

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XIX, 1988

Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

Concerning Litigation Among Brethren

(I Corinthians 6:1-8)

Pat McGee

It ought to be obvious even to the casual reader that the church of Christ at Corinth had a vast variety of faults, some of which were of the grossest kind. No church in the New Testament that we know of seems to approach it in manner and measure of problems. One almost wonders how Paul could write what he did in I Corinthians 1:2,4-5 and II Corinthians 1:1 *et al* in light of the severity of the then current situation. But, of course, there are ever "the faithful few" as well as a number of brethren at Corinth who were teachable and reachable. Thus the inspired letter.

The matter of lack of Biblical leadership at Corinth is of paramount importance to note. It has direct causal relation to a proper understanding of the particular text which is under study. I am convinced that there was in fact no eldership over the congregation in the city and that this no doubt is a major contributing part of their troubles.

WHY DO WE SAY "NO ELDERS"?

1. Neither the words nor their Biblical counterparts are found in any of the verses of I or II Corinthians. Nor does the book of Acts so indicate any eldership.

2. Paul would not have said what he did in I Corinthians 6:1 if they had had bishops in the congregation. He would have referred them to the Lord's teaching on such matters as per Matthew 18:15-17.

3. Paul would not have used the phrase "not a wise man among you," as in verse 5, if they had had elders. He would have without doubt rebuked the elders directly if such they had.

4. Paul would not have called them all "babes in Christ," as per 3:1, if there were in fact elders.

5. Paul would have without hesitation directly confronted the eldership to initiate and carry out the matter of

withdrawal of fellowship from the immoral brother in I Corinthians 5:3-5 if elders there had been in Corinth.

6. I Corinthians 16:16 would make no sense if there were elders present. Brethren are to submit to the elders (see Hebrews 13:17) and Paul would have so stated had there been an eldership.

7. On and on one could proceed through the Biblical material with a lengthy list of similar logical scriptural conclusions to be drawn based upon the lack of elders at Corinth.

Thus, we are persuaded, there were no Biblical elders over the congregation in Corinth and that this is exactly why we have this unusual and sharp teaching by Paul throughout the whole epistle and in particular in I Corinthians 6:1-8.

It is the purpose of this article to show that Paul in I Corinthians 6:1-8 has under consideration exclusively and solely in this context a private brother-to-brother offence involving personal financial matters in which it is clearly manifest that one brother was deliberately planning to defraud the other brother. Whatever the exact issue was in the attempt at cheating, it was "in things that pertain to this life" (vvs. 3-4) and not anything beyond that.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Is it the case that these verses absolutely forbid the involvement of a brother and/or brothers (*i.e.*, elderships, trustees, boards, and such like) in matters of litigation against a brother and/or groups of brothers (as noted above)? This is the issue or question and the solution is to be sought by "rightly dividing the word" (II Timothy 2:15)—"understanding the will of God" (Ephesians 5:17), that is—taking into consideration the whole counsel of God and what God has to say on this matter, and therefore

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Does It Deserve An Answer?

Upon returning from another 42 days overseas in missionary work (November 29, 1987 to January 9, 1988) I learned that yet one more unfounded report was being circulated against the Bellview elders and also me as editor of *Contending for the Faith*.

Although almost all of our friends and supporters of the paper have insisted that said report "does not deserve an answer"—to which I agree, yet it seems to me that at least the two following points, in brief, should be made:

1) In looking through this new diatribe, I find very little indeed that was not answered already by the Bellview elders as to the ownership and publishership of this paper, under the heading of "Let The Facts Speak," in their issue of the *Defender* for September/1987. What they said in that issue should settle the whole matter, including the receiving and disbursing of all funds pertaining to the paper itself. Rather than our wasting precious time and space hashing and re-hashing the same old information, I suggest you go back to that issue of the *Defender* and READ IT AGAIN! Or, if you did not receive a copy and would like to see it, please address such request to Bellview church of Christ, Attention: Elders, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

2) As for any other controversial matters alluded to in that irresponsible report, for the most part they had to do with things wherein I was on the side of *truth*. I could hardly be expected to make something *right* that was *never wrong*! Any matter in which I was *wrong*, I confessed faults for and put behind me many, many years ago. I leave it to faithful Christians if one's own confession of faults should be held against him as was done in that report. A re-reading of Matthew 6:14-15 might be in order.

I do not see any worthwhile purpose to be served in continuing these discussions hereafter. However, I do want to express my deep gratitude for the confidence and encouragement of great numbers of Christian friends who have continued to rally to our support.

God bless you all.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

Concerning Litigation Among Brethren

(Continued from Page 1)

employing sound hermeneutics and principles which are biblically based and a reasoning process which is valid. This must be true in every study of the holy scriptures whatever the topic. The New Testament scriptures themselves are to be, of course, the sole guide in this study.

This last disclaimer before we enter the core of this study and that is to state that I personally approach this subject free of bias or desire to "proof-text" a certain position in order to defend a personal matter or action or to justify or condemn the acts or positions of someone else. The only thing under consideration here is what actually and truly *is* Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 6:1-8.

PLEASE READ THE TEXT

The reader is encouraged now before proceeding another word to take his *KJV* text and read the passage under study.

Obviously the then present condition at the church of Christ in Corinth was what we sometimes call "red" or "stat." Paul constantly alluded throughout the first epistle to their spiritually sick state (*cf.*, 11:30), and on more than one occasion called them "puffed up." (4:6,19; 5:2). They seemed to be egoists of the worst sort and claimed even greater knowledge than the apostle. Paul knocked them off their pedestal in a number of ways trying to bring them to a true evaluation of their spiritual state. Perhaps that is why in I Corinthians 6 he asked them no less than six times, "Know ye not...?" (see vs. 2,3,9,15,16,19). It was intended to be a strong, perhaps almost sarcastic, rebuke to those who thought they knew so much. Paul threatened when he came, to bring his "rod" (4:21). The blows he was laying on them now might seem pretty heavy, but they were nothing to compare with what would happen if they didn't straighten out the mess before the apostle got there.

In I Corinthians 6:1-8, whatever Paul is talking about, it is of such a nature that he calls it daring, unworthy, shameful and perhaps even worse than this if the text is closely scrutinized. This is strong and serious language that Paul is using and obviously something that all brethren need to understand, consider and obey without hesitancy.

Paul, by the Holy Spirit, writes at least two things specifically about this defrauding action that was on-going in the pagan legal systems at Corinth (and let us remind ourselves that no doubt in an utterly heathen place such as Corinth was, one probably would be asked to take oaths, using the names of their deities and gods which for a number of reasons would be incompatible to Christian convictions). Paul states 1) the matter was trivial, *i.e.*, "the smallest matters" (vs. 2), and 2) the matter had nothing to do with church affairs *per se*, but rather, "...things that pertain to this life" (vs. 3,4). That is the exact, precise and absolute limit of the issue that was involved here. It was a grievance of the smallest possible import and it had nothing at all to do with earthly affairs. Further let it be clearly seen that Paul's words in their strictest context apply only to one brother entering into the litigation process with one other brother and all of it about the kind of affairs vividly described above. One cannot get away from the weight of these points and their clear placement in this text. To draw any further conclusions from Paul's

words outside the narrow and clear limits of this context itself is simply to disregard what Paul is teaching. Paul's instruction here applies to one brother who himself Paul knows is malevolently planning to defraud his own brother using the pagan legal courts (perhaps bribes could be involved on the part of the evil brother?) to accomplish an end which Paul writes is trivial and worldly. That was the situation or condition that prevailed when the apostle wrote these eight verses. I am fully convinced that to apply these verses to any other type of circumstances or conditions which is not exactly identical to that of I Corinthians 6:1-8 is wrong and a wresting of scripture. It certainly would lead to confusion of thought and practice among brethren and churches of Christ in general.

NOW TO THE DISCUSSION

Having obtained the exact perimeters of Paul's statements and teaching in this text what may we now say?

First of all, let it be re-emphasized what is written directly above because I realize it is the pendulum upon which the whole of this article and its conclusions are based. Paul in I Corinthians 6:1-8 is without doubt discussing two brothers, at least one of which is evil in intent and purpose to cheat his brother. The exact matter is of absolutely no import or consequence, has nothing at all to do with church affairs or business and is totally worldly in nature. That is the set of circumstances according to the Holy Spirit and to exegete these eight verses correctly and make application of them it must be to the set of conditions herein set out. If not, why not? To do otherwise would be to go beyond that which is written. One must understand perhaps also what the pagan-court-systems must have been like in Corinth at Paul's time and all of what would have been involved to enter into them. This matter was clearly such that the spiritual (Galatians 6:1) among them could and should take care of themselves and not display the ungodliness on the part of some members to the pagan city of Corinth. That is Paul's point and the only point we are persuaded that can be named as binding upon brethren today.

Secondly, it is time to note more fully Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 on the matter of brother-to-brother disputes. That Jesus in this teaching had in mind the Christian Age there is no doubt for the Lord said, "...tell it to the church." That would have meaning only from Acts 2 and onward. This statement is the bottom-line teaching in the New Testament in respect to brother-to-brother disputes and is qualified by Christ with the statement "...if thy brother shall trespass **against thee**." This verse has only to do with matters of a personal nature where the one brother **sins against** the other brother. It has no direct application to affairs that are otherwise. Obviously there were no elders or faithful teachers in the church at Corinth to see to it that this matter in I Corinthians 6:1-8 was dealt with according to Jesus' teaching here. But Matthew 18:15-17 is the basic principle of the New Testament to ever be used among brethren if possible and when possible, if feasible and when applicable.

Thirdly, it is time to note our own Lord's attitude toward and involvement in civil and religious litigation. It would be strange for Paul to be universally forbidding something for the child of God if the Son of God himself taught and/or acted to the contrary. The basic principle is set down in the language of Matthew 22:21 which generally involves a proper division between the things of Caesar and the things of God. Thus we often hear Jesus employing

legal language during his ministry (see John 7:19)—and in John 10:30 through 39 he argues at great length to establish the legality of his actions and claims. According to all four gospel accounts, Christ during his religious trial spoke out, according to the Law (John 7:51; Exodus 23:1; Deuteronomy 1:16; 17:6; 19:15) in defense of himself (Matthew 26:59-64; Mark 14:55-62; Luke 22:66-71 and John 18:19-24), and, during his civil trial, he also did the same before Pilate (John 18:33-37). All of this recognizes that one, even the Christ, had a legal right to involve himself in the litigation process and to exercise those rights according to the Law. Christ's teaching on the marriage-divorce-and-remarriage process patently implies a right on the part of the innocent to litigation process. And, after all, what one could *attain* whether by religious or civil court in this process he would logically have the same right to *maintain* by the same litigation system. Clearly our Lord has not taught total abstinence from the due legal process.

Fourthly, the case of Stephen in Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-8:1 gives the record of this early Christian "disputing" (a legal term in the Greek), strongly defending himself and especially the gospel. When he was brought before the Council one has to wonder if Nicodemus (who was a believer—John 7:50) was himself present or some of that vast number of priests who were Christians by this time (Acts 6:7)? The point being that like his Lord Stephen involved himself in the litigation process and made his defense.

Fifthly, we must ask the question, "But what of Paul himself?" Do we find him acting contrary to the way that some seem to want to make him believe in I Corinthians 6:1-8? This question brings into true focus the actual issue herein under investigation. Paul's teaching in Romans 13:1-7 sets out the Christian's responsibilities toward the legal system or government under which he is presently living. The sum of this teaching is that "ye must needs be subject" (Romans 13:5), and a re-emphasis of what Christ taught in verse seven. (Matthew 22:21). The Holy Spirit inspires Paul to declare that the legal system is there as your servant, friend and "minister of God to thee for good" (Romans 13:4). We might insert here the notice that Peter himself (whose life was saved and the lives of his guards lost when God acted to release him from a wrong civil or legal action on the part of Herod the king (*cf.*, Acts 12:1-19) taught these identical things as Paul here in Romans 13 and in I Peter 2:13-17. In light of these instructions and teachings and like Christ himself did, Paul is to be found availing himself of both religious and civil systems to protect and defend himself and the way of the Lord. The following are a list of at least *some* of those occasions: 1) Acts 22:1—Paul makes what he calls "my defense" and even called upon the High Priest present (vs. 5) to corroborate with Paul by also giving his witness in order legally to sustain Paul's argument. 2) Acts 23:3—Paul turns on the Judge (as it were) in the religious court, crying "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall" and then proceeds to litigate his rights and legal protections under the law. When the court then turns back on Paul he further defends his actions and statements, knowing he is present in or before a legal system, by quoting again from the law. 3) Acts 25:11-12—Paul here makes what is his legal right to do under Roman Law, his appeal unto Caesar. He is present before Festus and accusers have made legal assaults upon Paul and he replies that they cannot *prove* the things they have said (Acts 25:7). Paul has directly and with full intention involved himself within the legal system and

claimed his full rights as a Roman citizen. 4) Acts 25:21,25—Paul is now before King Agrippa and Festus and both admit that Paul has rightfully exercised his legal rights as a Roman citizen. In Acts 26:32, Agrippa says to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar." By involving himself in the litigation process Paul is but doing, because he was so forced, what is his legal right to do. 5) Acts 28:19—Paul here explains this fact to the Jews in Rome and that his legal actions are not to be misinterpreted by them. He was "constrained" to do what he did, but his actions were in accord with all that Christ himself ever did or taught and he is but availing himself of the benefits and protections of the litigation system or legal process which he himself set out in Romans 13.

What are we to conclude from all of this and in light of Paul's own teaching in I Corinthians 6:1-8? The boundaries and limitations of the passage in I Corinthians 6:1-8 already have been clearly set forth. What Paul is dealing with here is severely and strictly limited to the confines set out by the Holy Spirit. This passage has application only when this exact set of circumstances is to be found. In view of the above material where Paul personally involved himself in the religious and civil litigation process in order to protect himself and the church and to defend the gospel, there also can be no doubt but that under some circumstances the child of God *can* and in fact *should* enter into the court systems and legal courts in order to accomplish the same. Paul does not teach total abstinence from the litigation process. One should certainly not use I Corinthians 6:1-8 to attempt to sustain such a position for this passage has its own limitations and circumstances set out within its own context.

It is obvious to me that extreme caution must be exerted in legal matters between brethren. When possible and permissible, application of all New Testament teachings, examples, and principles must be made. "Let all your things be done with charity," the Bible says (I Corinthians 16:14). Also finally let it be noted that great care and caution must be made in making application of the I Corinthians 6:1-8 text to a present personal matter that does not fall within the exact intentions of the Holy Spirit in this place.

—Mansfield church of Christ
201 E. Broad Street
Mansfield, Texas 76063

"Placing Membership"

Dan Jenkins

In recent weeks we have been mentioning the importance of Christians being a part of a local congregation. In order to grow fully, all need elders to watch over us. A sense of "I belong at this place" helps us to be aware of our duties to our God.

Consider the following: Paul obeyed the gospel in Damascus. When he later came to Jerusalem he wanted in "join himself to the disciples" there. (Acts 9:26). He wanted them to know that he was a part of the Lord's work in that place. Every Christian needs to be like Paul.

In an article along this line, Dan Flournoy observed, "Just as a soldier in the army 'reports for duty' when he arrives at his new assignment, the soldier in the Lord's army should also 'report for duty' when relocating. By doing so, the Christian is enabled to take up his responsibilities in the local church, enjoy the fellowship of the saints, and derive the benefits of the local congregation." (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Apostasy In Progress

Graham Cain

A study of God's people (those who by reason of close affiliation with God; those receiving special attention and blessings from him) shows a pattern of consistent dissatisfaction with his requirements and his provisions. This is evidenced in Adam and Eve and continued on through certain of their descendants right on down to Noah. Nimrod was the first monarch, establishing the first kingdom upon the earth. Evidently this was due to his unwillingness to continue under the rule and regulation of God. The people who built the tower of Babel conspired to accomplish their desires as expressed in Genesis 11:4, "let us make us a name."

"MAKE US A KING"

Human history reveals that man has not been successful in faithfully continuing in God's expressed requirements for more than two or three generations before veering off into those humanistic desires of lust or pride. We see the tragic reenactment of the people of Samuel's time happening constantly in the contemporary scenes of the church. God's people then, rejected him, preferring and demanding a king so that they could be "like all the nations" (I Samuel 8:5,7,19,20). Even so, his people today are manifesting the same spirit and persistently going about the enactment of rejecting and supplanting their God with the vain values of human philosophy.

It seems quite evident that a majority of those today who have been added to the kingdom of Christ through obedience to the gospel are not satisfied. They are being persuaded to desire and seek the ways and things of "the nations" about us. Of course, "the nations" in this case are the denominational, man-made churches. The stimulus of emotionalism, the glitter of innovations, and the pseudo intellectualism that characterizes these "nations" seem to have such a magnetic pull that the minds of all except those who are steeped in Bible lore are easy victims. This movement is a persistent determination to follow those who do not serve God, yet make impressive gestures of piety.

God tried to dissuade the people of long ago and told Samuel to "protest solemnly unto them" (I Samuel 8:8). He protests even more emphatically today through the full, detailed instructions of his will revealed in the New Testament (II Timothy 3:16-17). There never has been a time, past or present, when the children of God could, with impunity, disregard his will. The concluding words of the Lord at this instance of disobedience under Samuel are fearful in the fullness of their portent. In I Samuel 8:22 we read, "**And the Lord said to Samuel, Harken unto their voice, and make them a king.**" When men turn from God, inflexible and adamant in seeking their own ways and pleasures, the results are awesome! The proverbial "kiss of death" is when, in essence, God says, "Go ahead."

PAINFUL EXAMPLES

The Bible is replete with examples. Three notable ones are:

(1) **The case of Balaam**, chapter 22 of Numbers. In verse 12, we find Jehovah plainly charging him, "Thou shalt not go." When Balaam refused to accept this plain, emphatic command and inquired of God on this matter **again**, the answer from the same God, to the same question, was given

just as emphatically, "rise up and go" (verse 20). But, in verse 22 we learn that "God's anger was kindled because he went."

(2) **The case of the pompous, self-willed Jews** discussed in Isaiah 66:1-4. Their sacrifices, though proper in procedure and substance were, nevertheless, because of their attitude and spirit, an abomination before their God. Their guilt and assessment from the mouth of Jehovah was, "Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions and will bring their fears upon them, because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighteth not" (verses 3b and 4).

(3) **The New Testament warning on the spirit and principle of apostasy** in II Thessalonians 2:1-12. Three points need to be stressed here:

- a. The prophetic apostasy of verse three came to pass. A recovery (or at least a partial recovery) has occurred. A second apostasy, or another phase of the one mentioned by Paul, is in progress again even as you read this.
- b. The "mystery of iniquity" (vs. 7) continues to ferment and work. Let us not fail to understand that these matters have to do with activities within the church and do not relate to world or political occurrences.
- c. The saddest, most dreadful aspect of all is seen in verses 11 and 12. God deliberately sends those who refuse to receive and cherish his truth "a strong delusion." He actually assists them into believing a lie in all good conscience, and will, in full fairness and justice, condemn them eternally for their flagrant disobedience.

Other examples could be cited such as those described in the first chapter of Romans. It is repeatedly stated that, "God gave them up." Why? Because "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge." To what did he give them up? Verse 28 says, "to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting."

The foregoing remarks and principles set the tone and the scene for a careful examination of just *one* of the pathways this current falling-away is traveling.

OUR CLERGY-LAITY SYSTEM

Heinz advertises the "57 varieties" of their food products. We are reaching toward that figure in the increasing variety and number of "ministers" that we boast. These are all borrowed from the great enemy of truth, Satan, through his man-made institutions—denominational churches. The New Testament shows that in the first-century church certain men who were doing various aspects of God's work were called by definitive names. We read of apostles, prophets, preachers, evangelists, teachers, ministers, elders and deacons. The first two, apostles and prophets, are no longer with us. A few of the others remain except that "ministers" are just about as profuse as small stones in a gravel pit.

Some of the so-called Christian colleges are turning out assorted varieties, professionalized to perform in their

specialty field with amazing precision. They do not know a great deal about the Scriptures, but they certainly do know how to "minister" in their chosen field. The field is also quite extensive. There are junior-high ministers, youth ministers, singles ministers, and then the field becomes somewhat blurred as the other special interest groups begin to line up demanding attention for *their* "felt needs."

This great galaxy of ministers is always headed by THE minister. This is the one who is generally in charge and the one to whom, in some cases, the elders report. Following then, in rapid succession, is the associate minister, the outreach minister, the one who provides for "the 39'ers," the young marrieds, those in need of "counseling"—and the list goes on. This type of activity results in a group of weak, self-centered souls who are turned "INWARD," seeking their own gratification, and in most instances completely unaware of the fact! The highly skilled "ministers" keep them busy doing things. However, these "things" are, for the most part, what they *like* to do, yet with a sheen of spiritual worth skillfully veneered into place that enables one to feel good about it.

We all need to read and meditate upon the plight of the deceived, pitiful, lukewarm Christians in Laodicea. They felt good about themselves also. Their true condition, however, is defined as being, "wretched and miserable and poor and blind" (Revelation 3:17).

HOLD TO INSTRUCTIONS AND PATTERNS

When instructions and examples found in the New Testament for serving Christ in his church are cast aside, the road to apostasy descends and steepens rapidly. When we look at "all the nations" about us and begin to follow their ways, we must renounce the staid and true principle of having Bible authority in all that we say and do. With the first departure from this principle the whole panoramic view of human preference opens up with no rules of limitation.

Bible authority can be ascertained in only three ways:

(1) a command (said), (2) approved example (seen), (3) by implication (signified). When we examine God's revealed will to determine if any contemplated action is acceptable to him, we must do so carefully. We must understand that if it is neither SAID, SEEN, nor SIGNIFIED it just is not lawful. And then, before jumping to the much abused word of "expediency," we must be aware that for a matter to be expedient, it must first be lawful.

CONCLUSION

The mounting wave of ecclesiasticism today, with the offices and dignities involved, is causing great harm to the church that Jesus died to bring into existence. The willful authority that these false ministers assume to themselves appears to be without end. Many of them now go openly and brazenly into having fellowship with these satanic bodies. Their aim is to teach and train the leaders of these avowed enemies of truth how to improve and increase their unholy objectives. Amazement and shock with all their synonyms are inadequate to describe the outraged feelings of faithful brethren everywhere. In many local assemblies, with the approval of their slothful, wicked shepherds, the Lord's church is on a run-away train with no brakes. They are going down a steep grade and gaining momentum into the quagmire of utter, total denominationalism. In too many assemblies the train already has hit bottom.

Brethren, it is time to carefully weigh these sad events in light of God's clear instructions relative to those in the kingdom who deliberately defy all scriptural rules of conduct. All such men are "occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine" of Christ Jesus. Paul commanded that we "mark them" and "avoid them" (Romans 16:17-18). These highly personable, charismatic ministers are identified in II Corinthians 11:14-15 as being in the service of Satan. We are commanded to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11).

The time is later than some of us realize.

—2244 Mountain View Drive
Hurst, Texas 76054

HORTON ADVOCATES FELLOWSHIP WITH ICC

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Frank Harbin, minister to the church at Marshalltown, Iowa, under date of December 22, 1987, wrote:

"Thank you for contending for the faith! If men like you failed to speak the truth with love, our firm foundations will be weakened a bit at a time by those who for reasons of their own find it necessary to structure some new church.

"You are to be congratulated for the article entitled, *"Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio Church (Bob Fisk, Preacher) Lines Up With Christian Church."* That piece appears in the November 1987 issue of *Contending for the Faith*.

"You may have more response than you anticipated from the article. Unfortunately, there are many congregations supporting preachers who are searching for an accommodation with the Christian Church. It is my belief you will receive far too many letters such as mine. I pray I am wrong, and the situation I find in Iowa is an exception rather than the rule, based upon your experience since publishing the November issue.

"Enclosed are several issues of the bulletin from the Cedarloo congregation located in Cedar Falls, Iowa. My principal

concern is for the young people in this congregation and those others who are not yet mature in the faith.

"Please read the bulletins enclosed. If I have erred in my understanding of the doctrine they embrace, do let me know... Keep up the great work in God's service."

Upon looking through the Cedarloo church bulletins, which he enclosed, we noted the following from their bulletin for November 29, 1987, written by their evangelist, brother Wayne Horton:

"Brethren, we have a great opportunity to be a part of an historical meeting this Sunday evening. The Cedar Falls, Cedarloo & Waterloo churches of Christ will meet together to praise and worship God. The meeting will be in Waterloo and our brethren there have graciously offered to put aside the use of the instrument on that evening. It will be my privilege to speak to that combined gathering. Lonnie Rhodes (Cedar Falls) will lead singing and Larry Lane (Waterloo) will welcome the three groups. The meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. on Cedar Bend and old Hiway 20 where the Waterloo church of Christ meets."

On Page 2 of his very next bulletin, under date of December 6, 1987, brother Horton reported on this perverse event as follows:

REFLECTIONS ABOUT SUNDAY EVENING

As I began to speak Sunday evening, I made the statement that being in the pulpit that evening was one of the greatest thrills of my Christian life. I felt honored and quite fearful as I addressed the combined gathering of instrumental and non-instrumental brothers & sisters. God is at work worldwide to help us realize unity and it was good to be together in worship to the Saviour. Everyone who spoke to me said we must do it again.

Would you help me analyze what has occurred? Let's take note of several things.

1. **WE ARE PART OF THE SAME BODY.** Those brethren believe, teach, and practice exactly the truth we believe about entrance into the body of Christ (*cf.*, John 3:5; Acts 2:38; I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27). It is an undeniable fact that we are members of the same body. This means we are brothers & sisters in Christ. If not, why not?
2. **THEY LOVE GOD AS MUCH AS WE LOVE HIM.**
3. **THEY ARE AS HONEST AS WE.**
4. **THEY RESPECT THE WORD AS MUCH AS WE.** Earlier in my preaching life I did not believe the above trilogy of statements. I'm ashamed to say that the reason I didn't believe them is because I'd heard my preaching brethren say that the Independent Christian Church "wasn't honest enough to respect the Word of God and so they don't really love Him." Now that isn't an exact quote but you have heard the same basic accusation.

Then, a while back, two amazing things happened. (1) I began to study the Bible without man-made commentary and (2) I began to dialogue and study with brothers among the Independent Christian Church (ICC). I found very quickly that their love and commitment to God was as deep as mine and others of my brethren.

Let me hasten to add that I don't believe that I would ever have discovered their love and devotion if I had approached them with the intent of whipping them in debate. Contact with the two groups must be approached with the attitude of learning and attempting to understand each other. Dividing walls of tension fall when brethren perceive they are loved. Disagreement does not have to create enemies.

5. **WE DO HAVE SOME CRUCIAL DIFFERENCES.** We do not have enough room to deal with this point. It will be discussed in next weeks, editorial.

Some who read these lines will disagree and label me. I invite your comments for I truly desire to know and live God's Word. Please do not accuse me of something I have not said. But please help me if I am going the wrong direction. In my life, I've set the sail toward unity of God's people and I will not change direction as long as I am convinced that my heart longs for the oneness of His people. (John 17:20,21 et al).—Wayne Horton

Another week passed; then, under date of December 13, 1987, brother Horton resumed his presentation, as follows:

MORE REFLECTIONS ABOUT ONENESS

In an earlier article we made some statements about our combined worship with others in the restoration movement. We noted: (1) We are of the same body, (2) They love God as much as we, (3) They are as honest as we, (4) They respect the Word of God as much as we. Now we examine a fifth thought:

5. **WE HAVE SOME DIFFERENCES.** In this article, we intend to list some of the things which have caused us to be separated over the years. All our readers will be aware of the reasons we feel as we do about these things so it will not be our task here to defend the positions we hold. We simply intend to point out some differences which must be addressed before oneness can be realized and appreciated.

First and most obvious is the question of the use or non-use of the mechanical instrument of music in worship. From that dark day in 1860 when L. L. Pinkerton brought the first

melodeon into the worship of churches of Christ we have fussed and fumed and spent much of our greatest of minds discussing the right or wrong of his action. The use of the instrument has certainly been a dividing point.

Secondly, the formation of The American Missionary Society in 1849 has been a dividing wedge among those who desire the restoration of New Testament Christianity.

Thirdly, the Church of Christ (ICC) have had a concern about the formation of the North American Christian Conference (N.A.C.C.).

Fourthly, the use of choirs, quartets, etc., has also served as a point of contention between the two groups.

Fifthly, the use of women as preachers, teachers (of adult men), and prayer leaders has been questioned by churches of Christ as an unscriptural practice and in fact a practice spoken against in God's Word.

Sixthly, the appointment of women as elders has been referred to as a source of division since the Bible plainly teaches that elders are men. A woman could not possibly meet the qualifications of I Timothy chapter three or Titus chapter one.

Probably other things could be mentioned here but these are the major points that have historically been our problem. The question arises, "How can we deal with these differences?" "Do these things indeed have to separate us until one or the other group changes completely?"

Brethren, get out your Bible. We intend to address the answers to these questions in the next article. Pray about it—and study—and we'll seek God's truth together—Wayne Horton

Then again, under date of December 20, 1987, brother Horton brought out yet a *third* article in this same connection, as follows:

REFLECTIONS ABOUT ONENESS III

In the last article we mentioned six things which have been a source of separation between churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Church. We take this opportunity to discuss ways of dealing with the differences. We will look in reverse order of the way they were listed in the previous article and please note: **WE ARE SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THE WATERLOO (WL), CEDAR FALLS (CF) AND CEDARLOO (CL) CHURCHES.**

First, with regard to the appointment of women elders, neither WL or CF practices nor believes in such practice. Therefore this is not a dividing point for us.

Second, with regard to women preachers, teachers and prayer leaders, neither WL or CF uses such. Therefore no division.

Third, we mentioned the use of special singing groups and solos. I was taught in the school of preaching that such was wrong because it violated Ephesians 5:19 which says we are to be "...speaking to one another..." Our argument was that "everyone had to be singing at the same time or we were not speaking to ONE ANOTHER." I think we discovered and admitted a long time ago the weakness of such an argument. Some would accuse of entertainment taking the place of true worship which may or may not be true at different times and in different places. But even if it were sometimes true, such accusation makes the accuser guilty of sin (Matthew 7:1,2). I know of no scriptural argument against the use of special groups. Therefore, no division.

