a false teacher they were supporting. Rather than telling the truth about it, they denied supporting him. They not only were supporting him, they were acting as his sponsorship (overseeing) congregation (information obtained from the church bulletin).

4. Preachers who want to make a big name for themselves are compromising Bible truth by agreeing to speak at congregations which are no longer abiding in the doctrine of Christ (II John 9-11). Perhaps in times past they were sound but not today. Also some preachers are accepting money from liberal congregations to support their good works!

5. Sadly many elders do not have enough basic Bible knowledge to ask the right questions when considering a preacher to work with them. Great numbers of faithful gospel preachers have commented that in traveling around and speaking to elders around the brotherhood that the vast majority do not even begin to meet the qualifications recorded in I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9. These statistics will have a great effect upon whether or not congregations remain faithful or go by the way-side and no longer abide in the doctrine of Christ.

The following are examples of what some congregations (mostly larger ones) in Cannon, Rutherford, and Coffee Counties in Tennessee are doing or have done over the past few years, which should cause great concern among the brotherhood:

a. Many congregations have their pews full of the N.I.V., New International version, which is a perverted version containing Calvinistic error.

b. Some have and promote women’s ministries—whatever that is!

c. Advertising Winterfest and other activities wherein many of the speakers are nothing more than denominational teachers.

d. Having special Baby Blessing services.

e. Having liberals from so-called “Christian Universities” to conduct summer series, training classes, meetings, and lectureships.

f. Some congregations not only are supporting known false teachers, but also are taking the oversight of such men.

g. Special Thanksgiving services—some being

conducted with denominational churches.

h. A congregation who distorts their actual number by including those in the nursing home as being “present for worship”.

i. Being a part of “Adventures in Learning” sponsored by an interfaith coalition of nineteen denominations.

j. Using unfaithful men to lead in worship. One such person has his own singing group who entertains denominational churches with instrumental music accompanying their singing of religious songs.

k. Supporting the local “Arts Center” with contributions from the church treasury.

l. Fellowshiping with denominations during a nursing home Sunday service. Also having a denominational “pastor” to conduct their gospel meeting.

m. Preachers questioning Matthew 19:9—trying to justify those who have had several mates before baptism, that they can remain with the last one after baptism. This position asserts that the Bible does not apply until one becomes a Christian— which is the Devil’s lie (John 12:48).

n. Having a Christmas Eve production, along with a Christmas devotional. Also a drama of “The Resurrection” and having a nativity scene with live animals in front of the church building.

o. Supporting the so-called “Churches of Christ Disaster Relief, Inc.”

p. Changing the regular scheduled worship services because of “Christmas.”

q. Advertising in local newspaper referring to the preacher as the “Pastor”.

r. Inviting preachers from liberal, larger congregations to speak at their local lectureship; where false doctrine is allowed to be taught such as “no more guilt by association” (II John 9-11).

s. Foot washing during worship services.

t. Encouraging Christians to purchase books written by “best selling authors” such as: Max Lucado, Charles Swindoll, Billy Graham, etc...

u. Elders laying hands on folks anointing the sick with literal oil during worship services.

v. Teaching that sprinkling is an acceptable mode of baptism.

w. Preachers teaching it is all right to baptize women living in adultery (she knows it and has no intention of getting out of it) saying maybe she will repent later!

x. As a result of the lack of teaching by preachers and elders on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, many congregations have numerous couples living in adultery. It has been reported to me by several faithful Christians that one particular congregation may have between 60-80 couples living in adultery.

y. Having a scratch and dent sell at the church building. My question is; “What’s the difference between that and a bake sale or car wash?”

z. Preachers’ passing out a version called “God’s Word” which is as perverted as the NIV.

A few perversions contained in the “God’s Word” version are as follows:

1) **“Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me”** (Psalms 51:5).

2) **“By believing you receive God’s approval, and by declaring your faith you are saved”** (Romans 10:10).

3) **“God saved you through faith as an act of kindness. You had nothing to do with it...”** (Ephesians 2:8).

4) **“Because a bishop is a supervisor appointed by God...”** (Titus 1:7)

5) **“The day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day heaven will pass away with a roaring sound. Everything that makes up the universe will burn and be destroyed. The earth and everything that people have done on it will be exposed”** (2 Peter 3:10).