Fourth, the North American Christian Conference is very similar to any of our college lectureships when a committee of college people plan for the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. That is all the N.A.C.C. is—just teaching and preaching. They are not a policy making organization. Every congregation of the I.C.C. is as autonomous as any of ours. Therefore no division.

Fifth, the WL and CF churches have years ago withdrawn from participation in the American Missionary Society. Therefore no division.

Sixth, the use of the instrument. There is a great deal of study

left to be done but we offer the following thoughts for your consideration. Open your Bible and answer these questions. (1) Does the Bible teach that the use of the instrument in worship will damn a person's soul to hell? (Study that question with a Bible only.) (2) What about our people who use the instrument in worship at home? (More than half our people see nothing wrong with such activity.) Are they lost? (3) When I.C.C. people obey the gospel of the Lord just as we did, are they saved (Mark 16:16)? (4) How long are they saved? (5) Are they in fellowship with God while they are saved? (6) Then why aren't we in fellowship with each other? (7) Will God not have fellowship despite some error in our understanding? (8) Is this not an example of the principle of Romans 14:4,5? (9) Couldn't we leave the judging in this matter up to God? Is any damage done if we do?

In the next article we will examine thoughts about error in the life of a Christian. Incidentally, open up your Bible and do a thorough study (with Bible and concordance only) on the definition of a False Teacher. Looking at every passage about false teachers or doctrines in its context reveals some interesting things.

Please note: with regard to the things mentioned above, the CF, WL & CL churches really have only the instrument to consider. Does it have to separate? More next time.—Wayne Horton

[EDITORIAL NOTE: What is so evident in all these articles by brother Horton, per foregoing, is that, regardless of his motives and however sincere he may be, like so many

others among "us" these days, he is actively seeking an accommodation with the Christian Church. Some of the points he has raised, at first glance, may seem (to some) to have a certain validity. However, he was very selective in the points he introduced. There are quite a number of additional points that he did not mention which make it absolutely impossible for there to be any scriptural fellowship between the churches of Christ and the so-called Independent Christian Church.

Before we all rush out and start fellowshiping the ICC, please now read the following article "ONE BODY: A LOOK AT DEWELT'S PUBLICATION" by Alan E. Highers, reprinted here by special permission from the Firm Foundation, in whose columns it first appeared in their issue for September 8, 1987. There is a great deal more involved with having "unity" with the Christian Church than brother Horton's articles would indicate. It makes no sense at all for the Cedarloo church of Christ of Cedar Falls, Iowa, to be "fellowshipping" with ICC churches in their area, while the ICC churches continue in fellowship with Don DeWelt, Ozark Christian College, College Press and the things they believe in, stand for and advocate all at the same time. But read and study brother Highers' powerfully convincing article and you will see what we mean.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

One Body: A Look At DeWelt's Publication

by Alan E. Highers

ONE BODY is the name of a tabloid published on a quarterly basis by Don DeWelt of Joplin, Missouri. Although the latest edition (Summer 1987) says on its masthead that it is a "publication of Ozark Christian College," the inside identifier still lists DeWelt as publisher. Ozark Christian College (formerly known as Ozark Bible College) is a Christian Church school located at Joplin, which is also the home of DeWelt's publishing business known as College Press. Victor Knowles, a preacher for the Christian Church in Hamburg, Iowa, is editor, but his presence in the paper is meager and Don DeWelt, for all practical purposes, is the moving force and major influence. DeWelt is a leader among Independent Christian Churches and is one of the originators, along with Alan Cloyd, of the unity meetings between those who use instrumental music and those who do not.

Unity Meetings

The first unity meeting (in the current series) took place at Joplin in August 1984 and it was styled as a "Restoration Summit." This language proved to be embarrassing to its founders, however, and subsequent meetings have been known as "Restoration Forums." The latest such forum (the fifth) occurred in April 1987 at Cincinnati, Ohio, and the next has been announced for May 1988 at Akron, Ohio.

Much of the Summer 1987 issue of *ONE BODY* is devoted to a report of "Restoration Forum V," which

is the name given to the Cincinnati meeting. The manuscripts from this event have been printed in book form by College Press for those who would like to see the type of lectures delivered at these meetings.

From reading the publication known as *ONE BODY*, there are a number of impressions that seem worthy of consideration.

Evaluation of *ONE BODY*

FIRST: THE TREATMENT OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Our brethren have now joined together with those from the Christian Churches in five "unity meetings," including Joplin, Tulsa, Pepperdine, Milligan College, and Cincinnati. The Christian Churches seem no more inclined to give up instrumental music than they did at the beginning; but, instead, the tendency is growing among these brethren to treat the whole issue as frivolous and unworthy of their time and attention. Obviously, with such an attitude, these men are in no frame of mind to give serious consideration to that which we regard as a significant question of divine authority. The outlook of the Independent Christian Church preachers is conforming ever more closely to that of the liberal Disciples who readily concede their utter disenchantment with such matters.

The attitude of the Disciples is made clear in an article by Daniel Griggs in the June 1987 issue of

Mission Magazine. Discussing the unity meetings that have transpired, he says: "The current debate between the non-instrumentalists and the independents who are involved in the intra-Restoration unity process would have very little meaning for most Disciples: why be concerned about whether the churches in the Roman era used instrumental music? We live now; and such music is not only inspiring, but it also sets us on a par with the Presbyterians and the Methodists."

Brother Dobbs, who attended and spoke at Cincinnati, said in his report of the meeting: "The most disappointing aspect of the entire exercise was the persistent insistence of the good men of the Independent Christian Church that the music question doesn't amount to a hill of beans. One of them said, 'If you brought together one thousand Independent Christian Church preachers and put the question of music in worship to them, they would answer as one man that it is a dead issue.' Apathy on the part of prominent leaders in the Independent Christian Church is an impediment to continued study and possible unity." (*Firm Foundation*, May 26, 1987).

Regarding the attendance at "Restoration Forum V," Henry Webb of Milligan, Tennessee, wrote: "the a cappella brethren outnumbered the instrumental folk more than two to one." (*ONE body*, Summer 1987). He suggested that "instrumental ministers have a ho-hum attitude about hearing a re-play of the same old arguments that they find invalid." Of the instrumental music issue, he stated, "We see it as a cultural item and matter of small consequence." One correspondent wrote a suggestion for future forums, saying, "let's put less emphasis on the instrumental music question, and more emphasis on the common ground on which we stand..." Monroe Hawley, a consistent supporter of the forums, conceded "there has been considerable apathy toward these efforts on the part of many instrumental brethren."

It may be that the unity forums have virtually run their course. Many instrumentalists apparently consider them to be "much ado about nothing," while the vast majority of brethren who oppose the instrument have stayed away in droves—considering that these forums do not provide a meaningful way to address the issues that divide us. If Henry Webb of the Christian Church is right that the instrumental ministers "have a ho-hum attitude about hearing a re-play of the same old arguments," then it would be interesting to know if they feel likewise about the "same old arguments" used by evolutionists against creation, denominationalists against the necessity of baptism, and atheists against the existence of God. With their type of response it would soon be possible for one to excuse himself from every arena of religious controversy and to avoid meeting any unpleasant or difficult issue. Christian Church preachers need to face the facts: They must either deal realistically with the arguments relating to instrumental music or they must forget about unity and

togetherness. It will not suffice to pretend that the arguments are meaningless and that they will go away if ignored. If the arguments are indeed frivolous and unconvincing, the responsibility is upon the instrumentalists to demonstrate that this is the case. This, of course, they have thus far failed to do.

SECOND: THE OVERSIZED UMBRELLA OF THE INSTRUMENTALISTS

Some of our brethren have been overly optimistic in describing the conservative stance of Independent Christian Churches. For example, Bill Humble, in his 1986 lecture at ACU, said: "... these independents are very conservative. They believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scripture. They believe in the restoration of New Testament Christianity. And they believe in 'faith, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins,' just as we do." To read these statements, and many others like them, one would get the impression that, except for the instrument, there is very little difference between "us" and "them." If one reads very much from *ONE BODY*, however, he will soon learn that this is hardly the case.

In the current issue of *ONE BODY*, Leroy Garrett writes on "the hermeneutic of silence," which he styles as the "Noah-gopher mentality." (One of the requirements for manuscripts in *ONE BODY* is that they must be "irenic," but it appears that manuscripts favoring the instruments are allowed to be somewhat less irenic than those in opposition to instruments). It seems peculiar to find Leroy Garrett writing on how one should regard the *silence* of the scriptures, particularly in view of the manner in which he treats the scriptures *as a whole*. Writing in his own paper, Garrett postulated as follows: "And how do we determine what is the word of God and what is not? By God's exegete, Jesus Christ. When something in the Bible is contrary to the spirit of Christ or does nothing for us in terms of enlightening us about God and his will for us and is thus wholly irrelevant to our lives, then it cannot be the word of God to us. I find this to be the case with one entire book of the Bible, Zephaniah, a book that says next to nothing to me... But still Zephaniah is Scripture, and if I can bring myself to keep reading it may one day be the word of God to me." (*Restoration Review*, January 1987). Garrett's statement constitutes rank modernism, of course, but this has not kept him from being a welcome contributor to *ONE BODY*.

A further indication of the orientation of *ONE BODY* is seen in its prominent advertisement for a book entitled *Endangered Heritage*, written by Walt Yancey who is described as "currently a member of the Highland Oaks Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas." This hardback book is offered by College Press, DeWelt's publishing house. If one is looking for scholarly literature, he ought to pass by this book and look elsewhere. The style of the entire treatise is comparable to something a high school student might write in his spiral notebook. The author sets forth three

basic criticisms of church of Christ: *First*, we are in error in our opposition to instrumental music ("As far back as I can remember I have suspected that we might be wrong in our opposition to instruments"). *Second*, we are wrong in claiming the church is not a denomination ("We should thank the Lord for denominationalism"). *Third*, we are mistaken in believing that one must be a member of the church of Christ to be saved ("We must begin to treat the members of all other denominations...as people who will go to heaven").

Remember, this is a book published by DeWalt, advertised in *ONE BODY*, and described as "a fresh and candid look at the contemporary Church of Christ." After reading this puerile meandering, I am convinced that DeWalt's only criteria for publication of some works is opposition to our position on instrumental music. It must be borne in mind, however, that this is the type of teaching being promoted and perpetrated by those who allegedly believe "just as we do," except for the instrument!

Further, in a book on worship published by DeWalt, the author recommends a Thursday evening communion service (on the Thursday evening before Good Friday) as a popular option. He also states: "A number of congregations [Independent Christian Churches] present a service of Communion annually, usually immediately prior to Easter, when costumed men portray the apostles and Jesus in a real-life reproduction of the famous paintings of the Last Supper. The portrayal may be still-life or animated. The entire service has a profound effect upon the worshipers." (*What The Bible Says About Worship*, page 152).

Our brethren may as well pause now and consider how much they are willing to overlook for the sake of unity. A century of separation has taken the Independent Christian Church down a vastly different road from that which we have endeavored to follow—and they have apparently picked up much excess baggage along the way. We must not allow our passion for unity to blind us to the doctrinal defections and modernistic tendencies which have enveloped the Christian Church. They have broadened their umbrella to cover far more than a toleration for the piano and organ.

A Biased Presentation

THIRD: THE DOCTRINAL PREDILECTION OF THE *ONE BODY*

Although several brethren have written for *ONE BODY* who oppose instrumental music, one must not suppose that DeWalt's paper is either fair or equally open to all. Probably the strongest polemic ever permitted against instrumental music in *ONE BODY* was an article by Calvin Warpula in the issue for Winter/Spring 1987. Two responses were published in the same issue by purportedly "non-instrumental brethren" (one of these was none other than Leroy

Garrett!). Warpula was allowed a rejoinder to these letters which was then followed by a reply by the editor of *ONE BODY*! Yet, there were several articles in the same issue blatantly in *favor* of the instrument to which no one was invited to offer any sort of a response or reply. It is only the naughty non-instrumentalists who must be chastised regularly in the pages of the *ONE BODY*, without opportunity for a fair reply!

If brethren cannot see that *ONE BODY* is a forum for justifying the use of the instrument, and castigating those who oppose it, then they need to open their eyes. Although the paper calls itself "a national Biblical tabloid published to promote unity," it would be more accurate to say that it is published to promote College Press, instrumental music in the worship, and books and tapes critical of churches of Christ (Shelly's *I Just Want to be a Christian* was vociferously promoted, but his debate with Dunning and his recent work against the instrument go unmentioned, as do other significant works against the instrument such as the recently published forum conducted at Harding Graduate School in Memphis). Christian Church preachers are urged to order tapes by "brothers in the a cappella fellowship" such as Edward Fudge (who has written a book denying there is an eternal hell), but they are left by abysmal darkness regarding any recent significant works in *opposition to instrumental music*.

Summation of the Problem

The conclusion of the whole matter (with respect to instrumental music) is this: Unity with those who use the instrument is predicated upon a single choice—either they give up the instrument, or we give up our opposition to it. What other alternatives are there? Both of these alternatives depend upon a vigorous discussion of the issues that divide us—either to convince those in the Christian Church that they ought to give up the instrument, or for them to convince us that we ought to give up our opposition. Except in the minds of a few, these issues will never be solved by mere social camaraderie and mutual admiration. Unless the participants face the substantive issues, and the Christian Church preachers abandon their condescending attitude, it would appear that the days of the unity forums are numbered.

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A preacher was annoyed by people talking and giggling during a church service. He paused, looked at the disturbers, and said, "I am always afraid to expose those who misbehave for this reason: Some years ago, as I was preaching, a young man who sat before me was laughing, talking and making uncouth grimaces. I paused and administered a severe rebuke. After the services a young man said to me, 'Sir, you have made a great mistake. That young man whom you reproved was an idiot.' Since then I have been afraid to reprove those who misbehave in church, lest I should repeat the mistake and reprove an idiot."

During the rest of the service there was good order.

—*The Bible Voice*

HEMORRHAGE OF GOSPEL PREACHERS CONTINUES AS SOUTHWEST/AMARILLO MINISTER DEFECTS

Every time your editor leaves for more missionary work across the seas, I cannot refrain from asking myself, "What will happen back in the U.S. this time while we are away!"

When my wife and I got home from the Far East, January 9, 1988, among the tragic things first to come to our attention was a note from brother **Pete Hanks**, faithful minister to the church at Stinnett, Texas, enclosing a clipping from the *Globe-News*, of Amarillo, Texas, announcing that yet *another* formerly faithful minister of the

churches of Christ had defected.

"Another preacher in the Lord's church has left the fold," he wrote under date of December 15, 1987. "How many more before this current digression is stopped? 'Keep the faith!'"

That our readers may know what he was writing about, *Contending for the Faith* is saddened to reproduce photographically the unhappy clipping which he enclosed, as follows:

Former Church of Christ minister opens new church

By **BYRON HARRELL**
Globe-News Religion Writer

A Church of Christ minister who resigned his job with a local congregation last month has started a new congregation in Amarillo.

Mike Gardner, former evangelist of the Southwest Church of Christ, said Christ's Fellowship, a non-denominational assembly of Christians, will gather on Sunday mornings at Windsor Public School in southwest Amarillo.

A press release from Gardner and Grayson H. Ensign, the two servant-leaders of the congregation, said the group wants "to be Christians only and to focus everyone's eyes upon the Lord Jesus Christ."

Gardner denounced any rumor that he was taking members from his former congregation to support Christ's Fellowship.

"Our emphasis is not to raid the Church of Christ or any other church," he said. "We're not reacting to anybody or any group."

"A few from Southwest (Church of Christ)" attended last Sunday's service, but Gardner said he has been discouraging transfers be-

cause he doesn't want "to present bad feelings" among congregations.

Christians had been very interested in developing an open and caring fellowship like Christ's Fellowship, he said.

"It's hard for me to speak for all Churches of Christ, but my philosophy of a Christian is probably more open than the Churches of Christ I grew up in," he said.

"Whoever accepts Jesus as Lord and submits to him and is immersed is a Christian."

Ensign said the decision not to name the congregation a Church of Christ was made to "not scare people away who might be scared of the typical Church of Christ stereotype."

Worship services will be more contemporary in content, Gardner said. Songs will appeal to a contemporary generation.

Praise is an area of worship Christ's Fellowship will study, said Gardner, who thinks the Churches of Christ he's been affiliated with have sometimes neglected the concept of praising God in song.

"Some of our songs are filled

with talking to each other and not singing praise directly to God."

In most Churches of Christ, instrumental music is not accepted in worship. Christ's Fellowship currently is singing only a capella, he said, but the congregation will study and talk about the doctrine of music in the church.

According to the news release, Christ's Fellowship believes that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the only begotten son of God, the only savior of the world and the Lord of lords.

"Without reservation, the Bible is accepted as God's one perfect, complete, infallible and inerrant revelation of his will for mankind," according to the release.

The group strives to be open to all "disciples of Christ" in a nonsectarian spirit.

Christ's Fellowship teaches the priesthood of all believers because every member is considered a minister.

Gardner said about 80 persons attended last Sunday's assembly. He will receive financial support from the congregation.

The Difference Between Live And Dead Churches

Andrew M. Connally

There is no doubt most of us want to be a member of a live, growing church. Most of us easily can tell the difference—and so can the Lord!

Live churches have all kinds of problems—parking problems, lack of class rooms, teachers, and the like. They always have more work, programs, missions and opportunities than they can take advantage of; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches have lots of crying babies, noisy youth, new people, new faces and people we don't know; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches make constant demands on time, talent

and money. There are fellowships, services and classes to attend. There are people to visit, delinquents to reclaim and drifters who need encouragement and admonition; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches are filled with people who are weak, neglectful, forgetful and who need attention, but they are growing. They are concerned, prayerful and giving; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches have preachers who are book and people oriented. They have preachers who preach hard, exhort often and know what's going on in the world, the church

and in the lives of many of the brethren; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches have elders who stretch the budget yearly to help the congregation to grow. They have programs, sermons, classes, papers, missions, plans and hopes to take every member to greater heights of service, sacrifice and finally heaven; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches have deacons that are *pushers*, vitally involved to improve everything the congregation is doing. They are out front serving and helping in the entire program to get more done now! *Dead ones don't!*

Live churches have memberships that respond to challenge. The challenge of new programs, budgets, missions, and always the Word! They have people who evangelize rather than fossilize; *dead ones don't!*

Live churches fight error and know where it is found. They are compassionate and kind. They are gentle and loving, but bold and brave and afraid of nothing! They love God and hate sin; *dead ones don't!*

Neighbor, let's be a live one! —Curry Street Bulletin
Church of Christ
South Curry Street
West Plains, Missouri

DID PAUL "MATURE?"

Bill Jackson

We'll explain what is behind the question very shortly. Just looking at it, the answer is, "Of course, he did." In fact, every child of God, if faithful in service to God, makes strides toward maturity. Upon obedience, he enters the kingdom as a babe (I Peter 2:2), and is to make the progress seen, in one picture of it, as moving from being taught to being a teacher (Hebrews 4:12). Another picture is that of moving from taking only the *milk* of the word to taking *strong meat* (Hebrews 5:12-14). If one in Christ is faithful in worship, in study, in prayer, in living—in all of life—then he will indeed mature!

But the question was given me by one in another place, who had a preacher comment on Paul's presenting an "immature" view early in his writing, and later he had reached a point of growth wherein his remarks were now "mature." In fact, that man had the view that the *later* Paul contradicted the *earlier* Paul! Such is a LOW view of the Bible, and such reveals that the speaker does not believe in the inspiration of the Bible at all! Let us firmly declare that there is no "immature" part of the gospel and then a part that has, over the passing of time, grown to be "mature." There *never* was an *IMMATURE* gospel!

Paul, as with all others who obeyed the gospel, had to grow and develop. The apostles were not perfect men in their daily conduct and behavior—they partook of the frailties possessing all men of flesh. Peter is a fine example (Galatians 2:11-14), and Paul acknowledged his own need to keep the body under subjection (I Corinthians 9:26, 27). These men had to deal with the problem of sin throughout life, as do we all, and we've just noted so. But, from the outset, the apostles and other inspired writers presented the MATURE GOSPEL! There was no deficiency, and there was no "growth" period wherein with the passing of time, the message of God became more spiritual, more godly. From the first utterance after baptism in the Holy Spirit

(Acts 2:1-4), the word was inspired and the very message sent from Heaven! GOSPEL TRUTH was gospel truth *when uttered*, and it did not have to pass through a "growing and maturing" process to make it more truthful, more inspired, more heavenly. What is that "progressive revelation" some are suggesting? If one would follow that line, the last seven books of the New Testament would be far more important, and need far more emphasis, than the first 20. The first 20 would be "immature" books.

One wonders what will be heard next. Back to the point: Every bit of the gospel is fully, completely inspired, and totally suited for man's needs. That is so whether written by Paul, Peter or John, and whether written early in their life or late in life. How great is the SUM of God's truth (Psalms 139:17)! God's precepts are right in ALL THINGS (Psalms 119:128). *Man* may be immature. The *Word* never is!

—The Southwesterner
Southwest church of Christ
8900 Manchaca Road
Austin, Texas 78748

Blaming Godly Parents For Ungodly Behavior

Farris J. Smith

There is something going around among some young people which not only is inhuman and grossly unkind, but it is just plain not so. A person decides to quit the church and launch out into the world of sin and shame. When approached by some interested person, he says, "I've had religion rammed down my throat all my life." Thus his poor old parents, whose hearts already are breaking for him, are made to take the blame for what he is. How inhuman and cruel can one be?

I had food "rammed down my throat" all my life, and I still love to eat. I was made to comb my hair and take a bath all my life, and I still bathe and comb my hair. My mother tried in an uneducated sort of way to teach me right from wrong, and though I have done things wrong, it never crossed my mind to blame my mother for any misbehavior on my part.

My wife and I never "rammed religion down our children's throats" unless that is what you call trying to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We do admit that the first place we took our babies was to church. We gladly admit that we tried to teach them the Bible. We tried to teach them right when it was necessary, and we would do it now, if we could. If that is "ramming religion down our children's throats," we plead guilty.

Change of Policy

Because some of our best friends and well-wishers have expressed reservations to us relative to the advertising of books, Bibles, tracts, records, bound volumes and such like through the columns of *Contending for the Faith*, it was agreed in an elders' meeting on Monday night, January 25, 1988, that, on the basis of Romans 14 and also I Corinthians 10:23-33, such advertising would be discontinued. (This does not include such items, of course, as bundle orders or packets of *Contending for the Faith* itself; however, such items as specified above hereafter will be advertised by direct mail and otherwise, but no longer on the pages of this paper.)

Notes & Quotes...

DEBATE ON INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC Garland Elkins

An event of historical significance is scheduled to occur in the Joplin, Missouri area, April 12-15, 1988. There will be a debate on the instrumental music issues between **Alan E. Highers**, representing the Hillcrest church of Christ in Neosho, Missouri, and **Given O. Blakely**, representing the position of Independent Christian Churches. The following propositions will be discussed:

(1) **THE USE OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC AS AN ELEMENT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IS WITHOUT SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY AND THEREFORE SINFUL.** Alan E. Highers affirms; Given O. Blakely denies.

(2) **THE EMPLOYMENT OF INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN THE SINGING OF PRAISE DOES NOT TRANSGRESS THE LAW OF GOD, IS HARMONIOUS WITH THE FAITH OF CHRIST, AND IS UNOFFENSIVE TO GOD; HENCE, IT IS SCRIPTURAL AND IN HARMONY WITH THE WORD OF GOD.** Given O. Blakely affirms; Alan E. Highers denies.

This discussion will be an important occasion because of the geographical location, the strategic timing, the well-known disputants and the vital subject.

1. **The Place.** Joplin was the site of the first "Restoration Summit" in August, 1984, in which unity was discussed between those who use the instrument and those who do not. It also is the location of Ozark Christian college (formerly known as Ozark Bible College), an Independent Christian Church school. It is the home of College Press, a publishing business operated by **Don DeWalt**, a recognized leader among Independent Christian Churches; and consequently, Joplin has been a center of unity efforts relating to the instrumental music question.

2. **The Timing.** There have been five "unity forums" conducted between members of the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Churches, including Joplin, Tulsa, Pepperdine, Milligan College, and Cincinnati. The results of these meetings have been variously interpreted, but it is safe to say that many brethren who oppose the instrument have not been satisfied with this approach to the issues that divide us. Many have longed for a forthright discussion of the *scripturalness* of instrumental music. The purpose of this debate will be to provide such an opportunity.

3. **The Disputants.** The Hillcrest church of Christ has selected Alan E. Highers, of Henderson, Tennessee, to represent them in the discussion. Brother Highers is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College, David Lipscomb College, and Memphis State University School of Law. He conducts the open forum at the annual FHC Bible Lectureship and is an experienced debater. Given O. Blakely, of Cedar Lake, Indiana, representing the position held by the Independent Christian Churches, is editor of *The Word of Truth*, a quarterly publication, and is also experienced as a debater. He has been personally endorsed in this endeavor by Don DeWalt, and DeWalt has agreed to publicize the debate through his publication known as *ONE BODY*. Ozark Christian College also has agreed to promote the debate among their faculty and students.

4. **The Subject.** It is generally recognized that the use of instrumental music constitutes an insurmountable barrier between the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian churches. There can be no unity unless this issue is settled and settled on a scriptural basis. This will be a debate dealing

with "what the scriptures teach" on a subject that has been the source of division for over a hundred years.

Further details regarding the debate will be announced at a later date. For information, write the **Hillcrest church of Christ, 1037 West South Street, Neosho, Missouri 64850.**

—Bulletin
Curry Street church of Christ
111 South Curry Street
West Plains, Missouri 65775

Russell C. Artist, 1507 Blue Springs Road, Franklin, Tennessee 37064 still continues to preach for the Hills Chapel church of Christ, which he calls "a small island of faith in the Bible as God's word in a flood of apostasy around us.

"I appreciate your work so very much for it is not easy nor popular to 'sound the warning.'"

Bellview church of Christ endorses—

The church of Christ in Essex, of Baltimore, Maryland, renewed for another year, inclosing \$40.00 "extra", saying, "Use the extra as you so desire."

(NOTE: Inasmuch as we distribute special issues of *Contending for the Faith* by the 1,000s where needed most, we have constant need for such contributions to our *contending-for-the-faith fund*. For example, brother **Manuel K. Pelayo**, of the Philippines, recently asked us to send as many back issues on *Crossroadism* as possible to combat the encroachments of that error there. In addition to the cost of the 100s of such back issues—approximately 2,000 copies in all were sent—it cost more than \$250.00 to pay just for the postage alone! We have no other way to pay for such efforts only as brethren and churches contribute to our *contending-for-the-faith fund*. Much appreciation to the Essex brethren, in Baltimore. IYR Jr.)

A. Riley, of Buena Vista, Tennessee, when renewing for another three years, added \$7.00 to his check, saying, "Spend the rest as you see fit... I read *Contending for the Faith* as soon as I get it out of the mail box from lid to lid. I surely did like the last one."

SECOND ANNUAL

SHENANDOAH LECTURES

"The Current Digression II!"

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WILLIAM CLAIBORNE WRITES ON "WALKING THE RAGGED EDGE"

Occasionally a book, a pamphlet or a tract comes along that is "just a little bit different" so that when you pick it up you find it almost impossible to lay it down.

"*Walking the Ragged Edge*," written by brother **William Claiborne**, long-time minister to the Luna Lane church of Christ, of Hendersonville, Tennessee, is such a tract.

It grew out of intense sufferings he endured last August from an aneurysm and a blood clot on the brain necessitating immediate surgery. So excruciating was his pain that many insights were gained on numerous passages relating to suffering.

It seems to me that this is a tract which ought to be in every tract-rack brotherhood-wide. Why not slip a dollar into an envelope and write brother Claiborne to send you a copy—then, after you have read it, no doubt you will want to order 100s more directly from him for distribution where you are.

Please address him: **Bill Claiborne, 131 Evergreen Circle, Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075.**

W. R. Girod, Mobile, Alabama, had open heart surgery (four by-passes) July 14th. He wrote in September, "I've done exceptionally well so far..."

Mrs. Frank Thompson, of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, in renewing for three more years, said, "We appreciate the work you are doing. You have done so much."

Ralph B. Kuykendall, of Grand Prairie, Texas, in renewing for another year, said, "I hope that with your help we can keep down the influence of the 'Crossroads' churches... We hope you and others will help us contend for the faith and do what we can to be careful not to compromise with Christian Churches. We need to contend for the truth... We are made sad to see so many who write about so much that is not according to the truth of God's word."

Edith E. Kirby, of Vero Beach, Florida, renewed for another year, saying, "Keep up the good work and may God bless you and those like you who have the courage to speak out against error."

Ron Wolf, of Erick, Oklahoma, when renewing, did so for six years. So did **John E. Collier**, of Columbus, Ohio.

Val Scott, Chillicothe, Texas, renewed for three years, saying, "The best magazine published for information about what is going on in the church—good and bad."

Robert E. Weston, of San Antonio, Texas, ordered a set of our "Crossroads Packet."

Vinson Brown, of Licking, Missouri, renewed for three years, saying, "Keep up the good work!"

Mrs. Tommy Driver, of Andersonville, Georgia, purposed to contribute \$5.00 for contending for the faith and \$5 for our Far East work each month through 1987.

J. D. Houseman, of Liberal, Kansas, contributed \$7.00 saying: "Keep up your good work!" **Bob Tyler**, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed his own subscription, sent in five new ones.

R. C. Rayer, of Anchorage, Alaska, sent a three-year subscription for **William V. Clary**, also of Anchorage. **Isom & Gladys Aldridge**, of Tempe, Arizona, renewed for three years, adding \$2.00 contribution. **Ethel Slatton**, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, subscribed for friends, added \$5.00 "extra" to use "as you see need."

W. F. Anderson, of Springfield, Missouri: "Please remove my name from your mailing list."

Graham Cain, elder, Brown Trail/Hurst, Texas: "Press on!"

Aaron Nicholas, Stamps, Arkansas: "I just can't praise you enough for what you are doing through *Contending for the Faith*. May the God of heaven give you four score and more to keep up the good work. Thanks for setting the record straight."

Dub & Lavonne McClish, Denton, Texas; "We were part of a team of 32 workers from eight states who gave of their time to make (our campaign work in Mandeville, Jamaica) possible. Our team work was well coordinated by brother **Tommy Stacks**, who preaches for the Lord's church in North Augusta, South Carolina. Twenty-four of the workers were in Mandeville for two full weeks, while eight of us could go for one week only.

"The weather did not cooperate this year during the first week our American workers were there—it rained constantly. This seriously cut into the number of Bible studies that could be conducted and it also hurt the attendance for the preaching under the tent at night. However, the second week of American involvement (which time we were there) the weather was nice and much more was accomplished. A TOTAL OF 351 Bible studies were conducted by our zealous workers, resulting in eight baptisms and two restorations of unfaithful brethren. Attendance at the tent meetings each evening grew throughout the last week until every seat was filled and several were standing outside the tent by the last three nights.

"It was my privilege to preach each evening during the week we were there (except Monday night when we arrived too late due to a delayed flight out of Miami. Lavonne taught ladies' classes under the tent two mornings to help strengthen some of our Jamaican sisters. We both taught home Bible studies during the day.

"There were many with whom various campaigners studied and to whom I had the privilege of preaching that appeared close to obeying the gospel. Our Jamaican evangelists, **Earl McCall** and **Anthony Morgan** (fully supported by Pearl Street/Denton) and other saints in Mandeville will continue to study with such prospects."

Bill Lockwood, minister, East Flagstaff church of Christ, Flagstaff, Arizona: "Your statements on page 13 of 5/87 regarding HGSR are certainly apropos. Of course, you know that I, having studied three years there, found the school exactly as you have depicted. They are simply enamored with the 'theology' of the infidelic religious world that they are sending out men whom I have heard ridicule the Restoration Movement."

Gertrude W. Broy, Ypsilanti, Michigan: "I have been reading your paper almost from its beginning and am so thankful for it. I cannot believe how ignorant some brethren are about what is going on, and just won't believe what is going on, especially if it's someone they know or have known in the past that is in error.

"However, I pray your work will continue and that eyes will be opened to the great dangers we are encompassed with. Am enclosing \$5.00 to help on *Contending for the Faith* and will send as much as I can as often as I can from my limited resources... Remember there are still a few of us who have not bowed our knees to Baal. (1 Kings 19:18)."

Noel Davis, of Manchester, Tennessee, contributed \$50.00 for us to use as we see fit in His service, saying, "I look forward to your *Contending for the Faith* every month. Keep up the good work! We have so many brothers and sisters in this area who seem to have their heads in the sand as far as 'Crossroads', 'Unity at All Cost' and 'Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage' and other things are concerned, if the above aren't enough! There are so many, however, that are opposed to the above-mentioned, but they seem to be speechless!"

Samuel P. Hardin, of Anchorage, Alaska, renewed for six years, sent in two new subscriptions. **Hoyt B. Price**, of Hamilton, Alabama, ordered two sets of our "Crossroads Packet" and sent one new subscription. **Roger Baron**, of Rising Star, Texas, renewed his own and one more, sent four new.

SPARTA, MISSOURI SEEKS PREACHER

To Whom It May Concern:

We are looking for a full time preacher at Sparta, Missouri, who is sound in doctrine, especially on marriage and divorce, free of Crossroadism, and with good recommendations. We will not tolerate liberalism in any way.

Our congregation has an attendance of an average of 145 and contribution of \$1,000 plus per week. It is made up of a goodly number of young married couples with children. Everyone is accustomed to and likes strong Bible teaching; thus, a doctrinely-oriented group of people. We have the reputation of a friendly congregation and to know us is to love us. There are three qualified elders and five deacons. We accept and use multiple cups for communion, help support two children's homes, support mission work in India, Panama, and others as we are financially able. We have good relations with all surrounding congregations.

We have a nice brick church building which will seat 200, with paved parking lot. Also a preacher's house made of brick, 5 years old, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, kitchen, dining, utility, living room, small basement, and 2-car garage. It is adjacent to church property and all is debt free.

Sparta has a population of 800 located 22 miles south and east of Springfield, Missouri a city of 180,000 population. Two good state highways, 14 from west going east and 125 from north going south run through town. Ozark's town of about 2500 is 8 miles west and county seat with a 4 lane highway into Springfield north and to Arkansas south.

Sparta has a well organized elementary and high school, bank, doctor, ambulance and fire station, hardware, two convenience stores, feed store, post office (new building in process), restaurants, gas stations, beauty shops, and the like.

Anyone wishing to know more feel free to call or if interested send resume to:

Church of Christ
% Oren Bloomer, Elder
Route 1
Sparta, Missouri 65753
Telephone Number:
(417)278-3468

Irvin Carter, of Helena, Oklahoma, ordered one of our 8-track tapes, enclosing \$6.00 extra, saying: "Please put the balance... into the treasury of *Contending for the Faith* as a small contribution. Keep up the good work."

Don Ledbetter, Joshua, Texas: "When reading *Contending for the Faith*, I sometimes wonder who is next to cross over to the ungodly. Many foundations in the church are crumbling and destroying great houses. Please do not falter or hesitate, brother Rice. We need you and others like you to root out and warn us of false teachers. We know the right path but we sometimes are led astray by devious means by people who have grown up knowing as a pillar of the truth. We sometimes forget they are human, too."

Loretta McLellan, of Purcell, Oklahoma, in paying for one of our *Bound Volumes*, enclosed an extra \$10.00, saying, "Please use the rest as needed."

Glendale Hickey, of Baxter, Tennessee, when subscribing to *Contending for the Faith*, wrote, "I appreciate your standing for the truth against Crossroads."

Aaron Nicholas, Stamps, Arkansas: "Marriage, divorce and remarriage here in America doesn't seem to bother brethren at all. I was talking to what I thought a faithful gospel preacher on marriage and divorce—Matthew 5:32. I said the innocent must put away their guilty companion to be free to remarry. He said, "I never heard of that before"—and that was the end of our conversation. He had nothing else for me... God bless you and yours. Keep up the good work of *Contending for the Faith*..."

STATION NUMBER 35 ADDED

Jim Dearman

Reflecting upon the continual growth of "Sound Words Radio" produces deeper gratitude to God for his bountiful blessings over the years. In late 1982 we began publishing the Newsletter every month. At that time there were 12 stations over which our programs were being broadcast. Now we are broadcasting the gospel of Christ over 35 stations in various parts of the world. Our most recent addition to the network is WNEZ, in Aiken, South Carolina. The 15-minute program will be aired each Sunday morning at 8:15, an excellent time slot.

Back in 1982, in that initial *Sound Words Newsletter*, this statement was made: "It is our desire to provide distinctive radio preaching in the 'Sound Words' broadcasts, the kind of teaching and preaching that will exalt God's word as the singular standard of authority in all matters of religion. Over the years, as the program has grown, we have continued to strive to declare the whole counsel of God in a loving, but uncompromising, manner."

In a rapidly changing world, there might indeed be a tendency to alter one's teaching. However, we are able to say with confidence that the above-quoted statement from 1982 is as true in 1987 as it was then. This is because the gospel does not change and it must be presented in the same way today—with love, but without compromise. If the world becomes less receptive to truth, the truth must still be preached. The message cannot be altered to suit the times. Certainly we should "package" the truth in an appealing manner. This is what we strive to do with "Sound Words Radio." We try to vary the subject matter to present many Bible themes that will change the lives of our listeners. At the same time, we attempt to produce a quality program, from a production standpoint. But if a radio program does not seek to convert its listeners to the truth by clearly presenting that truth, it has failed to accomplish its God-given purpose. That purpose is to save souls.

We thank God for brethren who believe in the power of radio evangelism as one of the important tools God has placed within our hands. We pray that 35 stations will only be the temporary number of facilities on the network, and that many others throughout the world will be added so that we may saturate the world with the distinctive message of salvation.

—*Sound Words Newsletter*

Sue Bolin, Siloam Springs, Arkansas: "I give all my monthly *Contending for the Faith* papers to my grandson and he sees to it that others get to read them... It is a grief to see how Crossroadism and Liberalism are hurting the church..."

(Note: Sister Bolin has been sending \$50.00 each month to help support our missionary work. IYR Jr.)

BUSY YEAR GETS UNDERWAY AS EDITOR RETURNS FROM MISSIONARY WORK IN ASIA

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Since returning, January 9, 1988, from 42 days of missionary work in Manila, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan, my appointment schedule for the New Year is filling up rapidly once again.

On January 16th, I had to fly back out to San Francisco for a four-hour *Workshop on Crossroadism* with the combined leadership of all the black churches of Christ in the northern California area. Lasting from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with a 45-minute break for lunch, I gave the history, development, doctrine and danger of this heresy, steeling the brethren there against its incursions. Approximately 95% of the elders, preachers and other leaders from at least 12 of our black congregations in that area were present.

Next day, I spoke to the *Uptown/San Francisco* church at the morning worship, and to the *Bay View* church in the evening. Brethren **J. M. Butler** and **J. C. Rodgers** preach to these two congregations, respectively.

Lord's Day, January 24th, I preached both morning and night to the *Bellview* church of Christ, at Pensacola, Florida, remaining over for a special meeting with the elders, the following evening.

Although I am keeping February open for the most part in order to catch up back correspondence that accumulated while we were overseas, I do plan to attend the *Shenandoah Lectures*, February 19-22, in San Antonio, Texas, where **Jerry Moffitt** holds forth.

Beginning with a gospel meeting, March 4-6, at Duluth, Minnesota (**Paul Curless**, preacher), the Spring months are going to be busy, busy. March 16-17 I speak on the *West Coast Lectures* (**Joe Gilmore**, director); March 19-20, I speak Saturday (twice) on the *5th Annual Southwest Arkansas Lectures*, at Camden, Arkansas (**Tim Ayers**, director); then on March 27-31, I appear on the *22nd Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship* (**Curtis Cates**, director).

In April (10-13) come the *Southwest Lectures*, in Austin, Texas (**Bill Jackson**, director), where I speak twice.

The first week in May, I have a gospel meeting with *Robertson County church of Christ*, in middle Tennessee, followed by the *Bellview Lectures*, in Pensacola, Florida, May 11-15, during which I speak on Saturday.

Many other things are shaping up for me to appear through the year; but this is far enough ahead for the time being.

Lenard Hogan, West Memphis, Arkansas: "We continue to appreciate *Contending for the Faith*. Keep up the good work."

Margaret Asher, of St. Augustine, Florida, let us know that **Herbert Asher** is now deceased.

MONROYS FIND BOUND VOLUMES HELPFUL

Larry & Lina Monroy are members at *Northside* in El Paso, Texas. Since I spoke on their lectureship there last March, warning them of issues of which they were unaware at the time, they saw fit to order a complete set of bound volumes of *Contending for the Faith*.

They write: "The publication is a veritable gem, Brother Rice. We have learned so much over this past year. God bless you for your courageous and faithful stand. We have become appreciative of you and brethren who share your stand for the truth. Were it not for all of you, some of us who hadn't seen the forest for the trees' would have remained unenlightened."

An elderly sister in Christ, in a middle-Tennessee congregation, who clearly knows what she is talking about but who wishes to remain anonymous, writes: "I am from Florida and knew **Chuck Lucas** before he started 'Crossroads.' I now live in Tennessee and have found it necessary to fight this false teaching. It's spreading.

"A box of the enclosed tract... appeared in church—how, we don't know... Please send me 100 'Crossroads from the Inside' as soon as possible. They have moved into a country church with only about 60 members and split it apart. Also send Boston/Crossroad packet."

[NOTE: The "enclosed tract" she mentioned that had "appeared in church" was "The Crossroads Controversy—One Preacher's Perspective" by **Gordon Ferguson**. Readers will recall that this is the tract, printed by **Alvin Jennings** and **Star Bible & Tract Corp.**, with introductions by **Jerry Jones**, **Alonzo Welch** and **Mid McKnight**. A more insidious tract paving the way for "Crossroadism" has not been written. Pretending all the while to be an outsider-looking-in, it was clear from the tract that **Ferguson** was headed in that direction. He since has joined them outright and is now a part of the Crossroads Movement. But you still can't warn some brethren! IYR Jr.]

George & Lorine P. Qualls, of White Bluff, Tennessee, enclosed \$50.00, saying, "Thankful you had another good trip to Asia. Thankful you were able to leave so many Bibles in China, also... Should we fail to return a purpose card, you are on our list indefinitely."

Ted Cline, long-time Arizona preacher, sends word of a proposed retirement village for Christians there. Those interested may write to him directly to his home address: **11350 W. Tennessee #26, Youngtown, Arizona 85363**.

Michael G. Crowley, Sr., evangelist at Seneca, Missouri, when subscribing to *Contending for the Faith*, said, "I feel that I need to be better informed than I am at the present."

Mrs. A. B. McPherson, Gladewater, Texas: "Thank you so much for *Contending for the Faith*."

Contending for the Faith

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

White's Ferry Road Elders, Others Launch Worldwide Missionary Society Guised As *International Christian Ministries, Inc.*

Same Eldership Who Invited Chuck, Ann Lucas to Conduct That Weekend Seminar for Those Under Their Oversight Earlier, Evidently Expect Our Brotherhood Now to Follow Their Lead Docilely into Outright Apostasy

Students of Balaam, the son of Beor, always find it curious that someone professing to be a prophet of God would ask God even *one* time, much less *twice* for permission to bless God's *enemies* all the while cursing God's *own people*. Yet, if we'll read Numbers 22 once again, we shall refresh our memory that such an exasperating phenomenon actually can exist. All the while Balaam was pretending that if Balak, the son of Zippor, should offer him his house full of gold, "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." Yet there he was, clearly asking God not just *once*, but *twice*, for permission to do exactly that.

One should have thought, from the uproar it caused when they invited those enemies of the truth—Chuck and Ann Lucas—to conduct a weekend Seminar in Crossroadism for the White's Ferry Road church, back in 1981, that they should have learned at least *something* from that experience. But you just can't seem to warn *some* brethren simply because they refused to *be* warned! So here we are, some seven years later, and that same eldership at White's Ferry Road has its hand caught in the cookie jar once again. Only this time, instead of just Crossroads, they would lead the brotherhood (if we'll but follow) into open, outright, full-scale apostasy! Under the guise of something else, they are creating what *has* to be a "missionary society," aimed at taking over the work of the church as God's instrument for implementing worldwide evangelism.

Oh, they don't *call* it that! They never do! The name they have come up with is *International Christian Ministries, Inc.* However, if our readers will just bear with us a little, we feel sure that all can see through this thing without a great deal of difficulty.

The first that "we" became aware of what is being proposed was when we saw a letter from Darrell Frazier, President, under date of October 21, 1987. On INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES, INC. stationery, it reads as follows:

October 21, 1987

Dear Brethren:

I am pleased to enclose our first issue of ICM Board Report, a bimonthly newsletter of International Christian Ministries.

This special report is designed to keep those close to this new ministry, e.g. board members, speakers, supporters, etc. fully informed of the progress of ICM. In addition, this report will also serve to introduce and keep other leaders in our brotherhood abreast of our developments.

Over the coming months, we will be raising the \$1.5 million necessary to fund the cost of producing and televising our first television program, "Then Jesus Said". We are confident God will bless this effort with success through the generous hearts of a number of faithful brethren.

As soon as we have obtained a minimum of \$800,000 in commitments (\$200,000 has already been pledged), we will begin production of our program. At that time we will also coordinate a brotherhood-wide announcement of this ministry.

Until then, we appreciate everyone's cooperation in withholding any official public publicity.

I trust you will enjoy reading ICM Board Report. We all look forward to a lot of exciting news in the months ahead.

I ask for your continued prayers and encouragement.

In brotherly love,

(Signed)

Darrell Frazier
President

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Let's Try To Avoid Making A 'Hobby' Out Of Anything

Contending for the Faith does not hold with those who, in the name of "balance," refuse to take a stand between truth and error. II Thessalonians 2 is just too plain about those who have not a love for the truth. We have to stand for the truth of God's word at all costs.

On the other hand, probably all of us can think of certain brethren, who, no matter the occasion, seemingly have but *one subject* in mind. It could be the subject of "Crossroadism." Or "Marriage-Divorce-and-Remarriage." Or the "Versions." Or any of a host of other subjects. All of which, of course, are good subjects; however, when we settle on any *one* topic to the practical exclusion of all others, we make a "hobby" of it.

GOOD ADVICE FROM FRANK L. COX

One of the sanest, sagest brethren in the church I ever knew was **Frank L. Cox**, who, for more than 20 years, was office editor of the *Firm Foundation*. I recall, as but yesterday, a visit he made to me in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, in 1941, when I was a 24-year-old preacher at Mercedes, Texas. He and I had stopped to rest a moment at a stone wall, when our conversation got on the subject of "hobby riding."

"The only subject that you can make a 'hobby' of without splitting the church," he advised me, "is world evangelism. If you can avoid making a 'hobby' out of *anything*, that is well and good; but if you just *have* to have a 'hobby', make it world evangelism."

Brother Cox, of course, long since has passed on. However, I recall those words with appreciation even unto this day.

YOUNG PREACHERS, ESPECIALLY, PAY ATTENTION

Not only is it dreadfully boring if, every time you meet someone, he cannot get off his one favorite subject; but young preachers, especially, need to think brother Cox's advice over very carefully.

As we study the scriptures, we find much said, for example, on Premillennialism—but the Bible is not *all* on Premillennialism! Much is said on the Lord's Supper—but let's not make a "hobby" of the "one cup." Yes, the New Testament *does* mention how we are to appear—but to become known as a "hats and hair" preacher will turn us into a laughing-stock.

I should be the last one to criticize others when they are but contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. But there has to be some sense of genuine balance along the way. It will not hurt *any* of us to pause a moment and ask ourselves if we have made a "hobby" out of something; if we have, let us broaden our horizons just a bit and see if we cannot think of something else to talk about at least for a little while!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

Missionary Society Launched

(Continued from Page 1)

Whether this would come under the heading of "any official public publicity" that President Frazier was hoping might be withheld long enough to raise \$800,000, we dare not opine. However, that White's Ferry Road's eldership, which is the genesis of this apostatizing effort, is going to have *plenty* of publicity, ("official" or otherwise) we have no doubt.

Reading down through the ICM BOARD REPORT for September-October/1987, a copy of which was enclosed, we noted, among other things, on Page 6, under the heading of **Board of Directors**, the following:

The governing body of ICM is the Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of this board to create the policies and plans of ICM.

Presently there are six members of the Board of Directors serving terms of one, two and three years but eventually there will be fifteen members serving staggered terms of three years each.

The ICM Board of Directors was inaugurated last May in Monroe, LA. While most of the present board members are elders at White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, additional Christian leaders from across the country will be appointed to the board over the coming years.

Please keep in mind that the above statement is a direct quotation from ICM's *own* so called "BOARD REPORT," not something that we just made up. The Chairman (**Norman K. Rhodes**), Vice President (**Alton H. Howard**) and Secretary/Treasurer (**T. A. Isaacs**) of the Board of Directors all three are serving *right now* as elders of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ.

Neither is this proposed International Christian Ministries corporation envisioned as something just local, but *worldwide!* As Darrell Frazier wrote under the heading, "From the president's desk," in this same issue of the ICM Board Report,

...Many exciting events have continued to unfold since before ICM's incorporation in May, 1987. As more individuals become involved in this exciting new ministry, the task of reporting information becomes more important, so, the ICM BOARD REPORT was created...

For nearly two years much discussion, planning and prayer have been expended toward the birth of ICM. Now we are about to make our dream a reality.

ICM's first challenge is to use the powerful medium of television to expose the teachings of Jesus to American and foreign audiences...we act in the belief that the church is ready for a major new initiative using television. Thus, we are producing a new television series called "Then Jesus Said."

We are also dreaming of many other opportunities to spread the gospel, such as radio programs, a national Christian magazine, teaching and counseling services, international relief and development activities, campaigns and crusades, and God only knows what other opportunities He will grant us in the years ahead as we take the cross of Christ around the world...

...*take the cross of Christ around the world?* We have always thought this was what God had in mind for the church to do. Now it appears that God was all wrong about that. The elders at White's Ferry Road have decided to set up a missionary society to be called International Christian Ministries, Inc., and to use *this*, instead, to "take the cross of Christ around the world." If this is not an out-and-out, man-made missionary society, plain and simple, what is it!

POWERFUL PEOPLE ENLISTED

One thing you have to give the White's Ferry Road

elders credit for, though: they really know how to enlist some powerful people in their cause. For instance, we note that even before getting their ambitious program of worldwide evangelism underway, they worked through the Chattanooga law firm of **Stophel and Stophel**, ICM's national council, along with the Monroe, Louisiana firm of **Hudson, Potts and Bernstein** "to prepare and submit to the Internal Revenue Service its application for tax exempt status..." The result is that ICM *already* has been granted tax-exempt status—since August 25, 1987.

The host for the ICM television show, "Then Jesus Said," is to be "**Dr. David Davenport**, president of Pepperdine University of Malibu, CA." (The very fact that doctrinally-unsound Pepperdine University is in on this ought to tell the brotherhood something!). Among the other powerful people already named in this connection are **Jeff Payne**, **Prentice Meador**, **Bill Humble**, **Doug Parsons**, **Robert Oglesby**, and, of all people, "**Dr. Rubel Shelly**, pulpit minister at the Ashwood congregation, in Nashville, TN," who believes and teaches that there are Christians in all churches. Yea, verily!

Oh, but you ain't seen nothin yet. The "Board Report" goes on to tell how, in March 1986, "representatives of International Christian Ministries (ICM) met with representatives of Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) in Dallas to discuss the possibility of airing "Then Jesus Said" on CBN..." Then again last March, one year later, "**W. L. Howard**, the chairman of the ICM Board of Founders introduced **Dr. Pat Robertson** to a 'Pat Robertson for President' political rally in Monroe, LA. The rally and introduction were aired over nation wide cable television. Former Monroe mayor Howard also introduced Robertson to some movers and shakers in the twin cities.

"During the Monroe visit Robertson and Howard discussed the airing of 'Then Jesus Said' on CBN. Howard said Robertson expressed interest and thought 'Then Jesus Said' would be a 'powerful way to introduce the gospel to people'..."

Beside its **Board of Directors**, International Christian Ministries has two other separate boards with distinctive functions, namely, the **Board of Founders** and the **Board of Advisors**. On Page 8 of the "Board Report" we are informed that

The ICM Board of Founders consists of individuals who pledge \$100,000 or more to the ministry. The members of the Board of Founders will play an important role in charting the future course of ICM. Future appointments of the ICM Board of Directors will come from members of this board and the Board of Advisors.

At the top of ICM's list of priorities is recruiting members for the Board of Founders through a program called the "Founders Campaign." It is the goal of the Founders Campaign to raise the \$1.5 million necessary to cover the first year's cost of producing and televising "Then Jesus Said." To raise this money ICM is seeking people who will become a member of the Board of Founders with a \$100,000 donation. Thanks to their generous commitments ICM will no longer be a mere dream but an exciting reality.

HOWARD BROTHERS PLEDGE \$200,000

In order to get ICM's \$1.5 million Founders Campaign "off to a sound start," the Board Report revealed that two of the Howard brothers—**W. L. Howard**, of Monroe, Louisiana, and **Alton Howard**, of West Monroe, Louisiana—had made an initial pledge of \$100,000 each, making them the first and second members to join the Board of Founders. Of this fact, president Frazier commented,

...Their generous commitment and willingness to take a leading

role in our Founders Campaign, is an important milestone in the history of ICM, and sends a definite message to other influential brethren to likewise join in making a substantial commitment, so our first program production can be underway...

BANOWSKY NAMED CHAIRMAN OF ADVISORY BOARD

Another "definite message" of which the brotherhood might well beware is ICM's naming of **William S. Banowsky**, who fellowships the denominations right along with the churches of Christ, as Chairman of its Board of Advisors.

According to ICM's "Board Report,"

The Board of Advisors is made up of influential Christians who will lend their experience, knowledge and skills to aid the Board of Directors and the ICM president in developing the ministry. Future appointments to the ICM Board of Directors will come from members of this board and the Board of Founders.

Dr. William Banowsky is chairman of the Board of Advisors. Additional appointments to the board are forthcoming.

Inasmuch as Bill Banowsky evidently senses no difference between our Lord's body and the denominations of men, fellowshipping both, it requires no sage to prognosticate the direction that ICM's new Chairman/ Advisor will advise International Christian Ministries, Inc., to go.

ICM NOW HAS "PRAYER SUPPORTERS"

As we are painfully aware, all the while disclaiming any connection with "Crossroadism"—even if they *did* have Chuck and Ann Lucas for a church-wide "Seminar" that time—yet in one of their announcements you easily can see the influence that Crossroads is having on their International Christian Ministries *modus operandi*. No, they are not calling them "Prayer Partners"—*a la Crossroads*. ICM is calling them "Prayer Supporters."

Under the heading of "Become an ICM prayer supporter," toward the end of their Board Report, they were urging, as follows:

ICM calls on all our friends to become one of our "Prayer Supporters," by including this ministry on your daily prayer schedule. We diligently seek to do the will of the Father, and encourage as many people as possible to join us in asking God's special blessings on every aspect of this initiative.

An effort of this magnitude must be carefully wrapped in prayer. There is power in prayer. We cannot afford not to constantly beseech the Father.

To assist our prayer supporters in maintaining their daily prayer schedule, we have available a special "prayer card," which suggests certain specific people, involved in the project, to pray for each day. If you'd like to receive your free "Prayer Support Card," write or call us.

◆◆◆◆◆ Bellview church of Christ calls your attention to —◆◆◆◆◆

ALABAMA SCHOOL OF BIBLE EMPHASIS

Alabama School of Bible Emphasis is a school which proposes to create opportunities where preachers can obtain new insights to old truth. Rich material will come from such men as William Woodson, Franklin Camp, Jack Wilhelm, Wayne Dunaway, and others.

Classes are now being conducted in three locations: Leeds, Ala.; Athens, Ala.; and Winfield, Ala. Sermon and classroom material from I and II Timothy, John, and Titus is now being made available. Tapes on I Timothy will

ERNEST WEST WRITES
In a letter from brother Ernest West, who lives some five blocks from the White's Ferry Road church building, in West Monroe, Louisiana, under date of December 28, 1987, he writes with regard to all this, saying,

December 28, 1987

Dear brother Ira:

As stated by telephone recently, a group of like-minded brethren from Northeast Louisiana and South Arkansas has been meeting to examine and otherwise to assert our displeasure with structural departures and doctrinal errors with INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES, INC. (See ICM Board Report enclosed herewith.)

I have underscored certain serious points which obviously are worthy of refutation. We conclude that this departure is a combination of the Christian Missionary Society, the 700 Club, ACTS Television ministries, etc., with ultimate designs to destroy the undenominational nature of the church of our Lord, and to create an organization in competition to the purpose for its existence.

We note that the elders, preachers and teachers of their School of Biblical Studies, all being members of the White's Ferry Road church of Christ are quick to deny affiliation with the Crossroads/ Boston teachings, yet they affirm that they have not hesitated to use the "best made efforts" of their methodology. The ego-centered respondents claim as their right of autonomy to "DO THEIR OWN THING" and to otherwise demonstrate their greater faith and broader comprehension of the "Liberties" available to Christians.

The latest accomplishments of ICM is the naming of "top-named" people from Oklahoma Christian College, Harding College, Pepperdine College, etc., to their Board...and to warn all who oppose ICM that since the structural basis is the same as used by CHRISTIAN COLLEGES, that anyone who speaks out against ICM will DAMAGE HIS OWN CREDIBILITY.

We maintain that to implement an INSTITUTION (ICM) which "is not the church" to do the work "of the church" is to create but one more HUMAN DENOMINATION and we are vigorously opposed to such.

If you, after prayerful study, can join us in destroying this parasite whose design is to fasten itself, for support, upon the brotherhood...we solicit your help.

In brotherly love,

(Signed)

Ernest West

Meanwhile, in addition to generating these International Christian Ministries, which no doubt they soon will disclaim, the White's Ferry Road church also is the source

soon be completed. These contain the classroom discussions of these studies. They are available at \$2.00 per tape and many are using this method to participate in these studies.

Yours, for better preaching

Winfred Clark
P.O. Box 1026
Athens, Ala. 35611
Phone (205) 232-4765

of yet another weird encroachment on the autonomy of the elders and church at Homer, Louisiana, which the White's Ferry Road elders also disclaim, even though it is their own "pulpit minister" who is perpetrating this depredation.

Since it is self-explanatory, instead of our commenting upon it, please read it for yourself, as follows:

Church of Christ

308 WEST SECOND STREET
Homer, Louisiana 71040

October 15, 1987

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, Don Tate have just returned home from visiting with Ray Melton of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana. We met at 3:15 - 4:00 p.m. in his church office at White's Ferry Road during the Home-coming for the students. This was a meeting that was requested by Ray so we could talk about the possibility of an upcoming "disciplining" class.

I ask Ray to define what he meant by "disciplining class." Below will be just an outline of this class if the Homer Church agrees and in returns gets in touch with Ray.

1. The class is to be made up of around 5 young couples who have the desire to reach out to others.
2. This class is not to meet in the church building but in homes.
3. There is to be no interference from the Elders but to allow Ray free course with what he wants to teach and then not to interfere with the young people after they are taught.
4. Young people should be encouraged and allowed to practice things which might be different than what the membership is used to.
5. Ray would teach this class for a period of 8 weeks, one night a week. At the end of that time, one of his chosen men from White's Ferry Road (a young person) would continue to work with this group. Ray would still be interested in this work and would make sure that his man was helping the work.
6. Since the church is made up of a lot of older people, the emphasis will be upon the younger. Because, one day the older people will not be around any longer.

To the best of my remembrance, these were some of the topics discussed today, October 15, 1987 with Ray Melton in regard to helping the Church of Christ disciple young people in Homer.

Don W. Tate
Don W. Tate

The Process Of The Current Apostasy

John H. Renshaw

A Step 1—Success, Growth, Prosperity.

P Step 2—Degree Mania, Sectarian Schools.

O Step 3—“Upgrading,” Accreditation of Schools.

S Step 4—Acceptance of New Versions.

T Step 5—Domination of Brethren by Schools.

A Step 6—Adoption of New Versions’ Terminology.

S Step 7—Accommodation to Errors of New Versions.

Y Step 8—Apostasy.

As brother **N. B. Hardeman** used to say, “Anybody who has a thinker and uses it” knows how the present apostasy has developed. It is the purpose of this article to call attention to the process by which the current apostasy has come about, and to make some suggestions relative thereto.