6) **“I can guarantee that whoever divorces his wife for any reason other than her unfaithfulness is committing adultery if he marries another woman”** (Matthew 19:9). The word unfaithfulness is not true to what our Saviour spoke. He said “fornication” which is explicit. All fornication is unfaithfulness but all unfaithfulness may not be fornication.

Many other items of digression could be mentioned, but hopefully these will cause a few Christians to wake up and realize that . . . **“many false prophets are gone out into the world”** (I John 4:1); and a great number of them are sitting in the pews and preaching from the pulpits of the churches of Christ (Matthew 7:15; II Peter 2:1).

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The Last Word...

THE CONTINUING APOSTASY AT HARDING GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Kent Bailey

For many years informed brethren have watched in dismay regarding the continuing apostasy taking place at the Harding Graduate School of Religion located in Memphis, Tennessee. It was therefore no great surprise in reading the announcement regarding the annual W.B. West, Jr. Lectures that took place at Harding Graduate School of Religion on February 5-6 of this year.

According to Drew Custer, Student Association president, as reported in the January 2004 edition of *The Bridge*; **Jack W. Cottrell**, Professor of Theology at Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary was slated to speak at The W.B. West Lectures for this year. Mr. Cottrell is a Christian Church preacher and the educational institution with which he is identified is affiliated with Independent Christian churches.

Such being the case, it is obvious that Cottrell advocates a number of unscriptural concepts inclusive of which is his advocating the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship unto God and the missionary society concept in the work of Independent Christian churches. Some may protest that Cottrell is of the more conservative element found within Independent Christian churches. However, when one investigates the doctrinal stance of Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary, one will discover that there are more issues involved than just the usage of mechanical instruments of music and the missionary concepts. Even if it were the case that these were the only two key elements involved in our controversy with Cottrell (and indeed these are not the only issues involved), lines of fellowship, by the faithful, would still be drawn.

In years gone by, faithful defenders of the faith have soundly defeated those advocating both the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship unto God and the missionary society concept on the polemic platform with representatives of the Christian Church. History attests to the fact that such debates dealt death blows to those proponents of digression. Such debates were so successful for the cause of truth that the vast majority of Christian Church preachers have been driven from the polemic platform and are only willing to engage in "unity discussions" rather than dealing with an open examination of the issues involving their producing Bible authority for their practices. There is a very good reason why they refuse to debate. There is absolutely no Scriptural authority for their particular practices. As the result of discussions with faithful defenders of the faith, a great many preachers in Christian churches either desire to redefine the element of wor-

ship, or else contend that such is without Biblical regulation. When one goes that far they have rejected passages such as Matthew 15:9; John 4:23-24; and Colossians 3:17. The New Testament teaches that our practice must be limited by divine authority. Christian churches teach that whatever is not specifically condemned in the Scriptures is acceptable to God. True churches of Christ are governed by what the scriptures teach; Christian churches are governed by what the scriptures do not teach.

Others object to our stand in contending that there is a distinct difference between the church and the college, or university. Indeed such a difference does exist. I just wish these folks would recognize the full import of such a distinction and cease their attempts to link the college with the church in attempts to be included in the financial work of local churches and also in their attempts to get brethren to view the college as a work of the church.

While indeed such a distinction is a necessity, such does not authorize the extending of fellowship to false teachers outside the realm of the local church. False doctrine is false doctrine regardless where it is found; whether it be in the college, in the church, in the home, or in society in general. Due to the nature of false teaching, it is without Biblical warrant and therefore sinful to extend fellowship to those teaching false doctrine regardless of what context it is found to exist (Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 5:11-12; Colossians 3:17; II John 9-11).

It is time that brethren wake up and take note of the fact that through the influence of the colleges and universities operated by our own brethren, we are now seeing the disintegration of one-time faithful congregations into nothing more than fourth rate "Community" churches brought about by misguided educators who were brainwashed in sectarian theology at the feet of denominational theologians in denominational seminaries. These "professors" among us are now seeking to change the church by their influence upon those that hear them. Let us stand in opposition to such with all of our might!