STEP 1—SUCCESS, GROWTH, PROSPERITY. The seeds of apostasy may be traced, as in the early church, to its phenomenal success, growth, and prosperity in its early years. Both men and institutions are more often destroyed by wealth, power, prominence, and prestige, than by poverty. The early church did not apostatize until it had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). The church grew rapidly in the ‘30s through the ‘60s. It then moved “across the tracks” into nice buildings, and gained the attention of the sectarian world. But as strange as it may seem, that sounded the death knell of the beloved church. Growth came to a standstill. From the fastest-growing religious body in the world to zero growth in one generation! That has to be some kind of a record.

STEP 2—DEGREE MANIA, SECULAR, SECTARIAN, AND LIBERAL SCHOOLS. Well do I remember how the “preacher boys” in the early ‘40s were told by some that soon it would be impossible to get a preaching job without a college degree. Since times were good, the church was prosperous, and many obtained the coveted degrees. But, since they were obtained from secular and sectarian schools, they were worth little, and often were detrimental to preaching the truth. While preaching in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, I became acquainted with a number of “missionaries,” supported by faithful southern churches, who were getting their education while violently **OPPOSING** the truth, and **RIDICULING** the great principles of the Restoration. Some of these now are **TEACHING** in our colleges! They neither believed nor taught the truth *then* while dishonestly accepting support from churches, nor do they believe or teach it *now*. But, being teachers in such schools as Abilene, Harding, Pepperdine, Lipscomb and Freed-Hardeman, they now use their influence to send others to sectarian and liberal schools. Thus the suicidal process is perpetuated from generation to generation. Our colleges thus became saturated with error. Somehow, we must return to the divine formula of committing the precious truth to “**FAITHFUL** men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2). The solution will not come overnight; nor will it come without soul-wrenching decisions and cataclysmic changes of administrations, boards, and faculties. But the deadly cycle must be stopped.

STEP 3—ACCREDITATION, “UPGRADING” OF BROTHERHOOD SCHOOLS. Christian colleges were established for the purpose of teaching the truth. This was, and is, a noble purpose. But the schools began to clamor to be “like the nations” (I Samuel 8:5,20). The beloved N. B.

Hardeman stated, “If I could start over I would have a school in which only the Bible would be taught.” But *accreditation* requires that a different course be followed. So the colleges are staffed with faculties trained in secular, sectarian, and liberal colleges. The result of this degree mania, and of this “upgrading,” was predictable. History has repeated itself. The schools have led the *current* apostasy, as they led the apostasy of the *last* century. A candid examination of the errors tearing the church apart clearly reveals this fact.

Some faculty members of the schools **ARE TEACHING**: evolution, miraculous guidance of the Holy Spirit, Rubel Shelleyism (Ketchersideism), divided assembly, simultaneous acts of worship, changing the elements of the Lord’s supper, communion on week days, “cell worship,” “soul talks” or the equivalent, applause in worship, silent prayer, fellowship of denominations and instrumentalists, impossibility of apostasy, falsehood on divorce and remarriage, innocence of social drinking. Some teachers **DO NOT BELIEVE IN**: verbal, plenary inspiration, the virgin birth, authority of elders, regularly extending the invitation, the distinctive plea of the Restoration Movement. But they **DO BELIEVE IN**: conducting workshops teaching denominations how to grow, trading pulpits with sectarian preachers, wasting millions on “family (entertainment) centers,” and on, and on. With “Christian” colleges teaching and practicing such, and failing to teach and practice the truth, some of them ridiculing the Restoration Plea, churches throughout the world have been poisoned, and the current apostasy is in full swing.

It is an undeniable fact: the schools are **LEADING** the current apostasy. The only real protection against apostasy of **ALL** the churches is the divinely-installed safeguard of autonomy (Acts 14:23; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7,17). Where the elders are holding their ground, the churches are defeating the liberals. Leave the church’s safety to the schools, and to those trained in the schools, and the church will soon cease to be. “But this makes **ALL** the schools suspect.” Granted. They positively **MUST** (in the present situation) be suspect. The divine warnings to teachers are being disregarded. They must not be allowed to “deceive the simple” (Christian children) with “good words and fair speeches” learned in sectarian and liberal schools (Romans 16:17,18). They shall “receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1), and are “accursed” of God for what they are doing (Galatians 1:6-9). The divine command is, “Mark them” (Romans 16:17). Failure to do so will assure that the conflagration of the current apostasy will continue to be fueled by the schools, and will cost Christians their own souls.

Paul Lee Tan, in his *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, says, “History has shown that once a school or church compromises its position and sells short the fundamental doctrines of the Word that there is no chance of their going back to retrieve that which they originally adhered to. **NOT IN ONE INSTANCE** has there been an apostate body that returned to fundamentalism.” (*Emphasis mine, JHR*).

STEP 4—ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW VERSIONS. Such giants of the faith as **G. K. and Foy E. Wallace, Jr., B. C. Goodpasture, Guy N. Woods, Roy J. Hearn, Robert R. Taylor**, and a host of other well-informed and devoted men

have warned for three decades that acceptance of the new versions would destroy the church. In spite of such warnings, the schools among us, almost without exception, have embraced the poisonous vipers to their bosoms. Many remember the outcries precipitated by the acceptance of the *Revised Standard Version* at Freed-Hardeman College and the disavowals of the administration. But there was *no correction, no turning back*. Preachers and boards capitulated, and the school, as usual, had its way. Now it is the doctrinally poison *New International Version* which has been promoted by Harding Graduate School for years, and whose graduates are passing it on to colleges and all other schools operated by brethren in this country and abroad. The faculty of said school has never seemed to care for doctrinal soundness and practice, a fact well known to sound brethren throughout the brotherhood. But many preachers, and faculties of the other schools, have received their beloved *degrees* from Harding, hence continue to be dominated by them. What happens to the very effective "book, chapter, and verse" preaching that converted thousands (me included), when both the Bible used, and the method taught, are inimical to that superior practice? Those who introduced instrumental music and other innovations were regarded as the apostates in the past. Through 47 years of preaching I have proclaimed, "The Bible unites. The doctrines of men divide. Where there is divisions, false doctrine has been taught. Division is caused by the words of MEN, not by the BIBLE." Have we been wrong since the inception of the unbelievably successful Restoration Movement? Are we now to accept a "Bible" that TEACHES the false and very divisive doctrines we have FOUGHT all these years, such as "faith only" and inborn sin?

What kind of reasoning is this, my brethren? The National Bureau of Standards has decreed that a yard is three feet of twelve inches. But suppose that someone issues a standard, CLAIMING to be issued by the Bureau, setting the yard at 30 inches? It is claimed that the 30-inch yard is from the same source, to give it credibility. Let a dry-goods store try the 30-inch yard on the ladies, and it will soon learn the truth on the matter! But here is a "Bible" that contradicts, in a large number of instances, doctrines vitally affecting the salvation of souls. It CLAIMS to be from the same unimpeachable source as old, tested and true versions. Is the *incorrect* standard acceptable as *correct*? Does its CLAIM make it a Bible, although it CONTRADICTS what is known to be the truth, and even contradicts itself on matters having to do with salvation?

Suppose the law concerning the yard is stated in "obsolete" terms, or even in typical governmental gobbledygook hard to understand? Does that make it FALSE? Does it affect the ACCURACY of the Bureau's claim that the yard is three feet of twelve inches each? If a merchant used the 30-inch yard because "one version is as good as another," due to the obsolete terms and gobbledygook of one, is he absolved of blame before the law? Is one justified in adopting a standard that HE ADMITS is misleading, unsound, contradictory, and ERRONEOUS on matters relating to salvation, because he detects minor obscurity and some obsolescence in a few words of no bearing on the all-important salvation of the soul? One wonders if the professors and others who so relegate the older but sound versions to mere "comparative" status practice the same, and for the same reasons, with regard to their wedding licenses, legal papers such as deeds, insurance policies, and

other documents of far less importance than the Bible. If not, why not?

STEP 5—DOMINATION OF PREACHERS AND CHURCHES BY COLLEGES. That intrepid soldier of the cross and embodiment of Christian scholarship, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., in what was then truly the *GOSPEL Advocate*, July 1, 1977, wrote:

Repeating history sustains the assertion that every major digression and departure culminating in apostasy has originated in the schools. The colleges mold the churches and control the preachers who seemingly stand in awe of the colleges—and the result is college domination of preachers and churches. We are not opposed to the schools but we are against what is going on in them and what their professors are teaching and doing. Our attitude is not that of OPPOSITION to the colleges, but of APPREHENSION for the increasing inflow of liberalism and the menace of modernism which are already evident in the entrance and influence of the false neo-versions within the colleges and the churches. To ignore it is to hide the head in the sand like the ostrich.

...A college president deplores the threat of division over the versions. How much does he deplore it? Enough to withdraw the cause? Innovations cause division, such as mechanical instrumental music and the missionary societies. The new theological versions are doctrinal innovations and they will divide the churches...

So wrote the great soldier a decade ago. For his trouble he was unmercifully castigated by the "scholars" who stood as dwarfs by any comparison with this intellectual and spiritual giant. Who would now deny that his prediction was correct? The church IS divided. The schools, once again, have driven the wedge.

That some brethren "love to have it so" (Jeremiah 5:31) does not absolve the schools of guilt in this matter. Our brethren are easily intimidated by those with advanced degrees because we are a people who RESPECT education. Such passages as John 6:44,45; 8:32; II Timothy 2:15; II Peter 1:3 and all such are well known and often used by our brethren. One of the mighty slogans of the Restoration has been "Turn on the Light." But those who have again led an apostasy have prostituted their otherwise salubrious educational attainments, using them to lead the church into spiritual adultery. Surely those able to "deceive the hearts of the simple" because of their superior education should be marked more quickly BECAUSE OF such, as they constitute a greater danger to the truth. But that does not absolve the rest of us from guilt, as "Every one of us shall give account of HIMSELF to God" (Romans 14:12), and judgment will be rendered by the word, not by something which the "educated" claim to be the word (John 12:48; Romans 2:16).

The panelists of the "Forum on the Versions" at Freed-Hardeman were asked who would be to blame if complete division resulted, those who pushed the new versions on the brotherhood, or those who insisted on staying with the reliable versions. The inane (or flippant) reply of the four panelists was, "We do not know of anyone pushing the new versions on the brotherhood."

STEP 6—ADOPTION OF NEW VERSIONS' TERMINOLOGY. That a "babel of tongues" has already resulted from the wholesale adoption of the new versions by the colleges cannot be successfully denied. Nor can it be denied that the "uncertain sounds" emanating from any of our pulpits is attributable, at least in large part, to such

acceptance. As **Robert R. Taylor** and others have held before us for two decades or more, the very proliferation of the versions is confusing and misleading. The new versions are inaccurate and imprecise, their terminology questionable and immature, their teaching false, misleading, erroneous, therefore accursed of God (Galatians 1:6-10). GOD says ANY "other gospel" is accursed. Our "scholarly" brethren have adopted "another gospel." Draw your own conclusion. One can understand why the precious, reliable, earth-shaking slogans of the Restoration Movement are ridiculed by many who accept the new versions.

Christians always have recommended that one should "search the scriptures" for himself (John 5:39; Acts 17:11). Now, as per the Freed-Hardeman panelists, when one comes across inborn sin, instrumental music, and such like, in the new versions, he simply has someone explain it to him. Show him that the "Bible" is wrong? Shades of Baptist

practice on Mark 16:16! Sharpen your penknife, brethren!

STEP 7—ACCOMMODATION TO THE ERRORS OF THE NEW VERSIONS. The list of departures listed above is attributable, at least in large part, to the erroneous versions now endorsed by our brethren. If one accepts the *NIV* as his Bible, he is not likely to condemn it. If the spring (the Bible) is polluted, how can the stream (teaching) be pure?

For some 30 years and more, stronger brethren and much wiser than I have urged erring administrations, faculty members, and other liberal brethren to turn back. The ONLY way this EVER will happen is for strong, courageous INDIVIDUALS to return, just as they obeyed the gospel in the first place, denouncing ALL sin, error, and sectarianism in the process.

—4400 Knight Arnold Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry

Tom L. Bright

"Loyalty," in anybody's language, is a commendable trait. *Webster's* unabridged work defines "loyalty" as "the state or quality of being loyal" (p. 1072). At the same opening, "loyal" is defined as meaning "faithful to those persons, ideals, etc. that one stands under an obligation to defend or support." Included among the many synonyms listed by *Roget's Thesaurus* are such words as "constancy" and "devotement" (p. 297). Interestingly enough, the same authority lists as synonymous with "loyalty" a concept that bears heavily upon this article—that concept being the idea of "to idolize" and "to worship."

It goes without saying that everyone admires "loyalty" evidenced in another's life, even though they might not agree with the object of one's loyalty. But when that loyalty becomes idolatry, when it becomes the worship of man or things of man's origin, then our view of such attachment changes from admiration to disdain.

Blind loyalty to things of man is never a quality to be coveted. As we look through "tinted glasses," our vision becomes blurred and we can see only the object of our affection in the light of that which we *want* to see. We become blind to the truth, and will defend the object of our affection regardless of the consequences. Loyalty to anything which has had a direct impact upon our life, and in which we have been heavily involved is not uncommon. Likewise, neither is blindness to the truth, even to the extent of a "whitewashing" and a cover-up.

This, in my view, has been evidenced in the recent furor raised by the charge of Theistic Evolution being taught in Abilene Christian University. I have long claimed that many people operate under the philosophy that "You can talk negatively about me, my wife, my children, my parents, the church, the elders, or the preacher—but don't ever talk about my *school*."

We have read the "Abilene Christian University Institutional Statement," dated Feb. 17, 1986 which was an official response to the charges leveled at ACU by brother **Bert Thompson** in his book, *Is Genesis Myth?* However, we ask simply: Was anything really answered? Was anything settled? It seems to me that all of the evidence available was not considered, and that there are many inconsistencies

relative to those specifically charged which were never harmonized.

WILL ACU RESPOND?

We should welcome a response from ACU relative to the charges made by **Kevin McLeod, M.D.**, a former student at ACU, now associated with the prestigious **Scott and White Clinic** in Temple, Texas, in a personal letter to ACU President **William J. Teague** (a copy of which I have before me), dated Feb. 18, 1986. In this letter, brother McLeod plainly stated "I was taught evolution in my classes at ACU without alternative. You have not been wrongly accused." On the next page, brother McLeod expressed his consternation relative to all of the literature attempting to clear the faculty of evolutionary teaching. He states that "No mention ever was made for creation science. I did not encounter this term until three years following ACU."

This brother further writes, "Letters I received in '80 inform me that then there was no coherent consensus of opinion among the science faculty about creation or the Genesis account. Creation material received no emphasis to the students. Evolutionary views in some fashion (certainly theistic) were held by these writers." This is, without doubt, shockingly interesting.

Of further interest is a letter from **J. S. "Jake" Macleod** of San Angelo, Texas to brother **Bert Thompson**, dated 2/26/86 in which he writes, "I suppose it was a result of sheer ignorance that I did not challenge the apparent lack of continuity between the proposed geologic progressions and the first chapters of Genesis, but I do remember it striking a strange chord. I simply never challenged Dr. Williams' authority. I assumed that Genesis and the geologic tables somehow dovetailed into a logical progression of events that did not violate the words of Genesis nor the 'facts' of evolution. Needless to say I never found an adequate explanation."

He adds that upon the reception of his Texas State Teaching Certificate, he began to teach Life/Earth Science in the 8th grade. He writes, "I taught a strange home-brewed brand of theistic evolution simply because I knew nothing else until I attended one of your seminars in Austin. You presented the facts that I needed to resolve the

conflict." Then with a lament that should touch the heart of every concerned Christian, he wrote, "Unfortunately I will never have an opportunity to re-teach the students, who, as a result of my ignorance, are misinformed regarding evolution and creation."

Why is it that a person can make such statements after having graduated from one of our prestigious colleges? Hear his explanation: "The bottom line is that I was not armed with any information from the ACC science department to support the Genesis account of Creation. Creation was never discussed nor was the topic ever remotely approached in any of the science classes that I attended while at ACC. Could it be that the professors are also unfamiliar with the logic and facts regarding the Creation?"

FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

In the "Institutional Statement," readers are told that the Committee conducted face-to-face interviews with the two accused professors. We are told that "Both unquestionably repudiated the theory of organic evolution and the theory's particular reference to the evolutionary creation of man."

Yet, when we consider a document sent to brother Bert Thompson by the L. D. Swift family of Tuscola, Texas, we find an unresolved contradiction. Briefly stated, the Swifts tell of a regular meeting of a church visitation group which they attended in 1981, which was held in the home of brother Archie Manis, one of the accused professors. In a conversation that evening, they affirm that brother Manis clearly stated a view of the creation of which the Swifts stated, "This view is commonly known as 'theistic evolution'." Because of this, they left the Baker Heights congregation in Abilene.

Upon hearing of the recent controversy, they decided to talk directly to brother Manis, and on October 28, 1985, the Swifts called him. Of the many things said in that conversation (approximately one and a half hours) which do not harmonize with the claims of the "Institutional Statement," one, in particular, stands in bold contrast to the claims made therein. In response to a question asked by sister Swift relative to whether brother Manis ever refuted the teachings of evolution as it is presented in the books he used, it was reported that he replied, "No! I never do." (Further statements of Manis in the same conversation would collaborate this).

Even more interesting is the fact that the Swifts gave brother Manis a copy of their conversation with him. On a blank provided, he signed his name verifying the fact that he had been given the opportunity to read the statements relative to his discussion with them, but left blank the options as to whether he did or did not consider them accurate as they were written.

But the "Institutional Statement" is as silent as the stars in reference to the claims made by the Swifts. Were they ever "interviewed" or even contacted? Maybe we should assume that they were incorrect in their claims? Possibly the ACU administration feels that all people will bow to their *ipse dixit*, and that the matter is closed, and that they have been exonerated of all charges.

But let us look further. John Propst, who was a member, as well as a deacon of the Baker Heights congregation in Abilene where Archie Manis is an elder, gives a story that harmonizes with the Swift letter. Thus, we see another instance that places Manis and the ACU "Institutional Statement," and all associated with it, in a very precarious and unenviable position.

Brother Propst states that on Wednesday, September 25, 1985, he met with brother Manis at the Baker Heights building. In response to the question, "Do you believe that God created the heavens, earth, and everything in them in six literal days of approximately 24 hours each?" brother Propst writes the following relative to brother Manis' answer: "Initially, Archie tried to avoid giving a direct answer, therefore, I continued to ask the same question until he gave the following answer: 'I think he could have, if he had wanted to, but I don't think that's the way he did it'."

A month later, on October 26, at the request of two other deacons of the congregation, John sat in on their meeting with Manis. At the start of the meeting, Manis verified that Propst had quoted him (Manis) correctly in saying that he (Manis) did not believe that God had created everything in six literal days. However, toward the end of the same meeting, Manis denied that this was his belief, stating that he did believe that God created everything in six literal days. When asked by Propst why he (Manis) had deliberately misled and deceived him in the first meeting, Manis' answer was "I'm sorry."

On November 20, 1985, brother Propst and another deacon, along with their wives, met with all of the Baker Heights elders (Manis included). To their surprise, the Baker Heights elders, to a man, stood with Manis! The other deacon, who had previously met with Manis on November 3, asked him why he had specifically told them that the days of creation were 24-hour periods. The response from Manis was that he had "become all things to all men."

So now we ask: Which Archie Manis are we to believe: The one of September 25, October 26 (the first part of the meeting), October 26 (latter part of the meeting), November 3, November 20, or the one in the "Institutional Statement" of Feb. 17, 1986?

Why is it that the "Institutional Statement" never mentions these meetings, nor those who were involved in them? Were John Propst, the other deacon, and their wives ever "interviewed" or contacted? If they were not, then we ask, "Why?" In my judgment, the ignoring of such detrimental evidence by the Special Committee of the ACU Board of Trustees is worthy of being questioned. The dignity of the position of Board of Trustees and the obligation which they have to both parents and students, whether past, present, or future, as well as to the brotherhood in general, calls for an investigation which would remove any doubt. After all, is it not their claim that they are a "Christian College"?

Again, we affirm that loyalty is to be commended. But when this loyalty becomes blind, even to the point of being idolatry, then the result can be nothing less than disastrous.

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: Photocopies of the letters from brethren McLeod and MacLeod quoted in this article are available from Apologetics Press, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117 (a contribution to help with postage would be appreciated.—Tom L. Bright)]

Bellview Church of Christ Announces:

The 5th Annual Northside Lectures
Theme: Great Bible Chapters

March 2-6, 1988

Northside Church of Christ

El Paso, TX 79914



Namik (Paul) Cebeci

Memphis School Of Preaching Trainee Presents Opportunity For Some Sound, Wide-Awake Church To Undertake Unique Work Among Turkish People

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

It is not often that an opportunity comes along which is so extraordinary, if not unique, in its nature that some sound, wide-awake, live-wire congregation should recognize it for what it is and take hold of it before it gets away.

From the moment that I first met brother **Namik (Paul) Cebeci**, from Turkey (Asia, as referred to in the New Testament), I knew that he presented an opportunity almost without parallel among the people of God. Having myself traveled for several weeks to many parts of that Bible land, I knew how dead set against Christianity the Moslem Government of Turkey really is. I also knew how basically friendly and reliable Turkish people can be—and how, individually, they would respond to the gospel if only there was some way to get around the Moslem authorities opposing it.

NOW TRAINING AT MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

It appears to me that, in brother Cebeci, we may at last have found an effective solution to the Turkish-evangelism problem. Now in training as a gospel preacher at Memphis School of Preaching, in Memphis, Tennessee, this young man comes to us with a background made to order for a special work to be described in this article.

Namik (or Paul, as they call him at Memphis School of Preaching) was born in Turkey. His grandfather emigrated from Georgia, in southern Russia, which makes him a second-generation Turk.

"I was raised as a Sunni Muslim on a 50 acre farm in Sakarya, a town of Georgian immigrants near Istanbul, Turkey," he writes. "In my teen age years, I studied blacksmithing and construction at the Technical High School. From 1976-1978, I attended the Teacher Training Institute at Eskisehir, near Ankara, Turkey. I left Turkey for Germany and England during the period of political anarchy which ended in 1980."

While he was in England, brother Paul took several courses in English from institutes in London; however, most of his time was spent working.

At the beginning of 1980, he returned to Turkey to complete his education at the Teacher Training Institute, graduating as a teacher of English as a second language. Then, from the fall of 1981, he taught English at the Adana Business High School, in Adana, Turkey.

PAUL'S CONVERSION AT ADANA, TURKEY

It was in 1983, while studying surreptitiously with **Jay Vandersloot**, at Adana, that this young Turkish Moslem was converted, being baptized into Christ.

"Desiring to study the Bible," he recalls, "I left Turkey in August, 1984, to attend European Christian College. Since 1983 I have been known among the American brethren as 'Paul'."

While studying at European Christian College under the

direction of **Otis Gatewood**, he attended the church of Christ in Vienna, Austria. During that time he conducted studies with six people, all of whom became Christians.

"I decided to become a preacher and left Vienna and came to the United States," he relates. "My aim is to be a preacher and to preach the gospel to my people."

Brother Cebeci is deeply conscious how very necessary it is to be taught, "as teaching is a chain of continuing the message; I am learning the word of God at the Memphis School of Preaching; and I will teach others (also)."

He believes that "all Christians should carry out God's message by teaching others. Without teaching we can not know, understand, or have faith in God, because faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17)..."

AMBITION TO EVANGELIZE TURKISH PEOPLE

Although, since his conversion, Paul always has been ambitious to teach people in general, he is particularly interested in preaching the word of God to the Turkish people in the world, of whom, including all parts of the world, there are well over 30 million who speak the Turkish language, he being the only known Christian among them.

In the days of the early church, Christianity was perhaps strongest in the part of the world where eventually he wants to work. Followers of Christ were first called Christians in Antioch, whence the gospel spread into that part of Asia which now is called Turkey.

"There were seven churches in Asia," Paul cites from the New Testament, "and there was even a preaching school at Ephesus, where the Apostle Paul, himself, taught. Also, Paul was born in Turkey."

"Where has the church gone? The church no longer exists in that part of the world today. Ungodliness is the order of the day. Men have tried to take the word of God to Turkey, but they have been deported and arrested by the government. One man was even martyred. I, myself, have been arrested and interrogated because of my belief in Christ."

LONDON, ENGLAND: A PLACE TO START

Since the government strictly enforces the laws against the preaching of the gospel inside Turkey, the only legal way to preach is first to establish an officially-recognized religious organization. To be officially recognized requires that there must be at least 12 native members.

But, "how do we get members if we cannot preach?" Cebeci asks. "I propose first to start preaching to the Turkish community in London, England, and then I plan to attempt to acquire air time on BBC radio. BBC radio broadcasts all over Europe, including Turkey. Through the radio program I would be able to reach the Turkish people without being arrested. If I could convert the required 12

through the radio programs, I could then legally begin the work inside the borders of Turkey."

Obviously, such a plan could not "just happen" overnight. It would require time, much time, perhaps years. What makes London such a perfect choice as a place to start is that there is such a huge Turkish community already there—possibly as many as 200,000—and Paul could evangelize among these Turkish people freely while seeking ways and means to get the gospel back inside his own native land.

SPONSORSHIP, SUPPORT NEEDED BY JUNE

The next step Namik now faces is finding a good, strong, zealous church, hopefully with dedicated elders with the vision to grasp the possibilities of this opportunity, who will reach out to sponsor him, starting this coming June, helping him raise the support necessary for such an undertaking.

"Brethren," he writes, "to fulfill my dream of saving my own people, I need your support. I need both your prayers and your financial support. This is not just a dream to me. It is my life's ambition to spread the word of God to my countrymen. This will not be an easy or an inexpensive task. Please aid me in the work for Turkey. Don't think of this as helping me. Think of it as helping millions of people find their way to salvation."

Realizing that brother **Curtis A. Cates**, director of Memphis School of Preaching, knows brother Paul perhaps better than anyone, I asked if he could recommend him. Here is what he wrote:

November 23, 1987

To Whom It May Concern:

I am very privileged to have the opportunity to recommend brother Paul (Namik) Cebeci, a fine Christian and very capable, gifted gospel preacher. He is genuine in his love for the truth, in his stand for the Old Paths, and in his undying love for lost souls.

Brethren, this man desires to go among his own people. His potential is boundless, for he speaks fluently more than five languages, and knows some five additional ones. He is an experienced preacher and personal evangelist. He is preaching each Lord's Day while a student in the School.

Please allow brother Cebeci to present personally to you his great plans for evangelism among his people. Help him if you can, for he is very deserving.

Faithfully in Christ,

(Signed)

**Curtis A. Cates
Director**

*(NOTE: So there you have it, brethren: one of the most extraordinary opportunities to help evangelize among people of the land where the Apostle Paul himself was born! If you are the kind to grow discouraged when something does not work out "yesterday", this is not for you. However, if your congregation would like to take on a lifetime work with one who has every potential of carrying it through to eventual success, then you need to get in touch immediately with this Turkish brother and get things underway. Please address him directly to: **Namik Cebeci, 4405 Aloha Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee 38118. IYRJR.**)*

ATTEND UPON THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTION

Don Walker

In I Corinthians 7:35 we read, "And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." After we understand the context, of a father giving his daughter in marriage or not, we are reminded of the steadfastness which is required in the service of the Lord.

Every Christian must realize the importance of serving

the Lord without distraction. Jesus reminded us that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it". (Matthew 7:14). Paul, that great apostle, said, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (I Corinthians 9:27). "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10:22). We must be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the Lord. (I Corinthians 15:58). The point is: if we are faithful unto death we will receive a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10).

John wrote, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Revelation 3:21). Truly, if we are going to serve the Lord with a single-eye devotion we will not be lulled by the distractions of this world.

MATERIAL THINGS PERISH

The faithful follower of Christ will not be distracted by the material things of this world. Paul, writing to the young preacher Timothy, said, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (I Timothy 6:10). It is not a sin to have money or nice things, but it is a sin to allow any material thing to come before our service. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15). Jesus forever showed the value of heavenly treasures as compared to the temporal treasures of this life which will be destroyed at the last. (Matthew 6:19-21; II Peter 3:11-12). There is nothing sadder than watching Christians throw away their time and energy on things, stuff, and junk, "which perish with the using."

Christians who truly love the Lord will not be distracted by false doctrine. Jesus warned of those who would come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly were wolves, while Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them!" (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:29-30). Instead of being deceived, the soldier of Christ will be engaged against such wickedness. Yet it seems there are men who would invite the serpent in to teach us the way. Paul said, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11). The only way we shall be able to fulfill this great responsibility is if we know the truth. In Hosea 4:6 God's people were destroyed because of a lack of knowledge. We must search the scriptures daily to see if the things taught are so. (Acts 17:11). There is nothing which can take the place of knowing the scriptures God has outlined for us. Only the fool would shun away from studying the scriptures, for it will be the word which will judge us in the last day. (John 12:48). As we walk the roads of this temporary life we shall walk in accordance with the gospel if we are truly striving to please the Lord. (Philippians 1:27). We will not be distracted by false teaching because we know and love the truth which will set us free. (John 8:32).

The life of a Christian is a challenging one which requires our total effort. We must always be aware of the distractions and shun them as we walk down the path of righteousness. It will be *this* way that we please the Lord and walk in His favor.

*—109 Chestnut
Mabank, Texas 75145*

Contending for the Faith Readers Keep On Signing up Others As Our Large Circulation Keeps Growing!

The principal means by which *Contending for the Faith* keeps on growing is by faithful readers either sending in gift subscriptions or signing up others. It is remarkable the number of our readers who take it upon themselves to do this.

From time to time, we like to give recognition to the many who are helping in this way. Since the last time we mentioned this, the following have sent in, as indicated:

A. L. Fulks, of Huntington, West Virginia, renewed for three years and sent in six new subscriptions; **Carl Pate**, of Riverview, Michigan, sent one three-year renewal and four new; **A. O. Smith**, of Seminole, Oklahoma—three new; **Riley Nelson**, of Paducah, Kentucky, sent five new ones with his own renewal; **David B. Johnson**, of Ardmore, Oklahoma, sent in a new one with his renewal; **Mrs. Alba M. Rowden**, of Licking, Missouri, enclosed two new ones; **Leon C. Bowman**, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, subscribed for two, sending \$2.00 "extra"; **Clyde C. Hightower**, of Homer, Louisiana, renewed his own and added one new; **Richard Bates**, of Canal Winchester, Ohio, sent in two renewals for three years each; **Mrs. & Mrs. W. G. Lawrence**, of Cape Coral, Florida, sent three new ones; **Mrs. Mildred S. Pirtle**, of Memphis, Tennessee, subscribed for three friends; **Orland S. Robinson**, of St. Marys, West Virginia, renewed his own and signed up two more; **Richard Messer**, of Muncie, Indiana, signed up four; **Ola Mae Waits**, of Cuero, Texas, sent three renewals; **Mr. & Mrs. Fred W. Ford**, of Fort Worth, Texas, sent in three; **Archie Collins**, of Memphis, Tennessee, renewed four and sent in two new ones, three being for three years each; **Marion O. Stevens**, of Dallas, Texas, subscribed for two brethren in San Saba County; **James Faulstich**, of Elwood, Tennessee, renewed four and sent in 11 new ones; **Robert C. Stewart**, of Clyde, Texas, renewed his own and sent in one new, both for three years each; **George Knisley**, of New Martinsville, West Virginia, sent seven three-year subscriptions; **B. J. Jones**, of Sheffield, Alabama, renewed his own and sent one new; **Mrs. Sarah L. Crain**, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, renewed her own and sent two new; **Guy Weddel**, of Hereford, Texas, renewed for three years and sent two new; **Ken Yocum**, of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, renewed three years and sent three new ones; **Bob McGoldrick**, of West Plains, Missouri, sent four new ones and \$6.00 "extra", saying, "Use rest as you see best. Keep the good work going..."; **Garland White**, of New Johnsonville, Tennessee, sent one new; **Kenneth Badgett**, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, sent one renewal and one new; **Gordon N. Rice**, of Dearborn, Michigan, renewed two for three years each; **Louise B. Hassler**, of Ringgold, Georgia, renewed her own and sent two new; **J. V. Copeland**, of Forest Park, Georgia, renewed four, sent one new; **A. O. Beall**, of Iowa Park, Texas, enclosed a new one with his renewal together with \$2.00 extra "for whatever you see fit"; **Reginal Tyler**, of Pocahontas, Arkansas, renewed five, sent five new; **W. Wayne Coats**, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, one renewal, two new, added \$10.00 extra; **James Newberry**, West Plains, Missouri, renewed his own, three new; **Kenneth & Carolyn Jones**, of Page, Florida, two new; **A. W. Jarrett**, renewed his own, five new; **R. F. Knox, Jr.**, Dayton, Ohio, three new; **Stanley Gibson**, Huntsville, Alabama, three new; **L. Carl Cornell**, Huntington, West Virginia, renewed his own for three years, sent nine new; **B. J. Gallaher**, of Pensacola, Florida, sent eight renewals and three new; **Mrs. Myrtle Marlow**, Old Hickory, Tennessee, renewed her own, two new; **Mrs. Dale Frazier**, Ozark, Missouri, renewed her own, three new;

R. D. McBee, Perryville, Arkansas, three new; **Wirt Barthel**, Muskogee, Oklahoma, four new; **Wayne Melnders**, Metropolis, Illinois, sent five new subscriptions, adding \$3.33 extra to use "where you see fit"; **Hubert H. Holmes**, Morrison, Tennessee, renewed his own and three more, plus two new; **Ardele Odom**, Bixby, Oklahoma, three new; **Jake Perry**, St. Petersburg, Florida, three renewals, three new; **Avis Fleming**, Booneville, Mississippi, renewed his own, five new; **Dr. D. O. Donaho**, Winnsboro, Texas, three new; **Norman & Louise Brock**, Anderson, Indiana, ten new; **Mrs. Carl E. McAfee**, of Missoula, Montana, renewed her own, sent five new; **Mrs. Harold Caplinger**, of Akron, Ohio, renewed her own, sent one new; **Foy Simpson**, of Idaho Falls, Idaho, renewed for three years, sent one new; **Ms. Dee M. Culverson**, of Lemon Grove, California, sent one new; **Milton Smith**, of New Richmond, West Virginia, two new; **Maurice Crowley**, of Thayer, Missouri, three new; **Nina Maloney**, of Middleton, Tennessee,

renewed her own, sent five new; **Dewey P. Celsor**, of Chicago, Illinois, two new; **Glynn V. Purdy**, of Coffeeville, Mississippi, one new; **William Beck**, of Jacksonville, Florida, 22 new; **Mr. & Mrs. Don C. Ellis**, of Aurora, Colorado, renewed their own and one more, sent eight new; **Eugene Springer**, of Cadiz, Kentucky, five new; **Johnny Suter**, of Palmyra, Missouri, renewed his own, sent one new; **Donald A. Burner**, of Philippi, West Virginia, renewed his own, sent two new; **W. E. Pedron**, of Jonesboro, Louisiana, renewed for three years, sent two new; **Jesse Condra**, of Rogersville, Tennessee, five new; **Clifford Shepherd**, of Rocky Face, Georgia, renewed his own, sent five new; **James D. Cox**, of Tustin, California, renewed for six years, sent three new; **Henry W. Thurman**, of Prescott, Arizona, renewed his own, sent one new, both for three years each; **Mrs. Jeanette Walker**, of Farmers Branch, Texas, ordered a bundle of five copies sent monthly for one year; **Charles E. Fletcher**, of Burkburnett, Texas, renewed his own for three years, another for two years, sent in eight new; **Granville O. Allen**, of Huntsville, Alabama, renewed his own, sent two new; so did **Max Schmollinger**, of Mountain Grove, Missouri; **Charles Balcom**, of Town Creek, Alabama, sent 15 new; **Larry D. Mathis**, of New Orleans, Louisiana, renewed his own, sent in nine new.

[NOTE: Any desiring a bundle of back issues to introduce *Contending for the Faith* where you are please let us know. These are sent free of charge. Help us sign up all you can! IYR Jr.]

Notes & Quotes...

3RD ANNUAL DIERKS LECTURES ANNOUNCED Charles Coats

The 3rd Annual Dierks Lectures will be held April 29 - May 1, 1988 in the building of the Dierks church of Christ, Dierks, Arkansas. Our theme this year will be "Christian Living."

All lectures will be taped, both audio and video. This year's speakers will be **Lynn Matheny, Toney Smith, Tommy Mounts, Dean Fugett, Ivle Powell, Oran Rhodes, Lowell Lites, John Bowles, Charles Coats, Wayne Smith, and Leon Jones.**

For more information, write **Church of Christ, P. O. Box 62, Dierks, Arkansas 71833** or call 501/286-2641 or 286-2989.

Burton W. Barber, of Northboro, Maine, ordered 60 copies of our May issue, of 1987, containing the examination of the Crossroads church of Boston. "Crossroads Packets", containing approximately 20 different back issues each of what we have published regarding Crossroadism, since 1979, have been ordered by **Earl Dale**, of Harlingen, Texas; by **Kevin Cozort**, of Memphis, Tennessee; by **Mr. & Mrs. Everett Holloway**, of Canton, Texas; by **John Emery**, of Middletown, Rhode Island; and others.

[NOTE: Those interested in ordering our "Crossroads Packet" please enclose \$9.95 for each packet (which includes postage) and address your orders to: **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.**]

Larry R. Devore, of Wooster, Ohio, ordered 25 copies of our October issue on "Is 1987 a 'Watershed Year' for Boston/Crossroads?" saying, "It is excellent."

Maggie M. Moody, of Tampa, Florida, enclosed \$10.00 contribution, saying, "I appreciate *Contending for the Faith* so much. I wish I could help more. I have kept them through the years..."

FRANK AND GRACIE YOUNG TO BE HONORED AT 1988 MSOP LECTURES

Brother and sister **Frank D. Young** will be honored at a special dinner during the 22nd Annual Memphis School of Preaching lectureship, to take place at 4:30 p.m., Monday, March 28, 1988. Brother and sister Young will be recognized for their many years of preaching the gospel and for their ten years work with the Memphis School of Preaching.

Brother Young began preaching the gospel in 1935, nearly 53 years ago. He was educated at Freed-Hardeman College under **N. B. Hardeman, L. L. Brigrance, W. H. Owen, C. P. Roland, W. Claude Hall**, and others. He did further work at Cumberland University. A gifted preacher, brother Young has done work in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky and Tennessee. He has been in wide demand for gospel meetings. He was very well prepared educationally and as an experienced preacher to join the School's faculty in 1970.

The decade of brother Young's teaching in the School was characterized by marked popularity and respect among the students. He was recognized as a scholar in the Scriptures, very thorough, refusing to enter the classroom unprepared. His courses included the Life of Christ, Romans, I, II Corinthians, Hebrews, Revelation, Premillennialism, Denominational Doctrines, Expository Preaching, Genesis, Hebrew History, and others. His students praise him as one of their finest teachers ever. Sister **Gracie Nichols Young** was also very popular with the students' families. She taught some of the wives' classes on Monday nights.

It is altogether fitting that this fine person and Christian gentleman and his very supportive loving companion be thus honored. All will want, if possible, to be present.

—Yokefellow,
Memphis School of Preaching
January 26, 1988

Bill Lockwood, who formerly preached at East Flagstaff, Arizona, now preaches at Paintsville, Kentucky. He writes, saying, "I will seek to gain subscriptions in this locale. I wish all brethren would subscribe to *Contending for the Faith* as I know so many are ignorant of the issues which false teachers press upon the Lord's church and carry away 'even the elect'."

Glenn B. Bishop, for the elders, sent a congregational subscription for all 77 families of the Broadway church of Christ, of Gainesville, Texas.

5th ANNUAL SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS LECTURES

"Issues That Still Confront Us" will be the general theme of the 5th Annual Southwest Arkansas Lectures, March 18-20, 1988, at the Cullendale church of Christ, of Camden, Arkansas. **Tim Ayers**, Director.

Jerre M. Whitman, Robertson County church of Christ, Cross Plains, Tennessee: "It is our earnest prayer that the 1987 Robertson County Lectureship accomplished what God would have it to and that it might be for the good of all who attended and to his glory. We are thankful for the outline books, the audio and the video tapes of each and every speech that was delivered and we believe they will help us now and whatever years the Lord has left for us.

"Brother Rice, we are thankful for your love and defense of the truth and your courage to uphold the right and oppose the wrong and your willingness to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. We are aware of the fact that you and others like you and even the other speakers of this lectureship have received much undue and unjust criticism for your strong stand for the truth..."

"We are enclosing this check for you to use as you see fit in your efforts to extend the borders of the kingdom... We hope that we can help you more as funds are made available."

(NOTE: On behalf of the elders, brother **Whitman** enclosed a check for \$300.00. Much appreciation. IYR Jr.)

Mary F. Schultz, Acworth, Georgia: "I have subscribed to *Contending for the Faith* for many years. It is sad to read of apostasy but necessary to learn whom we may or may not fellowship... We would like to order the complete set of Bound Volumes... Thank you so much for all your hard work in compiling them."

Bill Northam, Shreveport, Louisiana: "Please continue to keep me on your list to automatically mail me the *Contending for the Faith* BOUND VOLUMES as they come off the press. I bought all the volumes available in 1974 and then all the others as they were printed. They are a valuable source of information and reference to me and I value my collection highly. I also have all three volumes of *Axe on the Root* (Rice on the Root?—Ox on the Toot??) Ha!

"Ira, there are great numbers of us who deeply appreciate the good work you are doing and have done in the Far East. Not to mention the firm stand you take for the truth, even though the criticism is often harsh and the opposition vigorous. If we can't (or won't) teach the truth exactly as it is written, then the cause of Christ would be better served if we didn't teach at all..."

A faithful brother in Christ in Colorado, who asked that he not be named, inclosed \$213.75 to pay for 57 subscriptions, saying, "I commend you for the work that are are doing to try to keep the word clean and forceful."

Loyd Celsor, of Tompkinsville, Kentucky, offered to distribute a bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* to introduce the paper there.

H. B. Geane, of Coffeyville, Kansas, ordered 40 copies of our May/1987 issue, saying, "The false teacher never gives up. Thanks for your continual fight against Satan's doctrines."

Judito D. Aton, minister to the Central congregation in Manila, Philippines, has just finished his first year of special training at Brown Trail School of Preaching, in Hurst, Texas.

"I hope and pray that you... can help me establish a preaching school in Manila," he wrote in March. "I'm working out a curriculum. The Philippines is in need badly of SOUND preachers and lovers of truth..."

(NOTE: "When I received your much appreciated letter of March 9, 1987, and discovered that you are hoping to establish a preaching school in Manila in order to train SOUND preachers who will be lovers of TRUTH," I replied, in part, under date of May 20, 1987, "I was deeply gratified and relieved.

"Just because EXISTING schools are not doing this does not mean that we are forced to just accept the 'status quo' and go along with them. Just the way that FALSE schools got started, we also can establish schools that are devoted to TRUTH. And I shall be only too happy to encourage this when the time comes.

"By now, of course, you know what all took place during the seven days that I was in the Philippines last week; so I will not go into that in this letter. To say the least it was quite an eye-opener to me. I do not recall ever seeing a whole nation of preachers being held hostage by one missionary before. However, the fact that you yourself were able to break out of this stranglehold is proof positive that it can be done. Nevertheless, just as soon as you finish the two years you committed to be in the States, it is crucial for the cause of truth that you return immediately that neither he nor anyone else can justly have ought to say truthfully against you/or the cause you serve..." IYR Jr.)

NIV PACKETS STILL AVAILABLE

Concerned brethren and sisters in Christ continue writing in asking for our special packets of what brother **A. G. Hobbs** wrote exposing doctrinal error in the *New International Version*. These were published in five separate issues of *Contending for the Faith*. Those ordering them should inclose \$3.50 for each "NIV Packet" (postage included), addressing your order to: **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226.

Among those who recently ordered our "NIV Packet" are **Wayne Porter**, of Taylor, Michigan, and **Bobby Crowell**, of Parker, Colorado. In his letter, brother Crowell said, in part, "I have been trying to convince the members here that the NIV is not a reliable translation, but some still insist on using it. I hope this material will help me in this effort.

"I am at present talking with a congregation about working with them, and the elders there allow the use of only the KJV or ASV. I surely wish more elders would take this stand so that we could all understand what is being read when someone is asked to read certain passages."

Mrs. H. L. Davis, Austin, Texas: "I am very interested in receiving the issue which discussed the various versions of the Bible."

Don Shackelford, Bolivar, Tennessee: "In order to hold your costs down you may cancel the two editions I receive each time."

Mrs. Paul A. Faber, of Woodsfield, Ohio, in renewing for another three years, said, "Certainly sad we have so many who are not willing to abide by the simple gospel of Jesus Christ. We just closed a good meeting at Laings with brother **Robert Taylor**. He certainly is an eloquent Christian teacher. The children loved him in children's class. I'd love to sit about two months with him teaching the children to learn from him. Wished our meeting had been much longer."

Whoever said, "It's not whether you win or lose that counts," probably lost.

Bill Clayton, of Yazoo City, Mississippi, invited *Contending for the Faith* to bring a display of books, Bibles and other religious materials for convenience of those attending the 2nd Annual Mississippi Lectures at Tupelo, saying, "I believe you do perform a much needed service to the brethren by doing this. Whatever you do with the proceeds is up to you and not the brethren. You, in my opinion, are due a fair profit just as any other. Whatever you like, I gather that someone has given you static about this, but brother it was and is NOT me. If you remember, it was I that REQUESTED that you come with your materials... We will be looking forward to seeing you there..."

(NOTE: This much appreciated letter from brother Clayton was like balm in a sore wound. Since I was 17 years old, I have tried, as opportunity afforded, to supply sound, reliable materials to the brethren, that they might have what they needed for their own edification in their own homes.

It came with some astonishment to me later on when I learned that at least some looked upon this as "making merchandise of the brethren." What had been motivated strictly as a service was perverted to appear as something else entirely. Still, I knew that if I (or at least someone) did not supply such a service, most brethren in their whole lives would never have access to the materials they really needed or even know where to get them.

Therefore, many years ago, my wife and I decided between us that each year we would make our contributions exceed anything and everything we might be profited by making these materials available to the brethren. This we have done religiously ever since—trying to be "ready unto every good work" just like it says.

Now that I am growing older, just the physical ordeal of boxing up these materials and putting them in the van (six hours work), unloading them at the lectureships and setting up the displays (six to eight hours work), resupplying the displays during the lectureships, boxing up what is left over and putting it back in the van at the end of each event (four hours work), and unloading the van and putting back into the shelves when I get back to Memphis (four to six hours work) is taxing my strength. More and more I keep seeking ways to carry these materials to the lectureships less and less. And when I hear someone make snide remarks about "merchandising the brethren", when my wife and I both know that whatever we make we give it all as contributions to "good works", I feel like we have been kicked in the teeth for trying to perform a sincere service to others.

The result of all this is that I never "offer" to bring the materials to brotherhood events any more. The only time I bring them is when I am asked or invited to do so. The hassle that brethren of a certain mentality put me through make the effort unnecessarily frustrating as far as I am concerned. In view of all the work and then giving the proceeds all away, if all such brethren can do is to stand around and criticize, why bother? It is just not worth it as far as I am concerned!

Oh, yes, we'll still make the materials available when asked or invited by those in charge of lectureships. However, with physical strength abating, even this may soon be at an end. We'll still maintain our mail-order service from our Memphis address yet a while. But when I finally pass—or Vada and I both get too old to do the work—this, too, will cease.

The only thing I hope that brethren will remember from all this is that at least we tried to perform a sincere service to our brethren and that no motive of profit was our reason for doing so—that we performed the service without charge to the brotherhood and then gave the profits all away. IYR Jr.)

Guy Walters, Floral City, Florida: "I've been a member of the Lord's church for five years and I've come to love this beautiful blood-bought body that stands for the truth and life. I suppose in my defending the church from all who would criticize it, maybe I have gone too far in my efforts. I've seen so many disagreements, misunderstandings and plain stubbornness in the brotherhood in these five years, plus two divisions of congregations in this county. Our own congregation had a faction which led to a division about two years ago because of men who accused some of bringing Crossroads doctrine in. The charges were false but it led to a division. Brother **Larry Hartman** has been preaching the true word for years here and brother **Jere Hooker**, as his assistant, stands for the same Bible truth. These men that accused us of Crossroadism did so because of one young brother that had attended the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. There never was nor will be any Crossroads doctrine in this congregation as long as brethren Hartman, Hooker, myself and a few others are here.

"I felt that all this talk going around about this movement contributed to our division. It tore many of us apart, broke our hearts for no reason, other than men becoming afraid of this movement..."

"I realize we must all stand up for truth, but sometimes I wonder just what is the best way? I realize that you are doing what you believe to be best, but I still can not agree with your methods. I'm sorry to say, I'm not sure what is the best way at this time, but when, and if, I ever think of a better way, I'd like to share it with you.

"Brother Rice, I'm an idealist. I dream of a united brotherhood. Everyone thinking along the same lines, all working together in the kingdom, loving and caring for one another. It saddens me to realize that even I can't seem to be this way. I don't know how we'll ever change the denominational world as long as we can't get unified.

"I really have nothing more to say at this time as it is taking every bit of strength I can find to hang on to what I believe. Please have patience with people like me who are searching for answers."

[NOTE: Even though this good brother was forthright in saying he disagrees with me and my methods, yet I appreciate his having written from his heart. As to just why I approach brotherhood doctrinal problems as I do: after life-long study of how Jesus, Paul, John and others approached such, as I read in the Bible, I try to mold my manner and thinking accordingly.

It is one thing to be *idealist*—quite another to be *realistic*. And in the real world, however much we may yearn and long for unity, there is just NO WAY for this to flow until we are UNITED ON DOCTRINE. Those who "cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine," Paul declared, "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18). He told the Corinthians, "...speak the same thing...that there be no divisions among you..." (I Corinthians 1:10). James, in 3:17, said, "...the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable..." To try to have peace (unity) without first keeping the doctrine pure is just one long frustration. We want unity, too—and we can have it—once brethren quit trying to foist different doctrines upon us. IYR Jr.]

W. A. Collins, of Memphis, Tennessee, sent in 14 renewals (one for three years) and one new subscription, saying, "Keep up the good work."

Sara White, of Richardson, Texas, in renewing for three more years, said, "We appreciate all you do to help keep people informed on the issues that face us as Christians today."

Michael Cox, Paragould, Arkansas: "Since 1983 I have been the minister for the Holywood church of Christ, of Arbyrd, Missouri... Beginning January 1988 I will be the new minister for the Gainesville church of Christ, of Paragould, Arkansas."

Sue Harris, of Waco, Texas, writes: "Our ladies class at Robinson church of Christ, here in Waco, Texas, is involved in World Bible School. I'm not sure in which periodical I read it, but I understand that the Crossroads Movement is using World Bible School to promote their cause. I do not know if this is with **Reuel Lemmons'** consent or not.

"My question is, if we request names of evangelists to contact our students from World Bible School, will those evangelists be teaching Crossroads methods? If so, who would be able to give us names of evangelists who are not involved in Crossroads?... We presently have students in Nigeria, West Africa and the Philippines... Any assistance you can give me will be appreciated."

[NOTE: In my reply, I said, in part, "According to brother **Manuel Pelayo**, of the Philippines, brethren friendly to the Crossroads Movement there are using World Bible School to promote their cause. If **Reuel Lemmons** DOES know of this, it would make him no difference, as he is a great admirer and defender of Crossroadism. In fact, according to **Don DeWitt**, of the Independent Christian Church, they, too, are using World Bible School to promote their cause. Brother **Lemmons** goes right along with the Christian Church, too!

"At this point, I know of no way for you to be sure that the preachers you are sending your contacts to are faithful and sound, unless you know them personally and know that they are such... Sister Harris, these are desperate times for the church of my Lord when so many who formerly were sound now have allowed the spirit of error to take them over..." IYR Jr.]

Jack Caraker, of Hartford, Kentucky, contributes \$15.00 each month to our Contending for the Faith FUND.

[NOTE: Brethren little realize how much "extra" that *Contending for the Faith* is called upon to send out each month above and beyond OUR costs that is not covered by subscription rates. For this reason, we have set up with the *Bellview church of Christ*, at 4850 Sauffley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506 what we call our "contending for the faith FUND."

All contributions to this fund are tax-deductible. They should be made out to the *Bellview church of Christ*, clearly ear-marked for our CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH FUND. Tax-deductible receipts are sent for each and every such contribution. In this way, such heavy costs are shared by MANY which otherwise would have to be borne by US ALONE! IYR Jr.)

Cecil Allen, of Paris, Texas, in subscribing for three years, contributed an "extra" \$12.00 to our contending-for-the-faith fund "to be used as necessary." Due to heart problems, he is not in full time local work any longer, but preaches on Lord's Days to the Deport church of Christ. "Your paper is so good," he commented. "Keep up the good work."

Joseph H. Terry, of Jupiter, Florida likes to send in new subscriptions all along—and we surely do appreciate it!

Tim Smith, Taylorsville, Mississippi: "God bless you and your work."

Walter E. Meyer, of Montezuma, Iowa, in subscribing to *Contending for the Faith*, ordered a dozen copies of sister **Bronwen McClish Gibson's** tract, *Crossroads from the Inside*, for distribution there.

Jessie F. Hunt, of Aurora, Colorado: "I have read every word of mine and I can say I appreciate all your efforts to stamp out the erroneous teaching that is doing so much to take over some of our good brethren in almost every area."

Mark Dockey, Trenton, Texas: "I enjoy reading *Contending for the Faith*. I have used many of the articles for sermon preparation. We need more preachers who are willing to make a stand for the truth. Young preachers would do good to read your paper and other sound Biblical material. I, as a young preacher, highly recommend it. All preachers need to be well read. *Contending for the Faith* is a good place to start."

Richard O. Haase, Medon, Tennessee: "Would to God there were more in the brotherhood that would stand for the truth as you and others we know of. Let's keep on keeping on. It will be worth it all in due time..."

Tommy Ware, Keithville, Louisiana: "Don't want to miss one copy of your paper."

Among those renewing for six years, we note **Roger Robinson**, of Tishomingo, Mississippi; **Ralph J. Ware**, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; **Bill Prather**, of Morgan City, Louisiana; and **C. W. Hendrix**, of Valdosta, Georgia.

Otis Berry, of Troy, Tennessee, is now deceased.

Frank O'Daniel, Rogersville, Alabama: "Keep the unadulterated faith going."

V. B. Dishongh, Friendswood, Texas: "We do not want to miss any issues of your publication."

J. M. Cooper, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, inclosed \$20.00 with his one-year subscription, saying, "Use the rest as you see fit."

Robert W. Doak, of Pennsboro, West Virginia, contributed \$25.00 on the Pearl Street/Denton "Crossroads" mailing.

Mr. & Mrs. Ernest W. Meador, Lafayette, Tennessee: "We enjoy reading *Contending for the Faith* and wish to thank you, brother Rice, for upholding the truth."

Archie W. Luper, of Ventura, California, after he and I visited the church in Barstow, California, subscribed for every family there, some 70 families in all.

A Texas brother (whom we shall not name) gave us a new reason for removing his name from our mailing list: "DOCTOR'S ORDERS," he said.

Joan Moody, of Eagle River, Alaska, in sending two new subscriptions, said, "Thank you for the good articles and exposing the false teaching and error many of our brothers are involved in. We have been through many of the things described in your paper and ended up, along with six other families, leaving the congregation here. I wish we could have known about the "unity" movement, house churches, and Crossroads before it was too late."

Mrs. Connie D. Moser, Maud, Texas: "I have never found such an interesting paper before..."

Champ C. Taylor, Sulphur Springs, Texas: "Keep up the good work letting our people know what is going on in the brotherhood."

Ira L. Haney, Anthony, Texas: "I like to keep up with the Crossroads articles. Keep up the good work, and I will try to keep track of my subscription..."

Mac Deaver, Austin, Texas: "The amount of ignorance and/or disregard for the Scriptures today is a frightening thing. How big will the remnant be? Hang in there..."

Virginia Thomson, San Mateo, California: "I am glad you are showing the errors of **Rubel Shelley**. I couldn't stand his book. He called those standing for the Lord bad names and praised the liberals. So now he is slipping into the Christian Church..."

Leon D. Schrei, minister, Loop, Texas: "I was pleased to see the tribute to **B. L. 'Pete' White**. He had a great deal of influence on my family while he worked in the Northwest. He baptized my dad in 1961 or so and has had much influence on me since I've been in Texas... I am thankful for *Contending for the Faith*. May God continue to bless your work."

Barbara Nichols, Stillwater, Oklahoma: "Please remove my name from your subscription list. I do not wish to receive your magazine in the future."

Debbie Mell, Chesapeake, Virginia: "We're combatting 'Crossroads' in the congregation here. Would you send a bundle of issues on the subject to serve to educate a congregation where membership is 115?...Also, area elders have met with the elders from the Shandon church of Christ in Columbia, South Carolina, and they are targeting Norfolk, Virginia, for a Crossroads church planting in 1988..."

"The men met last night and want to have a... speaker (male, church of Christ) come tell the congregation as a whole about "Crossroads." My husband (Royce) is one of three men on the committee to find someone soon. Could you or one of your staff members help us to find the man for the job? (We thought of **Gary Colley**; other names brought up were **Garland Elkins** and **Jackle Stearsman**—isn't that a woman?) Anyway, we'd appreciate hearing from you soon as to someone(s) you could recommend..."

(NOTE: "Yes," I replied, in part, "I am sure that **Gary Colley**, **Garland Elkins** or **Jackle Stearsman**—any of these—would do a superb job. [No, **Jackle** is a man, not a woman. He is one of the instructors at Florida School of Preaching, 1807 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida 33803. He has done a superb study on Crossroadism. If you could get him to come, you could not be better informed.]

"Others who could handle it would be **Noel Merleth**, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee; **Barry Hatcher**, of Birmingham, Alabama; **Eddie Whitten**, director of Brown Trail School of Preaching, Hurst, Texas; or, as a last resort, should none of these be available, perhaps I myself could come... Should you need to reach me further, my home mailing address is 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee. And my telephone number is Area Code 901/363-6498. Zip code 38118.

"Crossroadism now has grown into a worldwide battle for the minds and hearts of our brethren. If truth is to survive among the churches of Christ, they simply MUST NOT WIN!" IYR Jr.)

H. R. Baker, Pennsville, Ohio: "Keep up the good work."

Rory D. McBee, of Perryville, Arkansas, sent in one gift subscription.

Perry Cotham, whose mailing address is 1814 Santa Cruz, Grand Prairie, Texas 75050, would be glad to hold gospel meetings for faithful congregations in Taiwan, if asked.

Bill Henselman, who preaches at Cary, North Carolina, offered to distribute *Contending for the Faith* "wherever I can."

Ron Cosby, who was preaching at Marietta, Oklahoma, now has moved to Disney, Oklahoma. The **Frank Thompsons** lived formerly at Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, now have moved to Altamonte Springs, Florida. **Ted J. Thrasher**, who formerly preached at Piedmont, Oklahoma, now is doing the same thing at Mountain View, Missouri. (Say, those "Okies" surely do move around, don't they!)

L. A. Gilliland, St. Joe, Texas: "You are doing a marvelous work. (The brotherhood must be informed.) That is what *Contending for the Faith* does. Thank you and the brethren who write on different subjects."

Raymond R. Gates, Grand Bay, Alabama: "I don't want to miss one issue."

Bill W. Rhodes, of Proctorville, Ohio, renewed for two years, saying, "I will try to send more later to help your work."

Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Driver, of Andersonville, Georgia, send each month to the support both for Far East work and also our contending for the faith work.

Elsie M. Conrow, of Manhattan, Kansas, enclosed \$5.00 for preaching the gospel, saying, "I appreciate you so very much for the stand you are taking for the truth and to warn people about the false doctrines. I am thankful to God for *Contending for the Faith*. So many of our brethren don't want to know what is happening in the brotherhood."

Bill Willard, who formerly preached at Harrison Street, in Batesville, Arkansas, is now doing the same at Bay, Arkansas.