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Sean Hochdorf, Director

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9:45 am	There is a God In Heaven	Noah Hackworth
10:45 am	Day Age, Gap and Big Bang Theories LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE CONGREGATION	Sean Hochdorf
1:30 pm	A Review and Refutation of the Discovery's Channel "Ancient Evidence: Joshua and the Wall of Jericho"	Greg Weston
2:30 pm	Explanation and Refutation of Theistic Revolution	Jason McDade
6:00 pm	Internal and External Evidences of the Inspiration of the Scriptures	Chuck Webster
7:00 pm	Three Classic Arguments for the Existence of God	Dub McClish

MONDAY, MAY 3

10:00 am	A Review and Refutation of the Discovery's Channel "Raising the Mammoth"	Wade Webster
11:00 am	How Can a Study of Creation Be Scientific? LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE CONGREGATION	Ricky Spacek
1:15 pm	The Scopes Monkey Trial	John Grubb
2:15 pm	The Need to Publicly Defend Creation vs The Hypothesis of Evolution	Jack Stewart
7:00 pm	Evidences of Dinosaurs	Wayne Jackson
8:00 pm	Evidences For a Global, Catastrophic Flood	Curtis Cates

TUESDAY, MAY 4

10:00 am	A Review and Refutation of the Discovery's Channel "Walking With Dinosaurs"	Dan Cates
11:00 am	The Evolution of Evolution LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE CONGREGATION	Lennie Reagan
1:15 pm	Evidences From Archaeology Support the Biblical Record	John Moore
2:15 pm	An Explanation and Refutation of the Geologic Timetable As Accepted by Modern Science	Cliff Goodwin
7:00 pm	Cloning: the Process, Its Future, Consequences and Scripturalness	Ronnie Hayes
8:00 pm	Evidence for the Existence of God Through the Unfolding of the Scheme of Redemption	David Brown

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5

10:00 am	A Review and Refutation of the Discovery's Channels "Walking with Cavemen"	Rick Popejoy
11:00 am	Evolution in Public Schools and Universities (How Should Christians Handle the Problem?) LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE CONGREGATION	Carl Garner
1:15 pm	Evolution During the Restoration Movement	Lee Davis
2:15 pm	Mistakes, Hoaxes, Lies and Scandals Discovered About Evolution	Eric Lyons
7:00 pm	Internal and External Evidences of the Diety of Christ	Randy Mabe
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Somerville-Union Church of Christ, located on Hwy 36, one mile east of Hwy 67, Somerville, Alabama, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tom Larkin, Evangelist, (256) 778-8955, (256) 778-8961.

Tuscaloosa-East Pointe Church of Christ one block from Exit 76, off I-20, I-59, Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed., 7 p.m. Abiding in God's Word—The Old Paths. U of A student, visitor, or resident? Welcome! Andy Cates, Evangelist. (205)556-3062.

-England-

Cambridge-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

Cambridgeshire-Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

-Florida-

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.

-Georgia-

Cartersville-Church of Christ, 1319 Joe Frank Harris Pkwy NW 30120-4222. Tel. 770-382-6775, www.cartersvillechurchofchrist.org. Sun. 10, 11 a.m., 6 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Bobby D. Gayton, Evangelist-email: bdgayton@juno.com.

-Indiana-

Evansville-West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sun. 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, Evangelist.

-Louisiana-

Chalmette-Village Square Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St., Chalmette, LA 70044. Mark Lance, Evangelist, (504) 279-9438.

-Massachusetts-

Chicopee-Armory Drive Church of Christ, 26 Armory Drive; Chicopee, MA 01020, in-home, (413) 592-4834, Ken Dion, Evangelist.

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Garden City-Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Dan Goddard, Evangelist. (734) 422-8660. www.garden-city-coc.org

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

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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: lawson@starnetok.net.

-Tennessee-

Memphis-Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

Rockwood-Post Oak Church of Christ, 1227 Post Oak Valley Rd., Rockwood, TN 37854. Sun. 10 a.m., 11 a.m., Wed. 6 p.m. Contact Glen Moore, (865) 354-9416 or Mel Chandler, (865) 354-3455.

-Texas-

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., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, Evangelist. Home of Spring Bible Institute and the SBI Lectures beginning the last Sunday in February. www.churchesofchrist.com

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

Hurst-Northeast Church of Christ, 1313 Karla Dr., P.O. Box 85, Hurst, TX 76053. Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Jason Rollo, Evangelist, (817) 282-3239.

Lubbock-Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00, 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

New Braunfels-1130 Hwy. 306, 1.5 miles west of I-35. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 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.

Roanoke-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm. (817) 491-2388.

Schertz-Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., Schertz, TX. (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff and Stan Crowley, Evangelists.

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Cheyenne-High Plains Church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, Tel. (307) 635-2482.

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