Eugene Botz, of Ravenden, Arkansas, renewed for three years, added \$12.00 onto his check "extra", saying, "The church never learns, does it, with the so called big-name preachers going the way of Baal. The papers (most of them) are so unreliable I am afraid to recommend but a few. I have and will continue to support *Contending for the Faith* since it came out to truly defend the faith. Keep up the good work. I need it to keep up with what's going on in the brotherhood, thus being able to keep on guard against false teachings and teachers. As you know, the longer we let it go it grows. Most ignore it and think it will go away. Not so, as seen by us it grows on indifference and quickly gets out of hand. Sad about brother Hogan and his son. He knows better and should repent and hopefully help his son back to the truth. Time will tell... May we all help any way we can to get Christ's glorious church back to God's way. Continue to mark false doctrine and teachers. All may not listen to you, but believe me most of us do... Renew me for three years. Use the rest as needed. Am now preaching part time with small congregation in Sharp County, Arkansas."

Mrs. A. B. McPherson, of Gladewater, Texas, contributed \$5.00, saying, "Keep up the good work in exposing error."

Henry W. Thurman, of Prescott, Arizona, renewed for three years, sent in a new subscription for three years, saying, "I really love *Contending for the Faith*. Keep up the good work."

Alex Tomshack, of Hixson, Tennessee: "CANCEL."

Gertrude W. Broy, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, added \$5.00 onto her renewal for another year, saying, "Use rest where needed."

Joseph Stewart, Jr., Morgantown, West Virginia: "My father, **Joseph E. Stewart**, of Eastman, Georgia, died on December 6, 1986. He was an avid reader of your publication. After he followed his doctor's advice and retired from preaching in 1981, much of his time was spent reading church bulletins and literature such as *Contending for the Faith*, and he thoroughly enjoyed reading of old friends and hearing of others carrying on the work he would have loved to have continued... Our family wishes you continued success in your good work."

Fred R. Bogle, Orlando, Florida: "It is tragic that those Crossroaders are trying to make havoc of the Lord's church (in Singapore and Malaysia) after you and your good wife have worked so hard for so long to teach the people the word of God and they come along and try to destroy the church and lead souls astray. I sent a regular contribution of \$75.00 plus \$25.00 extra this week. I'm enclosing another check for \$50.00 to help preach the gospel of Christ and expose error and false doctrines in the Lord's church. It appears, from what I read and hear, and see, that there are more false teachers than there are gospel preachers. People want their ears tickled—all sorts of gimmicks and gadgets today. I was pleased to hear error and false doctrines and innovations exposed and condemned at the lectures in Lakeland..."

Joe D. Holland, North Palm Beach, Florida: "Please remove my name from your mailing list."

Robert D. Rawson, Batesville, Mississippi: "I am so grateful to you for mailing to us each year the bound volume of the previous year. Thanks for keeping us on the standing order list each year. The *Training School for Better Service* begins its 17th year in January. Seven students, ranging from a 4th grader to middle aged men attend this session. The bound volumes are a part of the library of the school and are used by many in assignments and reports..."

Olan Hanes, of Paragould, Arkansas, enclosed \$350.00, saying, "After all your celebrating this summer you may need this check to buy you a new, larger hat. It sounds as if you have had some enjoyment added to your works anyway. Of course the Lord never promised any rest in this life, and no retirement, but it does take some grandkids and other things to keep the body going... I hope you are able to get the necessary funds for brother **Eddy Ee**. Keep up the good work."

(NOTE: Just like his wonderful father **Ottis Hanes** before him, brother **Olan Hanes** tries to keep himself "ready unto every good work." God bless him! IYR Jr.)

J. Granville Jones, of Chula Vista, California, turned in another subscription, saying, "If others should want to subscribe... you may rest assured I will forward... immediately. Keep up the good work. We are behind you one hundred percent."

MORE HELP NEEDED ON MAILING LIST

We keep trying to update our computerized mailing list so as to make as few mistakes as possible. This may seem like no "big deal" to some; however, when doing the actual work on it, sometimes we may use up almost half a working day trying to track down one address.

For example, when a certain magazine was changing addresses recently, they sent in a different name from the way they had originally sent. We kept looking under the new name. It was not until they sent us their actual address label with their old name on it that we were able to find it. Maybe, when folks are changing their addresses, it would speed things up a bit for us if they would send in their old address label together with their new address. Surely it won't hurt to try this.

Another thing which causes us problems is that oftentimes a sister in Christ will send her address using just her initials. There is no way that we can tell from the way she sends it that she is even a woman, much less her marital status. If we write back to her "Dear Brother," she takes umbrage, letting us know in no uncertain terms that she is a sister and not a brother! It would surely help us (if she wants to use just her initials) if she would append Mrs., Miss, or Ms., whichever is appropriate, so that we should have no excuse for addressing her "Dear Brother." Even if she uses her full name, not just initials, why not do this anyway! It surely would avoid a lot of confusion.

Sereta Thomas, of Hollywood, California, referred to *Contending for the Faith* as "this inspirational magazine." (NOTE: Much appreciation. IYR Jr.)

William H. Plew, Sr., of Bloomington, Indiana, sent \$3.00 "extra" with his renewal, saying, "Keep up the good work."

Steve Honnen, evangelist, South Burnaby church of Christ, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada: "We have just begun a new work here with a well established congregation. Some preachers here in the metro area seem to have lost all desire to contend for the faith. Please pray for my efforts to change that! Brethren, 'stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong!' (I Corinthians 16:13). I will continue to pray for your efforts in Christ."

John Propst, Abilene, Texas, turned in three subscriptions to *Contending for the Faith*, adding an extra \$25.00 for our Far East missionary work, saying, in part, "My wife (Janis) and I appreciate so very much the work you are doing, both with *Contending for the Faith* and overseas. We remember you and Vada often in our prayers and will continue to do so... Please pray for the faithful in Abilene. Also, pray for the unfaithful—that they might repent. Living here is no picnic! I feel a kindred spirit with Lot in that often my soul is vexed by the things happening in my town—especially those things committed by those claiming to be 'faithful' members of the Lord's body..."

**WILL SOME JUST SURRENDER
TO SECTARIANISM?**

Bill Jackson

College Press (Christian Church) has recently published a book, *ENDANGERED HERITAGE—An Examination of Church of Christ Doctrine*, written by **Walt Yancey**, a member of the Highland Oaks congregation in Dallas, where he concludes that we must acknowledge (1) that there are Christians in the denominations, (2) that we ourselves are a denomination, and (3) that the use of the instruments of music is acceptable unto God. Then, the same College Press catalog announces that the next in their *WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT...* series will be **Olan Hicks** writing on Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage. Hicks was among the very first to deny plain Bible teaching on these subjects, and has led brethren away in a dozen deviations from truth in this area.

Brethren, we're witnessing a complete surrender to sectarianism, and on those terms, they're anxious to publish our books! —*The Southwesterner*

W. C. Hickman, Oviedo, Florida: "I enjoy *Contending for the Faith* very much. I am enjoying the work here in Oviedo with the new, small church. We are about six months old. We had 28 Sunday morning service. I am preaching part time here and teaching part time. It is very good that way for an old man. I am getting a lot of calls and letters to come and work with small congregations across the country. I didn't know there were so many small congregations without a minister and cannot afford one..."

(NOTE: "It was good to know that you received so many phone calls and letters to come and work with small congregations across the country," I replied, in part. "We have great numbers of such reading *Contending for the Faith*; and when they saw your item in the paper, it is no wonder that many got in touch with you." IYRJR.)

Willis S. Langford, San Diego, California: "I have the good fortune to share occasional copies of *Contending for the Faith*. I find them well written, timely, and sound in doctrine..."

Mary Emma Pepper, Athens, Alabama: "Keep up the good work. The elders at Bethel decided to order 100 copies of the January/1986 *Contending for the Faith*. It is so vital that the brotherhood knows the danger of Crossroads. It should make every Christian fearful for the future of the church. Our prayers are with you."

Mrs. L. A. Norwood, of Daytona Beach, Florida, is now deceased.

Wreath Kelley, of Rantoul, Illinois, ordered 12 copies of our issue for May/1987, containing Eddie Whitten's excellent article on "The Discipling Ministry—Crossroads/Boston."

Lisa J. Moderacki, Bradenton, Florida: "I am indeed glad that I can join in the fight against the Crossroads philosophy. *Contending for the Faith* is the one sound journal that dares to state what needs to be heard by the whole brotherhood..."

Mrs. Betty Floyd, Cox's Creek, Kentucky: "Please send me the free bundles of *Contending for the Faith*. I received your letter and would love to give out some to the congregation here. We need them desperately now."

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March 16-20, 1988

(Wednesday — Sunday)

Theme:

"Back To Jerusalem"

San Lorenzo Church of Christ

977 Grant Avenue

San Lorenzo, California 94580

Sponsored by San Lorenzo Church of Christ, other local congregations, and concerned individuals.

Wednesday, March 16

- 7:00 Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem Ray Peters
- 8:00 Back to the Jerusalem Attitude Toward Error ... Curtis Cates

Thursday, March 17

- 1:00 The Role of Women In The Church Hugh Shira
- 2:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Discipline Billie Mac Jobe
- 3:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of The Plan of Salvation Wendel Fikes
- 7:00 Progress Can Be Made By Going Backward William Cline
- 8:00 The One Baptism Perry Cotham

Friday, March 18

- 9:30 Departures From The Faith Are Evident On Every Hand Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
- 10:30 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Hope George DeHoff
- 1:00 Do We Need A New Gospel For A New Age? Weldon Langfield
- 2:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Dedication Don Hartsell
- 3:00 The Necessity of Bible Authority Joe Gilmore
- 7:00 Let Us Return To The Old Paths And Walk Therein..... Foy Smith

- 8:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of The Home Garland Elkins

Saturday, March 19

- 9:30 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Evangelism Max Crumley
- 10:30 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Giving Noah Hackworth
- 1:00 Back To The Jerusalem Stand Against Compromise Bill Jackson
- 2:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Zeal Grover Wilson
- 3:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Leadership Roger Elliott
- 7:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Unity Winfred Clark
- 8:00 The Boston/Discipling Movement H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

Sunday, March 20

- 9:00 Departures In Methods of Church Growth Eddie Whitten
- 10:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Worship Jimmy Clark
- 7:00 Back To The Jerusalem Concept of Grace Bill Jackson
- 8:00 The Jerusalem Church: Its Identity and Exclusive Nature Guss Eoff

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

Peter's Use of a Powerful Preposition

Wayne Price

On the day of Pentecost, our Lord's apostles were gathered together in a house in Jerusalem (Acts 1:26-2:4) and were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The miraculous display of tongue-speaking caused the crowd to be amazed, and prompted them to ask: "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:12).

Peter answered by saying, "this (same pronoun they used in verse 12) is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16—and then he quoted from Joel 2:28-32). By Christ's use of the latter part of Joel's prophecy, which he applied to the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:29), we are made to understand that Joel foresaw both the events of Pentecost and the fall of Jerusalem. Here, rather unexpectedly, we see yet another argument for placing the miraculous operation of the Spirit between these two events (Camp, *The Work of the Holy Spirit in Redemption*, p. 61).

In his concluding remarks, Peter once more made use of the demonstrative pronoun *touto* in Acts 2:33, when he declared that the Lord "has shed forth this (*touto*), which ye now see and hear." To see more clearly the connection of these verses with each other, note the following statements in chart form:

(1) The crowd on Pentecost asked: "What does *this* mean?" (2:12)

(2) Peter, in answering their question, replied: "...*this* is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." (2:16)

(3) At the conclusion of this address to the crowd in Jerusalem that day, he again referred to their question of v. 12 when he stated that Christ "hath shed forth *this*, which ye now see and hear." (v. 33).

Doubtlessly, the word "this" referred to the miraculous events which transpired there that day, as is evidenced by the fact that "this" could be both "seen" and "heard". It is interesting to note that the same verb which is translated as

"shed forth" (in v. 33) is rendered "poured out" (in verses 17-18), suggesting that whatever is referred to in Acts 2:33 is the same as that of verses 17 and 18 in the same chapter.

In citing Joel's prophecy, Peter used the ablative case in verses 17-18 in connection with a "pouring out OF the Holy Spirit." (capitals mine, wp). This is most significant in making a correct exegesis of this passage. In both instances, the term "Holy Spirit" is in the ablative case.

A. T. Robertson shows that the meaning of the ablative case is "origin, source, separation or departure" (Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, p. 514). The basic idea of the ablative is SEPARATION—and note that the ablative case denotes this concept whether it is used with a preposition or not. Though prepositions do not govern cases, they do assist substantives in expressing their relationship to the other parts of speech.

Let it be remembered that the ablative and the genitive share the same endings, hence are the same in FORM but not in SENSE or meaning. Though the genitive is used more often, yet for one to guess that the case of a given noun (such as "Holy Spirit") is in the genitive case because it is used *more frequently* is poor exegesis indeed. Whenever a noun is in the genitive/ablative form, with no accompanying prepositions, it is the student's task to make the determination regarding which case is being used by examining the context, observing other places where the writer uses this construction, and the like. Various nouns, previously thought to be genitive, may well be ablative after all, hence emphasizing SEPARATION rather than a genitive connotation.

However, whenever this genitive/ablative case form is accompanied by certain prepositions, the making of such a determination is much easier. Why? Because some preposi-

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Defense Of Faith Not Enough —Where Are Our Initiatives?

Looking back over the past couple of decades—and perhaps necessarily so—the overall posture of the cause of truth has been largely one of *defense* rather than *offence*. With the rise of *Liberalism*, *Pentecostalism* and *Campus Evangelism* (falsely so-called) in the '60s, *Crossroadism* in the '70s, followed by *Bostonism* and *Pseudo-Unity* in the '80s, faithful brethren and churches have been so absorbed in *defending* the faith that, to a large extent, we have let the initiative slip away from us, to be taken over by enemies of the Cross of Christ.

A careful study of the *modus operandi* of the early church shows surely that they, too, defended the truth of the gospel. However, if such had been *all* they did, the apostle Paul *never* could have written those stirring words in Colossians 1:23, that the gospel “was preached to every creature which is under heaven.” Together with their *defense* of the truth, those first-generation stalwarts of the gospel siezed the initiative to *extend* it, too. And so must we.

EASY TO BECOME STALEMATED

For nigh onto a century, following the Civil War, faithful brethren and churches became stalemated over *Missionary Societies*, *Instrumental Music*, various kinds of *Anti-ism*, *Premillennialism* and such like. It was not until the late '30s and early '40s of the 1900's that those devoted to the truth of the gospel really did much to break out of the South and Southwest to mount initiatives into the West, the Northwest, the North and the Northeast even of these United States. And it took until the end of World War II for us to undertake seriously to extend the gospel to the “all nations” of the Great Commission.

WHERE ARE OUR INITIATIVES?

With formerly faithful brethren now on the attack against evilly surmised error where none exists, it would be easy for some of us just to draw back into our shells, assume a defensive posture, and leave all initiative once again to enemies of the truth. Or, we can take the initiative ourselves, as did the early church under the great persecution, who, instead of sulling like ‘possums when they were “scattered abroad,” rose to the occasion, siezed the opportunity, and “went everywhere preaching the word.”

Often we hear complaints—especially against the Boston Crossroaders, for instance—because they “target” cities and areas where the true church has existed for decades to “plant” their error. It is not their “targeting” and “planting” that is wrong, but their **error**. Instead of sitting back, wringing our hands and filling the air with our lamentations, how about *us* taking the initiative for a change! We *can* if we but *will*. Let's *do* it. Let us begin to select towns, cities, areas and countries where the gospel has not yet gone, then rise up in the strength of Israel's God and go forward to greater things!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

Powerful Preposition

(Continued from Page 1)

tions are used only with certain cases. Though there are some prepositions used with two or more cases (there are eight different cases in Greek), yet some prepositions like *ana*, *anti*, *apo*, *ek*, and *eis* (the latter is found more than 1,700 times in the New Testament, and always with the accusative case) are used with *one*, and *only* with one, case.

Whenever the prepositions *ek* and *apo* are construed with a Greek noun which is in the genitive/ablative form, we know that the noun is ablative because *ek* and *apo* occur only with the ablative case.

The *KJV* and *ASV* translate the ablatives in Acts 2:17,18 as "pour out OF my Spirit", a rendering which makes it difficult for the reader to determine if the case is genitive or ablative. The Greek is not so vague; it clearly shows that the substantive, the Holy Spirit, is in the ABLATIVE case since it is preceded by the preposition *apo*. Now, why is it important to be aware of this fact?

It has become popular in our day to use the phrase "of the Holy Spirit" to mean the Holy Spirit *himself*, rather than that which comes "from" the Holy Spirit. Peter plainly declared that something was to be "poured out FROM the Holy Spirit" by using the powerful preposition *apo*. Additionally, when we are made aware that the verb "pour out" is *ekcheo* (a compound which emphasizes the idea of "out of" or "away" prefixed to the verb "pour"), we have a very emphatic ablative usage. Both *ek* and *apo*, emphasizing "out of" and "away from" respectively, are used in the same context of Acts 2:17-18 giving a double emphasis to the idea of source and separation. Since the basic idea of the ablative case is SEPARATION or DEPARTURE, and since the usual significance of the preposition *apo* is "from the edge of", then these verses state in the strongest of terms that instead of the Spirit *himself* being that which is given, it refers to that which *comes from*, and is *separated from*, the Holy Spirit! The action contemplated is a "pouring out" and the direction marked by the preposition is AWAY from the SOURCE, who is the Spirit.

Lest someone argue that in the Hebrew language in which the book of Joel was written, the text says: "I will pour out my Spirit," we respond by showing that Peter (guided by the Holy Spirit himself) gave us an *inspired commentary* upon the meaning, the REAL meaning, of Joel 2:28-29 and the phrase "pour out my Spirit." There is no question about it—Peter's inspired interpretation of Joel's prophecy shows that the Hebrew makes use of synecdoche, a figure of speech by which a more inclusive term is used for a less inclusive, or vice versa. Example: the word "head" for "cattle" or "the law" for a policeman. Thus, when Joel prophesied that God will pour out his Spirit, Peter informs us that Joel means that God will pour out FROM his Spirit. Could it be made any clearer that "pouring out the Spirit" equals "pouring out FROM the Spirit"? This is an inspired definition of the meaning of Joel's prophecy that the Spirit was to be poured out. This use of synecdoche in the Hebrew also is substantiated by the fact that the *Septuagint* (*LXX*), a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek some 250 years before the time of Christ, also has the noun, the Holy Spirit, in the ablative case, preceded by the preposition *apo* as quoted by Peter on Pentecost. Is it not probable that the same use of synecdoche is employed by Peter in the latter part of his sermon, specifically verse 38, that day? The entire sermon—at least the part recorded for us by inspiration—is

placed with the miraculous phenomena which occurred on that day of Pentecost. Note the following lifted from Acts 2:

- (1) "sound from heaven" (v. 2)
- (2) "cloven tongues like fire sat on them" (v. 3)
- (3) "filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 4)
- (4) "speak with other tongues" (v. 4)
- (5) "every man heard them speak in his own language" (v. 6)
- (6) "hear...in our own tongue" (v. 8)
- (7) "hear them speak in his own language" (v. 11)
- (8) "prophesying" (vv. 17-18)
- (9) "miracles, wonders, and signs" (v. 22)
- (10) "shed forth (poured out) this which ye now see and hear" (v. 33)
- (11) "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (v. 38)
(Note: It could be argued that this was a gift FROM the Spirit based on the fact that this could be ABLATIVE, but that is not the argument made at this point, but rather that Peter is once again using synecdoche.)
- (12) "many wonders and signs done by the apostles" (v. 43)

Such a miraculous display that day, and for the next 40 years or so, served to confirm that the revelation of God's word was actually from heaven (Acts 2; Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). It is my conviction that Luke made use of synecdoche when he used the term "Spirit" (like Joel did) to signify that which comes FROM the Spirit; *i.e.*, miraculous gifts (Acts 2:17,18). Peter, like Joel, also used synecdoche in Acts 2:38 and Acts 10:44,47 where he used the more general term "Spirit" for the specific, *i.e.*, the "gift" given by the Spirit. This was made more certain by Peter in Acts 10 where the term "Holy Spirit" (vv. 44 and 47) was made to equal the miraculous gift of "speaking in tongues," once again using synecdoche by having the whole stand for any one of its individual parts.

Why should the phrase "gift of the Holy Spirit" refer to a non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit in Acts 2:38, when in Acts 10 the identical phrase means a miraculous gift? Indeed, why should this phrase refer to a non-miraculous indwelling in Acts 2:38 when that chapter is filled with language referring to miraculous occurrences? Why should one use a doubtful interpretation of the phrase in Acts 2:38 to explain almost all references to the Spirit in the New Testament to be non-miraculous? Why refer to the phrase in Acts 2:38 as being an example of an exegetical genitive (or genitive of apposition, or identification, and the like) when we already have an inspired definition of the phrase in Acts 10:45-46?

The promises of Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:17-20 find their fulfillment in Acts 8:14-18, Acts 19:1-6, II Timothy 1:6 and elsewhere in the laying on of the apostles' hands to impart some gift FROM the Holy Spirit.

Beginning on that very Pentecost, gifts of the Spirit were imparted to Christians, not because they had been baptized in water and that alone, but because an apostle imparted such gifts (Acts 8:14-18; 19:1-6). With the death of the last apostle, and the last person upon whom he laid his hands imparting such a gift, came the cessation of the outpouring of miraculous gifts "from" the Spirit.

—211 North 5th
Marlow, Oklahoma 73055



Prejudice Toward Blacks In The Church

Gary Grizzell

Surely, this is a sin which plagues the church today. It is a sin! But, why is it that some white Christians cannot seem to overcome their prejudice toward black people in general and black *brethren* in particular? Obviously, the gospel has the answer. The reason is "bondage to sin," along with an unwillingness to "grow in the grace and knowledge" of Christ and fight this monstrous temptation to consider others inferior to us because of the color of their skin. (By the way, for those who do not know, the author is white.) Many, it seems, will not even confess that they are guilty of this horrendous crime against their brethren and their fellowman.

A black preaching brother and friend of mine told me of his visiting a white congregation in one of our "stronger" areas (in regard to the size and influence of the church). One of the elders "suggested" that there was a black congregation in the area to which he could go. My preacher-friend got the blatant hint that he was unwanted because of his color, but decided he would have to worship with them (it was a Wednesday night) because the black congregation was over 45 driving minutes away. He told me that he sat on the second row that Wednesday night. No one sat on that second pew but he. **AND THE FIRST AND THIRD ROWS WERE COMPLETELY FULL!**

Brethren, what kind of an example are we setting before our teenagers and young people when this kind of thing happens? These things ought not so to be! By the way, one good thing; he said that afterwards, it was the *young* people who talked to him and were friendly to him. Well, I'm glad at least for that. Wish we could say the same for the adults.

Another black preacher-friend told me that he and the small congregation (all black) with which he is associated, make it a point to visit every gospel meeting in the area by white churches. He said that they load up their bus and go! But he continued to tell me, "When we have our gospel meeting, no one will come." Shame on brethren, if this shoe fits you! White brethren will say to their black brethren at their gospel meetings, "Be sure and *come* again," but they themselves are unwilling to *go* (which definitely does not express the kind of life, support, and unity the Lord requires).

I will not attempt to explain from the past or from childhood experiences why we act in such a selfish way. That does not matter. What does matter is what the Lord commands and demands, "**Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.**" (Acts 8:22).

A MESSAGE TO MY BLACK BRETHERN

(NOTE: Before beginning this message, notice the heading above: i.e., "**A Message to my Black Brethren**". Wouldn't it be nice if the time would come in the Lord's church when we could simply refer to each other as "brethren."? Where there is no prejudice, there is no need for distinction in our vocabulary and speech. GG)

Don't be prejudiced while fighting prejudice! Don't, while fighting prejudice (white vs. black), harbor prejudice toward white brethren. I have, on more occasions than not, felt the fiery sting of "prejudice-vibrations" in the atmosphere upon meeting black preachers for the first time. I AM NOT PREJUDICED TOWARD YOU! And neither are a lot of good, white brethren out there. You don't need me to tell you that; you know it. (Maybe just a reminder.)

Yes, you've been burned, abused, and mistreated, but many white brethren are waking up to that fact and those who have wakened up do not need a "suspicious" attitude on your part (although I am sure that it must be difficult for you not to feel this way).

Remember, "prejudice," is best defined as "condemnation *before* investigation." Therefore, may we do as the Lord teaches in John 7:24: "**Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.**"

AN EXHORTATION TO ALL

Paul, the beloved, inspired apostle of the first century said: "**I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

—Post Office Box 4142
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I Love You, My Brethren

T. W. Phillips, II

Please read the following passages of Scripture: "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. . ." (I Peter 2:17); and "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1).

Does not our brotherhood need to consider prayerfully these two passages?

Look for just a moment at the word IMPUGN. Our dictionary defines the word to mean, to attack by argument or criticism; oppose or challenge as false. Certainly we are to "reprove, rebuke" (II Timothy 4:2), but we are to do so "with all longsuffering and doctrine," stated in the same verse.

Perhaps I am wrong in some of my conclusions, but it does seem to me that some of us may be guilty of trying to crucify another when one falls in a wrong doing or in teaching what we rush in and say is false teaching. Am I not guilty of wrong doing when I accuse a brother in Christ with malice or dishonesty? Am I sometimes guilty of impugning motives?

We have a great brotherhood! Members of the church are among the best people on this earth. We always are going to have our problems; many of us are going to make our mistakes. Even some will teach error. Cannot it be a sincere and honest heart that will not teach such error following more study if approached with a spirit of meekness and love?

My brethren, I plead with us. Let us show that we do truly love each other. When one of us does a wrong, let us pray for him and love him. He can be restored! And, if we disagree with another, let us study more together. We must not have division — love for each other will not allow us to divide.

Really, do we have any brotherhood problem but what said problem can be solved? If we really love the brotherhood we can solve any and all problems.

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Rosemead, California 91776

Translation Or Transgression?

Jesse Whitlock

The National Council of Churches is up to its old tricks again. In the *Revised Standard Version* the Council tried their very best to deny the validity of the fact that Christ Jesus was born of a virgin. They tried to do away with the miraculous element in Isaiah 7:14 by changing "virgin" to "young woman." Any "young woman" can conceive and have a child. Mary would be set apart from all the Marys in the history of the world! One way that people could know that he was the Messiah would be the miraculous nature of a *virgin* (never having known a man) to conceive and bring forth a child — this One the Son of God. Then, going a step further, they deny the incarnation of deity in that Son. How do we know? Well, a Greek word, "*monogenes*", is the first clue. It is made up of two Greek words that mean "only begotten" or "one born." This word is generally translated as "only begotten" in reference to Christ as God's only One that is born or begotten of God. In the *RSV* they omit the fact that he is born or begotten of God. Read it for yourself: John 3:16 and 18; I John 4:9; John 1: 14 and 18. This is a dishonest handling of the text. There is no excuse for it!

Now they have published a 112-page work called "Inclusive Language Lectionary." A lectionary is supposed to be a "variant reading." Well, this is more than a variant reading. It is a *re-write* of portions of God's Holy Word! Somebody will stand before God and give an account for such mutilation of his Word! Compare Matthew 26:23-24, first in the *KJV*: "**And he answered and said, he that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.**" Now compare the *ILL* (I find the abbreviation more than fitting—JLW.) Quote: "*Jesus answered, 'The one who has dipped a hand in the dish with me, will betray me. The Human One goes as it is written, but woe to that person by whom the Human One is betrayed!'*" What the Council started out to do in the *RSV* is finally realized in the *ILL* — a denial of the divinity of Christ! The Son of man has now become only a "Human One!"

The *ILL* continues to live up to its abbreviation as it comes to John 3:16 (now put your ear down here): "*For God so loved the world that God gave God's only Child...*" That is not a 42nd cousin to what John actually wrote. Rather, "**that HE gave HIS only begotten SON...**" I do not apologize for John in writing the words of Jesus as Jesus and Nicodemus spoke that night. There are some stern warnings in the Bible for those who dare to tamper with the word of God — Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19; Psalms 119:160; and Matthew 24:35, for starters.

In reference to Christ and the term "Lord" please note that the *ILL* has taken that word out of the scriptures. I want to say with Mary in John 20:2, "**They have taken away the Lord...we know not where they have laid him.**" They have taken

him away! Don't ask me where they put him! I do not know. Look for Christ as Lord in Matthew 7:21-ff.; 9:38; 22:41-ff.; Mark 5:19; Luke 19:31; and John 13:13. *He is not there!* I submit to you that it is not fair to pretend they took out the word "Lord" because of its association with *masculinity*, when in reality they are still attacking the *deity* and therefore the *Lordship* of Christ Jesus. Shame on you, National Council of Churches. At least, try to pretend to be honest!

Will they also change the words of Christ in Luke 13:34 to show their consistency? Jesus said, "**As a hen doth gather her brood...**" Will they change it to read, "*as a hen and/or rooster doth gather its brood...*"?

What will you do with the *ILL*? As for me and my house the *ILL* has just passed away — spelled D*E*A*D!

—Post Office Box 388
Blanchard, Oklahoma 73010

The DAYS of Creation

Darrell Conley

Many have questioned the length of the creation days. The question is not important to one who rejects the Bible. It is all-important to those who believe the Bible. It is a question that is basic to the interpretation and understanding of the Bible. Here is where we set our attitudes toward the Bible. It is here we determine our answers to these questions:

- 1) *Is the Bible to be treated reverently?*
- 2) *Does it contain propositional truth?*
- 3) *Is it history or allegory?*
- 4) *Do the words of the Bible have meaning?*
- 5) *Is our religion subjective or objective?*
- 6) *Is the Bible our authority or not?*
- 7) *Are we going to interpret the Bible by the Bible or by the prevailing theories of men?*

The days of creation were not long geological ages. Each day had an evening and a morning as our days do now. The Hebrew word for day—"Yom"—is used to mean a literal day at least three times in the first chapter of Genesis. Would God use the same word in the same context to mean both a period of 24 hours and a period of millions of years? If so, He is the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). The word "yom" is never used figuratively when it is used in the plural. See Exodus 20:11. If the days of creation were eons, then plants thrived for millions of years without the sun or without the insects that are vital to the survival of many plants. If God had intended to indicate a 24 hour day, what word would he have used? "Yom!" What word did he use? "Yom!"

The only reason for believing that the creation days were millions of years is to give evolution time to work. But since evolution itself is false there is no need for us to compromise. We need never be ashamed of what the Bible says. Do not be afraid to accept all of it. It has worn out millions of critics and stands uninjured.

—The Cullendale Harvester
Cullendale church of Christ

How To Build The Church

Mark K. Lewis

The number one desire of every faithful Christian ought to be the salvation of souls. Our Lord was clear that the primary mission of his church is preaching the gospel (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15), and that by that gospel men would be redeemed from sin (Mark 16:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Thus, building the kingdom of Christ should ever be in the forefront of our thoughts and efforts, and should be the purpose directing all the works of the local congregations.

It is sad to see congregations that have lost their evangelistic fever as many have and well-meaning members who really do not have the foggiest how to go about saving a soul. This present treatise is designed to outline the grand Bible principles of how to build the church. Let us suggest five points that, if consistently applied, will produce, we believe, the kind of growth God intends his body to have.

1. Strong Bible preaching and teaching. This is unquestionably the most important point of all. Church growth can be accomplished in many ways, but the key here is *God-pleasing* church growth. God is not pleased with swelling, bloating, or “programs” that exalt the carnal and abase the spiritual. True expansion will come only from the word of God (Romans 1:16); life, thus growth, is in the seed (Luke 8:11), and spiritual life is found only in spiritual seed, the Bible (James 1:18, 21; 1 Peter 2:2). Thus, the preaching of that message boldly, fearlessly, without compromise or omission, is the only process by which souls will be saved and kept.

But prevalent extremes must be avoided here. “Chewing the brethren out” each week will not produce total obedience, nor will a weekly (weakly) “pat on the back” be sufficient. The wrong needs to be exposed and the right needs to be illumined. Balanced preaching is an absolute necessity because it is how our Lord and his apostles preached (for example, note Jesus in Luke 10:25-37 and Matthew 23; Peter in Acts 2 and II Peter 1:5-8; Paul in I Corinthians and Philippians). Isaiah’s “cease to do evil, learn to do well” instruction (1:16-17) has been the philosophy I have tried to build my preaching around for years. People need both; it is a *sine qua non* for true church growth.

2. The proper use of talents. Failure in this area probably hinders more churches from growing than just about any other point. God’s plan, in general, is for preachers (evangelists) to preach the gospel, elders to know and shepherd the flock, deacons to assist in whatever capacity, spiritual or mundane, that they are needed, and all members to use their God-given (Matthew 25:15) talents to mutual benefit (I Corinthians 12:7). Our system of the paid-located preacher has hurt us because, though not unscriptural (I Timothy 1:3), it has led to a denominational “pastor” concept where one man is looked to be a “jack-of-all-trades.” He is to do nearly all the preaching, teaching, and visiting of sick, visitors, wayward members, and even faithful members; if anyone is ever converted, generally it is by him. He runs the church errands, does the public relations work, is there when our kids are born, married, or buried, paints, carpenters, and such like—and this is not the work of an evangelist. The preacher has his abilities and talents just like everyone else, and he ought not be burdened

with works for which he is not qualified. Members who are good at visiting should visit; those who have talents to teach, should do so; those with personal work adaptations should use those gifts for God’s glory, and not expect others to do the same. This is the principle Paul is setting forth in Romans 12, and in his illustration of the body in I Corinthians 12. Just as each part of the human body has a different function and cannot be expected to do the work of other parts, so the body of Christ. And when one member of the human body must perform a function designed for another part, the whole system suffers. And, again, so it is in the body of our Lord. We each have our varying gifts according to God’s grace (I Peter 4:9). When one, and then several, members fail to uphold their part, the whole church suffers and ceases to function properly (*i.e.*, grow). What usually happens is as follows: Member A, a very gifted personal worker, neglects his talents; member B, an able public teacher but weak in the personal area, sees that the *personal work is not being done*. Thus, because of his faithfulness, conviction, and desire to see that work done, he attempts that function as well, a labor for which he is not talented. The result is that both works suffer because the less talented man now must employ himself in an area in which he is not gifted, and this takes away from his time to do his own labors effectively. We all need more study and application of this great principle. Churches are severely hurt by failing to understand and apply this Bible truth.

3. Churches are built by advertising. The word “advertising” sounds a bit crude, but by that I mean only that we must broadcast the message widely. Beloved, people must know what we have to offer, why our “product” is superior, or they will never have any reason to “purchase” it (and yes, Christianity costs men everything they have—Luke 14:26, 33). Why does the whole world know of Coca-Cola, but countless hundreds of millions have never even heard of the true church of the Lord? Like every other “corporation” in the world that wants people to have their offerings, wisdom dictates the use of every means possible to announce what we have, which is the greatest product, bar none, on this earth. What a tragedy that we are not advertising like we ought; what robbery of mankind. Newspapers, radio, TV, mailouts, door-to-door—how many of these and more are being used by the world? Why can we not offer correspondence courses, Bible literature, gospel magazines, and the like the same way? We can, and should, and when we do, we will probably be surprised at how many people are interested, and how few really know what we teach. One gospel meeting a year is simply not enough. The first century church certainly advertised. They taught in “every house” (Acts 5:42), and went “everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). We have means at our disposal that they didn’t; let’s use them.

4. Each member needs to do a personal examination. Every single one of us needs to look deeply into his heart and ask himself, “How much do I *really* want the church to grow? How much do I *really* love my neighbor (Matthew 22:39)? Do I *really* care? Do I want the church to grow badly enough to make the personal sacrifices necessary to help produce that growth?”

Building a church today is not easy; we live in a skeptical,

materialistic world that is full of sin, unbelief, and infidelity. Nowadays, to do things God's way, it simply takes plain old, back-breaking hard work to save souls. Visits, teaching, counseling, time, Time, TIME—these are essentials, these are the prices that must be paid for church growth. How many of us really care enough to pay those prices? Christian, examine yourself (II Corinthians 13:5); church growth is not up to the preacher alone. We MUST have members who are dedicated to evangelism.

5. Think big—have faith in God. Lack of work and lack of faith in God—these two probably sum up the reason why many churches have the same numbers year after year. God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20); there is no limit on God's power, no limit placed on what he can do through us. God's only limitation is *us*; we don't believe, we don't have faith, we don't work as we ought. God has PROMISED to do *his* part if we will do *ours* (I Corinthians 3:6; Isaiah 55:10-11). He is waiting for *us*, we do not have to wait for *him*. How big do you want your church to be? God can do more than that (Ephesians 3:20). Let's trust him and get to work. He will bless our faithful efforts.

Never before in the history of our globe has there been a greater need for the gospel, if for no other reason than there are more people on earth than ever. "Preach the gospel to every creature" was the Lord's command (Mark 16:16), and he did not issue impossible edicts. The gospel of Christ is the most powerful thing on this earth (Romans 1:16) and every human heart needs it. It will do what God intends for it to do (Isaiah 55:11). Churches can grow numerically today, but only in the same way they have always grown—by diligent application of Bible principles. Liberals, who have given up their faith in the power of God's word, have tried short-cuts to church growth, in imitation of the world and denominations; but true saints of God know that this isn't true church growth. May God strengthen us in evangelism, and give us wisdom rightly to apply his word. We know *he* will do *his* part.

—Shiloh Church of Christ
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Our Service To God

— Is All Of It 'Worship'?

Bill Jackson

From time to time we have heard some men answer "Yes" to this question; and we believe they are as wrong as can be. Getting right to the heart of it, one can say that all worship is SERVICE, and it is correct to say that *all* service, though, is *NOT* WORSHIP!

Inasmuch as the Lord, in our obedience, has a claim to all of our lives, and to every aspect of our lives, then all of life is to be SERVICE TO HIM. We serve him in our thinking (II Corinthians 10:5), and in both our speaking and doing. (Colossians 3:17). Whatever we do, whether in word or deed, is to be done "in the name" — within his will for us. When one who is a Christian goes about his secular labors, he is to be in every way pleasing to the Lord, and thus he is SERVING GOD. The servant to man, in the New Testament, was told to render obedience to his Master, doing so "heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men." (Colossians 3:23). One then can be SERVING THE LORD in being a godly parent, SERVING THE LORD in working as a farmer, mechanic,

carpenter, housewife or baker. Yes, we are to be SERVANTS OF THE LORD in all things! All obedience to him is SERVICE to him, but *all* that is our obedience to him is *not* WORSHIP.

We are glad that the New Testament specifies some items whereby the church SERVES the Lord, and wherein the members WORSHIP. Those items are study, giving, prayer, singing and contribution of our means. We are SERVING the Lord as we WORSHIP. But, we are not WORSHIPING in the acts of repairing an automobile, washing dishes, cleaning out a sewer, and such like. That is not to say that our thoughts are not always to be such as he will bless, for we've seen that point in II Corinthians 10:5.

We wonder why this idea ever came up anyway? And, then we know, merely by reflecting upon it for a moment. If Satan can get across the idea that *any* SERVICE to God is WORSHIP, then what difference does it make, next Sunday at 10:00 a.m., whether I am WORSHIPPING God in study with the assembled saints, or "WORSHIPPING" God by mowing my sick neighbor's lawn as Christian SERVICE? If all SERVICE rendered is WORSHIP, then what difference does it make, Sunday evening, whether I am WORSHIPING with the saints at 6:00 or helping someone short of funds in the repair of his automobile? One can clearly see where such ideas from Satan are leading men *away* from the church, and *away* from worship!

May we always remember that in our lives there are continual opportunities to SERVE God in our homes, in our recreational times, in our secular labors, in our association with our fellow-men — yea, in ALL of life. But beyond those things there is the OBLIGATION and PRIVILEGE of worshipping God in keeping with the New Testament order. WORSHIP of God is indeed SERVICE, but all SERVICE to God is not WORSHIP.

— The Apologist,
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Bellview church of Christ calls your attention to:

West Coast Lectures
Theme: Back to Jerusalem
March 16-20, 1988

San Lorenzo Church of Christ
San Lorenzo, CA 79914

The 5th Annual
Southwest Arkansas Lectures
Theme: Issues That Still Confront Us
March 18-20, 1988
Cullendale Church of Christ Camden, AR 71701

The 22nd Annual
Memphis School of Preaching Lectures
Theme: The Book of Deuteronomy
March 27-31, 1988
Knight Arnold Road Church of Christ
Memphis, TN 38118

OPEN DOOR—WITH ADVERSARIES

It always has puzzled me why so many Christians and churches—especially those in America—seem to presume that everything out over the mission field should forever go smoothly and that there should never be any problems, especially those of a serious nature, that might arise.

It was not that way in the Book of Acts—nay verily—so why should we unrealistically assume such today? Just because we may have doors of opportunity opened unto us, this does not mean there will not be adversaries. Consider what the apostle Paul says, in I Corinthians 16:9, when he writes, “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.”

A prime example of the meaning of this passage is the Chinese brother for whom readers of this Newsletter raised some \$5,000.00 toward the end of 1986 in order to effect the purchase of two small buildings to accommodate two congregations (one larger, the other smaller), which he had been instrumental in beginning inside mainland China. How I wish I could reveal to you his name, where he comes from, where he went, whom he baptized, and all about it! For his own safety—and also for the safety of our new brethren inside the China mainland—I must be careful, in making this report, that nothing be said which might possibly identify either him or them. Although *some* things appear to be relaxing inside China, intolerance of religion, so characteristic of Communism, is not. (I heard of someone in the U.S. raising funds to go into China as a missionary on the basis that the door is wide open, and all we have to do is walk in. Such a person is either ignorant of the facts and naive—or lying.) From the following report, with names, times and places left out to protect those involved, here is a fairly detailed report from a faithful brother who actually *went* into China earlier last year and what he found out. Here is what he said:

I prayed to the Lord before I left for China that the plans I had planned for this trip could be achieved. The three plans were as follows:

- 1) To further strengthen the two leaders, Bro. _____ and _____ who were converted during my last 2 trips to China... (in)...1986. These two brothers are leading two groups of believers, about 70 of them, in _____ and _____.
- 2) To go into a farming area near a town called _____ in _____ province which is adjacent to _____ province. I know through bro. _____ that there are about 1,000 believers in that area.
- 3) To contact the believers in an industrial city called _____, hoping that sound doctrine can be spread in the northern part of China.

There was no problem at the China immigration when I alighted at _____ airport on _____ and _____ were waiting for me and they had been waiting for more than six hours because of bad weather causing delayed flight from Hong Kong to _____. We spent 3 days together studying on the books of Titus, 1, 2, & 3 John on leadership and principles of Christian fellowship and dealings with false teachers in the Church.

Bro. _____, who earlier on received my letter concerning the plans I made for this trip, had written to the people in _____ informing them of our visit and also the contacts in _____ and _____ agreed to bring me to _____ and work there for about one week. They realized the importance of sowing the pure seed because of tremendous influence of Calvinism among many in China. They said almost all in China were taught wrongly and need to be corrected.

In order not to cause any suspicion on the authority as my permit to visit was based on tour and visiting relatives, I left _____ and _____ earlier to visit my family in _____ and stayed with them 4 days. Then _____ and I met again on _____ at the _____ railway station to catch a train to _____ province. It is always difficult to buy train tickets unless you are a foreigner, but since I did not want to expose my identity I had to let Bro. _____ do the necessary arrangement. Otherwise we have to be separated in the train or even lodging at different hotel. The authority may even question my visit to _____ because it is not a place of tourist attraction or have I any relatives there. We had been praying for God's guidance and providence and we did not know that there was danger awaiting us in _____.

We reached _____ about 4 a.m. in the morning and rested in the hotel for few hours. We continued our journey by bus from _____ to _____ and it took us 4 hours. And then we took a motortrickshaw into the farming area and it took us 20 minutes and finally we reached our destination which is called the _____'s village at seven that evening. While we were in the motortrickshaw, _____ notice a man following closely behind us and became very cautious but at that time _____ and I did not really pay much attention to it because we were warmly welcomed by madam _____ and her four sons.

Madam _____, a 76 year old lady, was one of the few who believed God many years ago... _____ province... is ...strong base of Communism. Her third son and daughter-in-law vacated their room for us and we felt the kind of warmth and love with them. After a good night's rest, we began our session of Bible study at 9:30 in the morning. I had already planned to teach them 9 topics on Sin, God, Faith, Confession, Repentance, Baptism, Church, Judgment and the Summary of all the topics. We had about 30 in attendance. During the afternoon session, more were coming from the neighboring villages and the attendance increased to 60. During these two sessions of study, I noticed that there were limited N.T. and Bibles for them to share. Bro. _____ explained to me that these people could not buy the Bibles produced by the three-self patriotic church because they refused to worship with them in _____. He said that he had purchased 80 Bibles through some friends in the 3-self Patriotic Church and will be delivered to them this November.

Also I knew that an interpreter was needed because they could understand only 60% of the messages. So that night I engaged a young man to interpret in their _____ dialect. It was so exciting to see about 150 souls coming for the night service. Some of them walked from their place as far as 8 km. After I finished at 10 p.m., they were so attentive and refused to leave but instead continued singing until 11:30 p.m. We had to literally compel them to go home because it was really too late for some of them to walk home. I received information that there are ten groups meeting in a parameter of 20 km. in _____ and they number to about 1,000. I was invited to go to two of these groups the next day and I remembered the last song they sang before we separated. “Till we meet... Till we meet...” Who knows that I could not see them any more.

It was eight the next morning on _____ and we were ready to meet other groups. Suddenly six men came claiming to be Government officers in charge of religious activities. They compelled _____ and myself to bring all our belongings and follow them all the way to the town. We walked for about 40 minutes and told them our purpose was to visit the believers with no intention to hold meetings but instead they had come and wanted to study the Bible with us. When we arrived at the Communist headquarters, we were told that perhaps we needed to stay overnight which I guessed that they were not satisfied with our reports. Soon _____ and myself were separated into

3 rooms and each of us was interrogated by two officers that morning. When I was told to identify myself, I told them that I was on my way visiting my relatives and beside touring I am interested in business investment in China. Of course they did not know what I really meant was to do our Father's business. They also asked of my occupation and I told them I am a teacher and they recorded all my particulars. During the interrogation, they accused me of giving a Bible to the natives in _____. I asked for evidence, knowing that I did not give the Bible to everyone, but even _____ and _____. Before they closed the investigations, one senior officer requested me to give him a Bible and I knew his intention and told him I did not have one and I came to visit the believers we know and the people just crowded in that evening and we said nothing against the authority. Also I showed from their press that believers are allowed to assemble at homes and not just restricted in the church building. Since they could not get any evidence against us, they released us finally and escorted us to the bus station. One thing we really thank God for his providence is that _____ and _____ gave the same testimony as mine concerning my identity and purpose of coming. We did not speak to each other about this before the interrogation and the fact is bro. _____ himself is a business man and perhaps the officers thought that I am planning to invest with _____. Also _____ brought along his business documents and samples to further convince them. At this juncture, we need to pray for madam _____ as we overheard the officer telling her son that they are going to deal with her later on. She was imprisoned for few months many years ago because of her faith and we are worried about her.

We were sad that we could not stay with the believers through the Lord's Day and I was angry with those officers because I could not share those important God's plans of redemption with so many hungering souls in _____. I know that Satan is not pleased with us and since he had tried to hinder the Lord's work in the first century, he is doing so today. But the Psalm those believers sang repeatedly that evening still is sounding loud in my ear... "Our soul is escaped out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped..." (Ps. 124). We were back to _____ that evening at 9:30 p.m. and we had to put up in the hotel for a night and catch a train tomorrow. It was past midnight and we were discussing the whole incident looking into what possibilities we must do for the Lord's kingdom and what further actions they will take in the near future. Suddenly the two officers who interrogated me opened our room and demanded us to write letters of repentance. They said that if we refuse to write them we will have to stay on. The two charges against me were, 1) causing disturbance in _____'s farming area and I did not make arrangement with the three-self Patriotic church. 2) As a foreigner, I did not register with the local security of my whereabouts and thus it was an offence.

We left as quickly as we could the next morning and we were on separate ways fearing that we might be followed. _____ was anxious to go home because he had many documents indicating all his contacts in China and Bibles smuggled (from) outside China. These could get him in great trouble. Thank God that his house was not searched and those items were kept properly.

I went back to him 3 days later and stayed with him for five days. I told _____ and _____ that it will not be possible to openly teach the believers but what we can do is to recruit and train capable workers from various places in China so that they can return and teach others also. Once the Word of the Lord prevails, there will be no way to stop it from spreading. _____ said that his factory will be set up in the near future and he will write to them to come working with him for six months and probably that could be done. Pray the Lord will give us wisdom.

These five days together gave me the opportunity to study with _____ and _____ the first eleven chapters of Revelation and hermeneutical principles in interpreting symbols and figurative language. Then came the Lord's Day and, as usual, _____ and _____ were prepared to go to _____ to worship God with the brethren there. _____ advised me to stay behind because he was afraid that the authority might be waiting to trap me again and if

I am caught the second time preaching publicly then I will be charged in the court and my presence also will cause the whole group (to be) in trouble for no foreigner is allowed to worship in an assembly elsewhere except with the three-self patriotic church.

True enough, when _____ came back at 5 p.m. that afternoon, he said to me quietly that I must leave the next morning because while they were on the way riding bicycle to _____, one sister came hurriedly from there and warned them not to bring me along because the police were telling a member to inform them immediately the moment I appear in the assembly. _____ also told me that his house could be watched. It was really a blow to me.

Another bad news I received from _____ was that a telegram followed by a letter were sent to him from _____ warning me not to go up there and no reason was stated. Lord, I do not know why these things had happened so terrible and so shocked to me.

Before I left _____ the next morning, I told _____ that I will still be back and the parting words I received that I can never forget were, "_____, you know that we Christians must walk that strait and narrow gate and I have to regret in walking into it. Up to this present the authority still has no evidence against me. I will be very careful and the Lord will lead us. The Lord's work cannot stop, especially when so many of so called 'Christians' were misled by Calvinism."

I spent the next 10 days reading my own Bible until I flew back to _____ from _____ on _____.

In conclusion, there are few things I observe from this trip and they are as follows:

- 1) There is difficulty in preaching and teaching God's word in China because of the hindrance of the "Three-self policy."
- 2) We can recruit and teach capable and teachable believers from various parts of China of course not denying the influence of literature and radio broadcasting.
- 3) The present political condition is still unfavorable to the cause of Christ but tighter control is expected in the next few years.
- 4) Finally, we believe in God's providence and even though my plans did not turn out well, we still need to evangelize.

By the way, the property which the brethren loan to bro. _____ is still outstanding. The owner who promised to sell the property has finally decided not to sell because his application of setting up business at the other location was rejected and he said it was pointless to sell his house. _____ said that the sum of HK \$38,850.00 is deposited in the bank and he knows that this sum of money is a loan from individual Christians and he will return the loan in 3 years. _____ told me that once they have secured the property, he will mail me the documents and photographs.

[Note: What makes the foregoing report so powerful is that it is not something someone who has never been there is theorizing about from the U.S., but it comes from one known to me to be 100% reliable who has earned the right to be heard because he is writing from actual experience.]

He told me that it was indeed fortunate that he had not taken a Bible with him published from outside mainland China because now it has been made an imprisonable offense for a Chinese even to possess such a Bible. Only those Bibles published by the "three-self patriotic church" are excluded from this new policy. Not only is this a hard blow to our distribution of Bibles paid for by the Bibles-for-China Fund, but it places the safety of anyone we give a Chinese Bible to inside China in serious jeopardy. Yes, indeed, "a great door and effectual" has been opened inside China, as Paul would put it, "and there are many adversaries." IYR Jr.]

That The Brethren Might Know—II

Goebel Music

On September 15, 1987, I wrote and mailed an article to many of our brotherhood periodicals entitled, "That The Brethren Might Know." I also hand-delivered it to some elders of the great metroplex area of Dallas-Fort Worth. I believed *then*—and I have not changed my mind—that we are TO UPHOLD THE RIGHT AND OPPOSE THAT WHICH IS WRONG! ...LOVING AND HATING WHAT GOD LOVES AND HATES!

It is not my purpose in this brief article to reiterate, repeat and reword, that first article, as perhaps many of you who read this will have read it. I think it *first* appeared in the October issue of the *DEFENDER*, but since then has appeared in several of our papers and also in some church bulletins from Tennessee to California. That first written discourse was outlined from the following sentence: "Some PROMINENT PERSONALITIES of a POWERFUL PEOPLE are in PUBLIC PARTICIPATION which PROVES PARTNERSHIP in error, and must PAY the PRICE of such adulteration of the gospel of Christ."

THE BROTHERHOOD NEEDS TO BE INFORMED

I set this forth very simply: (1) Richland Hills is invariably conducting "seminars" or "workshops" with people from diversified states coming thereto..., and (2) Richland Hills goes to various states conducting the same. The brotherhood needs to be informed for they are, indeed, both influencing and affecting it.

Many have asked, "Did these men actually go through with their assignments?" "Did they actually participate in the N.A.D.C.E. and the T.S.S.A.?" "Did the elders at Richland Hills know they were going to do this?" "Did they realize that this was a totally denominational organization with about 33 different ones participating?" "Wonder if these men went there to teach them the truth of God and win them from (out of) their error?" And the questions have been numerous!

Yes, these men went and they spoke (delivered their messages). Yes, they participated in both the N.A.D.C.E. and the T.S.S.A., that is, no one nor all in both, but both had participants from Richland Hills. Yes, the elders knew about it. Not at the first, but when they learned of it and discussed the same, the participants "went forth" with their blessings! You can secure the tapes and *hear for yourself* as to the message delivered, and some of us have done just that. Yes, they were fully aware of both of these organizations being denominational!

THE BROTHERHOOD NEEDS TO KNOW IF ANY LOCAL ACTION WAS TAKEN

Many of the local elderships were both shocked and saddened at the public participation of Richland Hills in such an open and flagrant way in denominational activity. Many godly elders knew that this could not be, as other things had been done, "swept under the rug." Not only can we be condemned for failing to preach the truth, we also can be condemned for our failure to follow other divine exhortations and charges.

The eldership at Richland Hills received numerous letters! Godly elders wrote begging, pleading, admonishing and even rebuking them for "giving greeting" to such who "bring not the teaching (doctrine) of Christ." To prove this point, note the following dates of some of the letters:

1. September 9, 1987.
2. September 14, 1987, date mailed.
3. September 16, 1987.
4. September 20, 1987.
5. September 28, 1987.
6. October 20, 1987.
7. November 25, 1987.

At this time, I deem it best to refrain from mentioning the *names* of the various elderships. This may come later in another article or discussion. I do want to say, however, that at least one eldership—there could be others that I know nothing about—has written, given them a date to respond, has written again and may even now be planning a third letter to them. Indeed, a tremendous amount of long-suffering and patience has been shown the eldership at the Richland Hills church.

THE BROTHERHOOD NEEDS TO KNOW THE COURSE OF RICHLAND HILLS

One of our faithful gospel preachers, brother Lynn Matheny, tried for two days to talk to one of the men speaking at the already-mentioned events. He finally did get to talk with Jon Jones, but this availed nothing. On September 11, 1987, he talked with Roger Dean, one of the elders, and also sent him some of the advertisement of the T.S.S.A. Since he heard nothing from brother Dean, he then called him on October 23, 1987. This was when the "bottom line" was given to Lynn, "...they went with our blessing and approval."

As of the date that I am writing this article (February 15, 1988), not a single church has had any "official" (and I say this for a reason that may be made known later) word from the eldership at Richland Hills! Not only did brother Matheny ask brother Dean to be sure and let his elders hear from said eldership, but some of the elderships ASKED FOR A RESPONSE TO THEIR LETTER! It seems to me, when such Christian love, patience, concern and yearning to uphold the truth of God by these elderships were made known, that it would only be the natural Christian courtesy, manner of life, to respond to their fellow brothers in Christ! There have been times when "they" have sent out letters and asked for a response! What if nobody ever responded to any letter, especially to one of real genuine Christian concern and love? Are some so big and powerful that they think they can just "do as they please" without any reproof from anyone? Why wouldn't elders want to answer letters directed to them?

THE BROTHERHOOD NEEDS TO KNOW THE 'WHAT IF'...

It is not mine at this particular time (yet I realize that time may come), to reproduce or to quote from some of the letters elderships sent to them. This may need to be done so the brotherhood of a certainty will know the charges made and also the warnings in their letters.

Suffice it to say, unless repentance is manifested and forthcoming, then this congregation of God's people will be identified as one of those who have "gone into fellowship" with denominational error and local churches will be advised of the same. Fellowship will then be withheld from them and they will be exposed for espousing error and the teaching of Romans 16:17-18 will, as well as

II John 9-11, come into play. No one has the right to BID GODSPEED TO ERROR, so states the beloved John in II John 9-11. Indeed, we are to have no fellowship with the UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS (Ephesians 5:11)!

We beg, plead, pray for and urge Richland Hills (and these letters are not to be taken into their pulpit and made light of, and I realize I might need later also to explain this statement) to be faithful to the "doctrine of Christ." The alarm has been sounded and the WORD OF GOD WILL BE UPHELD, yea, at any and all cost! Souls are at stake,

time is swiftly moving on and we must not let time take us having failed in our Christian responsibility, both to the brethren and to the world!

May God help us all, wherever, whenever and with whomsoever we find error and truth in conflict that we not sheath the sword of the Spirit until the battle has been fought and truth upheld! Once again, people will be destroyed for lack of knowledge; therefore, I write this second treatise **THAT THE BRETHERN MIGHT KNOW.**

—5114 Montclair
Colleyville, Texas 76034

DAN HUDDLESTON NAMED DIRECTOR OF ZAMBIA BIBLE TRAINING CENTER

Zambia Bible Training Center is pleased to announce that **Dan Huddleston** has been named as its new director. This comes due to the retirement of the former director and founder, **Lloyd Henson**. Henson, a missionary to Zambia for 18 years, will remain with ZBTC to work in other much needed areas. Henson founded the school 12 years ago, and has worked diligently to train men to be sound gospel preachers who can support themselves in a country with severe economic difficulties. ZBTC

has produced some of the finest and soundest gospel preachers in the country. Huddleston vows, "The students of ZBTC will be taught the old Jerusalem gospel as they were in the past. We will continue to train men who will DEFEND the kingdom as well as EXTEND the kingdom."

Huddleston comes to ZBTC after a teaching tenure at Namwianga Christian Secondary School and Bible College in Kalomo, Zambia. Huddleston received his Bible training at Bellview Preacher

Training School and at Alabama Christian School of Religion. He preached his first sermon at the age of 15 in Lexington, Oklahoma. He has done stateside mission work in Louisiana and Colorado, has served congregations in Oklahoma and Texas, and has preached in meetings, lectureships, and on other occasions in various states. He has contributed articles to several brotherhood publications. Huddleston and Henson are planning to publish a monthly journal dedicated to edifying the Lord's church and defending the kingdom. It will be mailed to all the congregations in Zambia at no charge. ZBTC has a print shop which has been in operation for many

SEVENTH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST LECTURES

April 10-13, 1988

THEME: "The Book of Proverbs"

Sunday, April 10

- 9:30 a.m.—Wisdom Cries for Man's Attention
..... Joe Gilmore
10:30 a.m.—God Gives Wisdom Out of His Mouth
..... Bert Thompson
1:30 p.m.—Panel Discussion
6:00 p.m.—The Strength of God's Man Paul Sain
7:00 p.m.—The Counsel of the Lord Shall Stand!
..... Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Monday, April 11

- 9:00 a.m.—Keep Thy Heart With All Diligence
..... David Brown
10:00 a.m.—Fear of the Lord, Beginning of Wisdom
..... Mark Lewis
11:00 a.m.—God's Things, Better Than Silver, Gold
..... Leonard Mullens
1:30 p.m.—Alcohol—The Adder's Sting Don Walker
2:30 p.m.—The Behavior of the Prudent Man
..... Garell Forehand
3:30 p.m.—Desire of the Righteous Is Only Good
..... Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
7:00 p.m.—In All Thy Ways Acknowledge God
..... Bert Thompson
8:00 p.m.—Introduction to Proverbs Guy N. Woods

Tuesday, April 12

- 9:00 a.m.—Loving Instruction and Knowledge
..... Bill Jackson
10:00 a.m.—Beauty of Quietness and the Merry Heart
..... Shan Jackson
11:00 a.m.—Ways of Man Before the Lord's Eyes
..... Frank Dunn
1:30 p.m.—Self-Control: Man Ruling His Own Spirit
..... Ken Hope
2:30 p.m.—The Commandment, A Lamp and Light
..... Tim Ayers
..... (Ladies Class) Irene Taylor

- 3:30 p.m.—Condemnation of Pride, Haughty Spirit,
..... Lynn Blair
7:00 p.m.—Death and Life In the Power of the Tongue
..... Joe Gilmore
8:00 p.m.—Blessings Are Upon the Head of the Just
..... Robert Taylor, Jr.

Wednesday, April 13

- 9:00 a.m.—The Integrity of the Just Man Mac Deaver
..... (Ladies Class) Irene Taylor
10:00 a.m.—A Way Seeming Right Unto A Man
..... Robert Taylor, Jr.
11:00 a.m.—The Lord Is Far From the Wicked
..... Roy Deaver
1:30 p.m.—The Way of Transgressors Is Hard
..... Glen Williams
2:30 p.m.—God Rewards The Fool and Transgressor
..... Dub McClish
3:30 p.m.—God Requires Justice and Judgment
..... Billy Balke
7:00 p.m.—God's Law, Keeping From Adultery
..... Ferman Carpenter
8:00 p.m.—The Value of a Good Name Tommy Hicks

Included in the lectureship book:

- Salvation to Those Who Walk Uprightly Garland Elkins
The Perseverance of the Righteous Oran Rhodes
Add Not to God's Pure Words! Wayne Price
God's Worthy Woman Bill Jackson

Accommodations in the homes of members.

Hook-ups for vans, campers.

Exhibit space available — on prior approval.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION WRITE:

Bill Jackson, Director
8900 Manchaca Road
Austin, TX 78748
(512) 282-2486

MAKE PLANS TO BE WITH US!

years. It mails out tracts and Bible correspondence courses, and serves as the only brotherhood printing source in Zambia. **Wayne Jarnagin**, who joined the staff six months ago, serves as the print shop supervisor.

Dan and his wife, **Dorothy (David)**, have three children. **Lisa**, 16, teaches Bible classes. **Brian**, 14, and **Derek**, 13, have both been preaching for over three years. When the Huddlestons left Namwianga, they had to leave behind more than half of their support and the vehicle that they were using. Therefore, they are in desperate need of your help. Part of the needed funds will be used to sustain his family and part as a work fund to take students to the villages to preach and teach, which would also require a vehicle

(Dan says that he can get a used one for about \$6,000).

If any congregation or individuals are interested in helping them with this wonderful work for the Lord, please get in touch with their sponsoring congregation immediately. You may mail inquiries or checks to the **Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506**, or you may wish to write Dan personally at **Zambia Bible Training Center, Box 60641, Livingstone, Zambia, Central Africa**.

[NOTE: My family and I were engaged in mission work in Zambia from 1966 through 1972. Since that time, I have continued to maintain an interest in the Lord's work in that nation. I correspond regularly with brethren in various parts of Zambia to keep abreast of

the progress and problems in the work. In my opinion, one of the best, soundest works being done in Zambia today is the work at Zambia Bible Training Center at Livingstone. Brother Lloyd Henson, longtime, faithful missionary, brings men in from the villages, teaches them the word of God and trains them to preach it while also preparing them to support themselves in agriculture when they return to their homes. Brother Henson has need of a man to work with him and help him carry the load of the work. Brother Dan Huddleston has joined him in the work. He is a capable man but needs additional support in order to remain in the work. I am happy to recommend him and the work at ZBTC as being well worthy of the support of the brethren.

(Signed) Rod Rutherford,
4399 Aloha Avenue,
Memphis, Tennessee 38118]

Notes & Quotes...

Jim Gazzaway, Conroe, Texas: "I received the copies of *Contending for the Faith* you sent to me to be distributed and have most of them passed out to friends that I hope will read them and subscribe. The seed has been planted.

"I wanted to let you know that Northgate church of Christ at 101 Dewberry, Lafayette, Louisiana, is using the piano.

"Lois and I, while on a recent visit to Lafayette, asked directions to the nearest church of Christ and were directed to the Northgate congregation. On arrival we noted that the minister's name was listed on the sign out front as 'Bro.' Roland Berry. Bible class was in progress in the auditorium when we arrived and the lesson was well taught and had we been blind we would have thought we were visiting an old paths congregation. However, I quickly spotted a stained

glass cross in the wall above the pulpit, four rows of pews behind the pulpit facing the congregation, and much to our surprise a piano off to the right of the auditorium.

"The class ended shortly and we were greeted by a number of the congregation and welcomed. About that time a lady started to play the piano, and a gentleman by the name of **Roland Grimes** met us as we were departing the premises and when he inquired if we were leaving, I informed him that we were members of the church of Christ and would not worship where the instrument was used. When I asked him where he found authority for the use of it, his reply was, 'I understand, brother, but we love you anyway.'

"Please make note of this congregation in *Contending for the Faith* so that others might be forewarned and not waste their time

stopping there. There are other congregations in Lafayette that do not use the instrument, but I know nothing else about them... May God bless you and help you in the good work that you are doing."

Charles Taylor, Wiesbaden, Germany: "I have enjoyed your articles in *Contending for the Faith* for many years.

"I just wanted you to know that the same thing that you have written about so much is happening right here in the Lord's church in Germany. We are a military congregation and our preacher **Ralph Beaty** (or he calls himself that) is doing exactly what you have been writing about.

"First of all, he let a family from the First Christian Church come in here and start teaching and waiting on the Lord's table. He has led singing and even been appointed as the assistant treasurer.

"In spite of all I have said and done, he is not stopped. I am considering leaving this 'church' and worshipping in our home.

"On top of all that, **Ralph and Marvin Phillips** spoke here one Sunday night, when

THIRD ANNUAL DIERKS LECTURES

April 29 - May 1, 1988
Dierks, Arkansas

THEME: "Christian Living"

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

6:00 p.m.—"The Name Christian"—**Lynn Matheny**
7:00 p.m.—PANEL DISCUSSION—**Matheny, Smith**
8:00 p.m.—"Outthink, Outfight, & Outlive the World"
—**Toney Smith**

SATURDAY, APRIL 30

9:30 a.m.—"The Christian's Obligation to Grow in Christ"
—**Tommy Mounts**
10:30 a.m.—"The Christian and Modesty"—**Dean Fugett**
11:30 a.m.—1 p.m. — LUNCH
1:00 p.m.—A Study of Tit. 2:11,12"—**Toney Smith**
2:00 p.m.—"The Christian and Tobacco & Alcohol"
—**Lynn Matheny**
3:00 p.m.—"Shall We Continue In Sin?" (Rom. 6:1-14)
—**Ivie Powell**
4:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m. — DINNER

6:00 p.m.—"Whose Servants Are We?" (Rom. 6:1-14)
—**Ivie Powell**
7:00 p.m.—PANEL DISCUSSION—**Bowles, Rhodes**
8:00 p.m.—"The Christian and Loving One Another"
—**Oran Rhodes**

SUNDAY, MAY 1

9:30 a.m.—"The Christian and the Great Commission"
—**Lowell Lites**
10:30 a.m.—"The Christian and the Church"
—**John Bowles**
11:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m. — LUNCH
1:30 p.m.—"The Christian and Being A Light"
—**Charles Coats**
2:30 p.m.—"The Christian and Forgiveness"
—**Wayne Smith**
3:30 p.m.—"Is It Worth It All?"—**Leon Jones**

he and his bunch were on their way to Africa. When I told Ralph that he was a false teacher, Ralph said, 'You don't have any proof of that.' When I showed proof, I was treated like a dog.

"I just wanted you to keep up the work and the writing that you do. We all need to be informed.

"The church that I am talking about is located at Lorelering 23, Wiesbaden, Germany."

(NOTE: In my reply, I said, in part, "It saddens me that the same things we have reported as going on in the States are being duplicated where you are in Germany. It ought not so to be. It was a sin for the brother Beaty you mentioned to allow someone from the Christian Church to come in there teaching, waiting on the Lord's table, and such. The Christian Church brings a different doctrine from the doctrine of Christ. If John 9-11 is explicit what to do in such cases; and that isn't it! If you cannot get it stopped, you would be completely justified in leaving such apostasy and worshipping in your own home.

"As for Marvin Phillips being invited to speak, he likewise brings a different doctrine from the doctrine of Christ. If we do not have the proof of his false teaching and heresy, then such cannot be documented with regard to anyone. The FAITHFUL brethren in the U.S. will have nothing to do with Marvin Phillips—and have not had for several years. He is lining himself up with the Christian Church, and, in fact, is presently one of their so-called 'adjunct professors' in a Christian Church college!" IYR Jr.)

George C. Stover, Yuma, Arizona: "I feel you are doing an excellent job in contending for the faith. Brethren who have a zeal for the Lord need this knowledge to guide them. Your obvious knowledge has prompted me to write this letter.

"Some of the brethren are teaching and persuading others that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 does not apply to us today. However, I think the 39th verse says it does. This teaching has caused a split in the church of Christ in Flagstaff, Arizona. I have not heard of this teaching before and would appreciate any information you can give me."

(NOTE: Paul told the Romans, in Romans 8:9, that if any have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Therefore, it seems obvious that we must have the Spirit of Christ or we do not belong to Christ.

The question is not do we, but how? Galatians 3:2 appears to imply that we receive the Spirit "by the hearing of faith." There was a time when He was received miraculously. However, spiritual gifts were just until "that which is perfect is come." That which is perfect evidently refers to the "perfect law of liberty." That law was being revealed when I Corinthians 13:10 was written. However, when the pen of inspiration came to an end at the close of Revelation, that which was "perfect" thus had come; hence, the miraculous "parts" were ended. Since then, we still must have the Spirit; but He now is received "by the hearing of faith," not as a miraculous manifestation any longer. IYR Jr.]

Clellave Boor, of Santa Maria, California, renewed for another year, adding \$45.00 onto her check, saying, "Use the rest in the best way."

L. A. Gilliland, Saint Jo, Texas: "When *Contending for the Faith* was handed to an elder to read and try to justify using the *New International Version* in classes, no answer was ever given. What can be done?

"We are thankful you expose false teaching of the recent versions. Thank you for keeping us aware of the many dangers of today. Keep up the good work."

Ralph Brinkley, of Anchorage, Alaska, sent three new subscriptions; Margaret Spear, of Canon City, Colorado, sent one new.

Jimmie B. Hill, Pago Pago, American Samoa: "...thank you for your encouragement. Even though we did not get the visas to enter into Ghana and work with the brethren there for the Lord, we do have the opportunity to serve Him here in Samoa and we are certainly grateful for that. The Lord has put us where he wants us to be; the Lord's will be done. If it had not been for your letters telling me how long you had to solicit funds and support for the mission that you started on, discouragement would have come very easily to me. Again, thank you so much.

"We have been here since February 17, 1987 and are just now getting settled into our home. We had to wait for a house for six weeks. The work here is going very well and I look for it to pick up once we get more settled. The brethren have some kind of Bible class every night of the week and Bible studies are becoming more frequent. I am teaching and preaching with brother Luao Soli and Edwin Crookshank at the Nu'u'uli congregation here and also teaching at the Leone Bible School. Linda and I have placed membership at the Nu'u'uli church.

"I have been reading about the church in Singapore and I had the opportunity to talk with brother Ray Peters before we left the States and am glad to hear that 'the tide has been turned.' I just received the January-February/1987 issue of the *Far East Newsletter* and am glad to see the *Underwoods* in Singapore..."

(NOTE: "You are entirely welcome to any encouragement I gave to you when you were trying so hard to go evangelize in Ghana," I replied to brother Hill, in part. "I am just glad that you got to go SOMEWHERE. It is good that you now are getting settled into your new work and environment. I am sure it will begin to pick up as you get more used to what you are doing there.

"As to whether the tide REALLY has been turned in Singapore, we shall soon see. There is just no excuse for the sort of shenanigans that some of the local brethren—and even two or three of the missionaries—have tried to pull there. Whatever it is, may the Lord's will be done!" IYR Jr.)

What you achieve depends on what you settle for. Settle for second-best and you'll never reach the heights.

Among those renewing for six years are Bill Schooley, of West Monroe, Louisiana; Ralph T. Johnston, of Katy, Texas; Hall G. Parrish, of Paris, Illinois; Cody A. Burgin, of Baytown, Texas; Delbert G. Golns, of Woodbridge, Virginia; Reed O. Miller, of New Martinsville, West Virginia; Marlin L. Harless, of Bim, West Virginia; Joe Gastineau, of Santa Maria, California; Bert Johnson, of Elliot Lake, Ontario, Canada; and James D. Cox, of Tustin, California.

James W. Berry, of Montgomery, Alabama, ordered 12 copies of our March/1987 issue for distribution there.

Carl & Emma Johnson, of Estevan, Saskatchewan, Canada, renewed for three more years, saying, "Thank you for saying it like it is."

Gertrude W. Broy, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, sent another \$10.00 to help on our expenses.

Bruce B. Hatcher, for the elders of the Atwater church of Christ, of Atwater, California, ordered 60 copies of our May/1987 issue containing the *Crossroads/Boston* article, saying, "We want the members of our Wednesday night adult class each to have a copy."

Mark N. Hicks, of Alexandria, Virginia, ordered two copies of that same issue, saying, "I think the article 'The Discipling Ministry—Crossroads/Boston' is excellent."

Mark K. Lewis, minister, Conroe, Texas: "Sure was good...to meet Eddy Ee. Hope he enjoys his stay in the States and that he will be very successful in his venture.

"The elders here discussed the matter at their meeting this past Tuesday and asked me to write you with their decision. They have decided to send \$100.00 per month for the rest of this year for the Jurong building fund, and then look at it again for the next year. I am pretty sure they will continue on next year at the same pace, but they wanted to wait until the budget committee got together and see how things turn out. Anyway, that will be \$400.00 for Sept.-Dec., and then hopefully next year and beyond..."

K. W. Franklin, minister, Bell Shoals church of Christ, Brandon, Florida: "We are doing something a little bit different this year in an effort to try to raise a little extra money for extra mission work. We have set aside March 29, the first fifth Sunday in the new year to help the Florida School of Preaching, the third fifth Sunday will go for benevolent work, and the fourth for something else. However, on the second fifth Sunday, May 31, 1987, we are designating the entire contribution to go to extra mission work, three or four thousand dollars of which has already been committed. We are hoping that we will have enough funds to send you at that time between \$500 and \$1,000 for your work to be used as you see fit. We realize this is only the beginning of helping a great cause like your work in the Far East. But perhaps it can be more as the years come and go and as the church here gets stronger.

"Ira, we have always appreciated your great work in the kingdom, particularly your great sacrifices in the mission field. May God continue to bless you in this good work, and we pray that we may have the resources that we can help even more in the future..."

(NOTE: "I still am grateful for the \$500.00 you and Bell Shoals sent to the support of our work somewhat earlier." I replied to the foregoing, in part, December 17, 1987, from Singapore. "Inasmuch as you indicated it would be all right to use it for Bill Cline's travel fund this time out, that is what we did with it.

"To give you some idea of what he and we have been doing, we left the U.S., November 29, 1987, arriving in Manila during the noon hour of December 1st. Our lectureship in Manila began that same night, lasting for four days—December 1-4.

"From there, we continued on over to Singapore, where he spoke Sunday morning, December 6, at Jurong. Then he and about 17 of us from the U.S., together with others from Asia, held our 3rd Annual Asian Bible Lectureship, here in Singapore, December 6-10.

"Ray Peters preached in a gospel meeting December 11-13 at Jurong. Then, beginning Lord's Day, December 13 through tonight, Bill and Buster Dobbs have preached a 'double header' with the Lim Ah Pin Road church of Christ here in Singapore.

"We leave in the morning for further work in Hong Kong. This is just an 'up date' along the way. God bless you all. (Signed) Ira Y. Rice, Jr."

William Earl Kaufman, of Parkersburg, West Virginia, at age 85, has had three strokes. He and his wife (82) now are confined to the personal care owned by the church there.

Charles Gantt, Madisonville, Kentucky: "I enjoy reading your magazine. Have read them all the way back to the beginning in our church library and they are very informative. More people should read them..."

Garry Stanton (for the elders), Eudora, Kansas: "We appreciate the May issue on the Discipling Ministry, Crossroads/Boston. The elders of the church here asked me to write you for 25 copies of this issue of *Contending for the Faith*."

T. L. Lamkin, of Houston, Texas, is now deceased.

Clyde E. Bennett, of Madison, Alabama, writes: "We are in total agreement that this Crossroads Movement is unscriptural... Many grand themes echo throughout the pages of the Bible. Only within these inspired pages can the truth that Jesus taught be found... However, it seems that this focus has been misdirected... Although the numbers on our rolls are increasing, the numbers of true converts (those in sin who repent and are baptized) has been declining. We are only evangelizing members from adjoining local congregations. We are offering as incentives: Day Care Centers, new and larger facilities, recreational facilities, counselling services, etc. However, the only incentive that Jesus gives is salvation through Christ..."

The only threat the churches of Christ pose to the denominations of the world is evangelizing their members through the incentives mentioned earlier. We (the churches of Christ) are no longer viewed as a threat in the ideological sense in the religious community... It is further amazing that the church is embracing the very same objects and philosophy that are currently causing a decline in the membership of the religious community. For example:

1. Lack of personal involvement: many phases of the worship service that were once open (leading singing, announcements, preaching) now are being performed by a paid staff or a select few.
2. Elevated hierarchy: no replacement of elders who have died or resigned. No mention of those deacons who have resigned. The elders delegating too much responsibility to the paid staff.
3. Lack of control over funds: money being spent with little or no regard to the wishes of the congregation as a whole.
4. Preeminence of the congregation within the brotherhood: Awards being given to influential members in the brotherhood, building bigger facilities.
5. Lord's Day being perverted: more emphasis being placed on fellowship luncheons, family days and awards than on worship.
6. Classes being taught out of material that has been written by individuals who are members of the religious community, and being presented as truth.

"It is no wonder that the Crossroads Movement is beginning to take a great leap forward in view of the prevailing attitude of the members and the leadership (elders and deacons) toward sin. IT IS EASIER TO COURT SIN THAN TO DENOUNCE IT. Which boils down to 'we need everyone's money' to continue to offer the incentives mentioned earlier.

"Other issues to be addressed in connection with the Crossroads Movement: the concept of the team player in its perverted form, the concept of a paid staff, and the ministry programs."

Thurman E. Self, who was preaching in Arlington, Texas, now has moved to Bermuda.

Ernest Loomis, elder and minister, Seymour, Missouri: "I continue to appreciate *contending for the Faith* and the role it is playing in warning those who will be warned of the false teachers and teachings which are destroying many churches of Christ and doing great harm to others. Keep up the good work."

(NOTE: Brother Loomis enclosed \$75.00 for four three-year renewals, saying that the excess "may be used in whatever way it is most needed." Much appreciation! IYR Jr.)

Lee D. Jones, of Hobe Sound, Florida, sent in two renewals.

Bruce Ligon, minister, Marshall, Texas: "In a time when many even in the church 'stand for nothing and fall for everything', your publication is certainly needed. Your work in world evangelism and the defense of the gospel is commended. I appreciate your untiring efforts."

Tyler Young, of Austin, Texas, sent six new subscriptions; **Eldon Whitfield**, of Canute, Oklahoma, renewed one, sent nine new; **Charles K. Woodson**, of Waco, Texas, sent two new; **Kenneth Badgett**, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, renewed two; **Mabel Plicher**, of Dalton, Georgia, renewed one, sent nine new; **W. H. Driskell**, of Hopewell, Virginia, sent two new; **Robert M. Hooks**, of Fort Worth, Texas, sent six new; **Burnis G. Hicks**, of Amarillo, Texas, renewed his own for two years, sent four new, also added \$20.00 "for whatever necessary"; **Herbert E. Mitchell**, of Seattle, Washington, sent 15 new; **Eldred Sassee**, of Bayfield, Colorado, enclosed \$800.00 together with ten subscriptions, saying that the "extra" was "to support your efforts in the U.S." He further said, "I greatly appreciate your efforts to contend for the faith. If we don't 'save' the church in the U.S., the foreign efforts will soon collapse. Some of us in the Bayfield, Colorado area have had to form a new church because of several false teachings being supported here. We don't believe there are Christians in all churches, etc.... May God give you strength and many more years in his vineyard."

W. V. Grimes, of Sonora, California, in renewing for three more years, added \$12.00 "for whatever it is needed."

A. J. Caraker, of Hartford, Kentucky, continues sending \$15.00 each month to our support of *Contending for the Faith*.

Recent contributions to our contending for the faith fund include **Edith Todd**, of King, North Carolina (\$10.00); **Virgil Roberts**, of Kenton, Tennessee (\$60.00); **R. Sorensen**, of Zanesville, Ohio (\$25.00); **Vernon O'gara**, of Vinita, Oklahoma, \$20.00; **Gene Nesler**, of Paducah, Kentucky (\$100.00).

Nona Mae Roberts, of Lansing, Michigan, sends \$5.00 each month.

Leon C. Bowman, of East Ridge, Tennessee, in renewing for another year, added \$10.00, saying, "There still are those in the Lord's church who still believe in God's word as it is written...and are not looking for something new to teach or tickle the ears of those who do not want to hear the truth as it was written (II Timothy 4:3-5) just for the sake of having a larger congregation.

"It seems like everywhere you look nowadays (around the world) the Lord's church is being torn apart by those who want to stand in front of the cross instead of behind it; but God's word once again said these things would come. It also said be thou faithful unto death. The older I get it seems I understand better what the Lord said in Matthew 7:13-14: broad... narrow... few there be that find it.

"Brother Rice, I hope that the Lord will continue to bless you and yours with health, and long life. May there always be someone of your conviction to stand up and speak out to warn those that will listen to what is happening to the Lord's church... *Preach the word!*"

Charles Wellborn, Palatka, Florida: "I have just finished reading the September issue of *Contending for the Faith* and enjoyed it very much. I am now recovering from another heart attack which almost got me this time.

"Ira, no matter how hard you work to teach the truth, there will always be men like _____ and _____ just had a meeting last week with one of the congregations here in Palatka (a new Crossroads congregation—Palatka church of Christ). I was not surprised about _____, since he and _____ are the ones that divided the Southside church Savannah, Georgia. _____ is great at that.

"Keep up the good work..." (NOTE: brother Wellborn enclosed \$10.00 "to help any way you see fit." IYR Jr.)

L. A. Cook, Buckner, Arkansas: "It is indeed strange that we cannot become evangelistic without becoming doctrinally unsound."

C. A. Feenstra, Waverly, Tennessee: "Please do not let us miss any issues."

"Crossroads Packets" have been ordered by **John J. Hasek, Jr.**, of Fort Worth, Texas; **Ruth Earnest**, of Johnson City, Tennessee; and **A. W. Routh**, of Clinton, Missouri (2 sets). In her order, sister Earnest said, "We have come to realize that about half of the congregation we attend is Crossroads. We knew very little about it, but enough to recognize it."

[NOTE: That is the way Crossroaders work—like termites. By the time unsuspecting, unwarned Christians wake up to the fact that "something is wrong," as a rule it already is too late to correct it. Far better that elders, preachers, teachers and concerned Christians forearm themselves by ordering our "Crossroads Packets" of previous issues of the paper that we have published on this error so they can point out to others what to look for. Each packet contains approximately 20 different issues on the "Crossroads" and "Boston/ Crossroads" problems. Please enclose \$9.95 per set with each order and address it to: **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.]

William E. Simpson, of Lemay, Missouri, sends \$20.00 each month to our contending for the faith fund.

Mrs. Zelpha Sprague, Lawton, Oklahoma: "I wouldn't be without a single issue."

Tom & Ailie Waldrum, Branson, Missouri: "What can be done about this Crossroads mess? I have thought a lot about it. Wonder how and why our preachers and teachers can afford to go wrong and teach false doctrine as plain as the Bible is. Only thing I can see is the devil (Satan) has done or is doing to them the way he did to Adam and Eve... We enjoy the paper very much... Keep up this work..."

Mrs. S. B. Wilson, of Tishomingo, Mississippi, renewed another couple of years, saying, "I wish I could help more, but my husband had a heart attack in October/1986, another in December. He is doing very well now but has to take an awful lot of medicine. Also I had a light stroke in June... but am doing well now. Pray for us... We pray for you and success in the work you are doing."

Eldon W. Rogers, minister, Ivanhoe, Texas: "I have just finished reading *Wayne Coats' book, A Critique of 'How Christianity Grows In The City'*. I believe that it is the most complete exposé of false doctrine that I have ever seen.

"I wrote brother Jennings when I received his book, and someone had said that he was a 'voice crying in the wilderness.' My remark was, 'I hope that that wilderness is so vast that no one will pay any attention to you.' I did not receive a reply.

"I am grateful that the church here knows what is going on: I shall do my best to keep them informed.

"Keep up the good work, Ira, and I will be sending in my subscription for *Contending for the Faith*. It is the only paper that tells us what is going on."

[NOTE: In my reply to brother Rogers, I said, in part, "What you wrote to Alvin Jennings was just right. I wonder what it would take to awaken him to the fact that he is on the wrong course." IYR Jr.]

J. H. Chynoweth, of West Palm Beach, Florida, enclosed \$20.00 to renew his subscription for another three years, saying, "Use the balance for your fund."

Russell A. Lieb, minister, Harrison, Ohio: "Your January, 1987 issue of 'Contending for the Faith' was an answer to prayer. We have a young couple in our congregation who have been studying with the 'Gateway' church in Cincinnati. I shared this issue with them, and last night they came to my home for a two-hour Bible study. I believe they are ready to break with Gateway... I promised them I would send for the 'Crossroad Packet.' Enclosed is a check for \$9.95... Please send the packet as soon as possible..."

BELLVIEW LECTURESHIP

May 11-15, 1988

"Are We Moving Away From The Cross Of Christ?"



GILMORE



HATCHER



WHITTEN



DeHOFF



DAVIDSON



WILLIS



EOFF



JACKSON



SEXTON



MOFFITT



COATS



KELLY

WEDNESDAY

- 7:00 P.M. Brethren, We Are Drifting Joe Gilmore
 8:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Spirit Of The Cross?
 Guss Eoff

THURSDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Ways To Apostasy Mike Hatcher
 10:00 A.M. The Hope Of The Cross Roger Jackson
 11:00 A.M. Let Us Follow The Jerusalem Pattern
 George DeHoff
 1:30 P.M. The Principles Of Restoration Are Always Valid
 M. L. Sexton
 2:30 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
 Doctrine On Prayer? Dean Kelley
 7:00 P.M. The Responsibility Of Elders Jerry Moffitt
 8:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Kind Of Preaching
 Demanded By The Cross? Harold Davidson

FRIDAY

- 9:00 A.M. The Organization And Work Of The New Testament
 Church Wayne Coats
 10:00 A.M. My Old Church Roy Deaver
 11:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The Certified Gospel?
 Ken Willis
 1:30 P.M. The Book Of Galatians (1) Winfred Clark
 2:30 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
 Standard For Steadfastness To The Faith? Bill Jeffcoat
 7:00 P.M. The Enemies Of The Cross Foy L. Smith

FRIDAY CONTINUED

- 8:00 P.M. The Cross Challenges Us To Live A Pure And
 Dedicated Life George DeHoff

SATURDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Despise Ye The Church Of God? Ira Y. Rice Jr.
 10:00 A.M. The Book of Galatians (2) Winfred Clark
 11:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The Preaching Of The
 Cross? Jimmy Clark
 1:30 P.M. The Purity Of New Testament Worship
 Eddie Whitten
 2:30 P.M. The Present Unity (Union) Movement
 H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
 7:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The Discipline Of The
 New Testament? Curtis Cates
 8:00 P.M. The Authority Of Elders Roy Deaver

SUNDAY

- 9:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
 Pattern For The Home? John Priola
 10:00 A.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
 Concept Of Respect For The Bible?
 H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
 6:00 P.M. "I Marvel That Ye Are So Soon Removed."
 William S. Cline
 7:00 P.M. Are We Moving Away From The New Testament
 Emphasis On World Evangelism? Ray W. Peters



JEFFCOAT



RICE



J. CLARK



CATES



CLINE



DEAVER



SMITH



W. CLARK



DOBBS



PRIOLA



PETERS

Bellview Church of Christ 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506 (904) 455-7595

Herbert I. Welr, of Thessalon, Ontario, renewed two, sent four new subscriptions; **Roger Barron**, of Karnes City, Texas, sent three new; **Jesse Condra**, of Rogersville, Tennessee, renewed three; **James H. Simpson**, of Virginia Beach, Virginia, sent three new; **Noel D. Davis**, of Manchester, Tennessee, sent five new; **Rich Rogers**, of Worthington, Indiana, renewed his own, sent three new; **Mrs. W. R. Ashby**, of Lynchburg,

Tennessee, renewed for three years, sent one new; **Armand Shanks**, of Belle, Missouri, sent 11 new.

Frank G. Starling, Paducah, Kentucky: "As always, my respect and admiration for your defense of God's truth is undiminished."

Mildred Noble, Yuma, Arizona: "This movement (Crossroads) has entered into our congregation at the Central Church of Christ here and we need all the help we can get."

Paul Flowers, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, renewed for three years, ordered the "NIV Packet", saying, "I am beginning to see it used more and more and would like to have an answer for those who propose its use..."

(NOTE: He added \$7.05 onto his check to use at our discretion. Much appreciation! IYR Jr.)

Florence O. Schrei, Portland, Oregon: "Keep the good word going out."

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THE HIGHERS-BLAKELY DEBATE

(On the Use of Mechanical Instruments of Music in Worship)

Or,

A Gathering of "Knuckleheads"

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

All will recall, I am sure, **Alan Cloyd's** off-hand reference at the first so-called "Restoration Summit" on so-called "Unity" to those of us he classified as "knuckleheads." After urging those on the Plains of Ono to "go back to a hundred localities across the United States and set up similar local summit meetings," he affected to be "scared" by such "local summits" because "every 'knucklehead' in the country is going to get in on those."

If brother Cloyd had been present for the Highers-Blakely Debate, April 12-15, 1988, at the Hillcrest church of Christ auditorium, in Neosho, Missouri, he probably would have thought that "every 'knucklehead' in the country" had gotten in on that, too!

In the debate, **Alan E. Highers** had been selected to represent the Hillcrest church of Christ, whereas **Given O. Blakely** supposedly was representing the position held by the Independent Christian Church. Although Blakely affirmed that the *scriptures* teach that the use of instrumental music is acceptable to God in worship, you can but imagine our astonishment when he declared that *authorization* by the *scriptures* is *unnecessary*! In fact this was his position throughout the debate, leading many of us to wonder if we were not just wasting our time debating with him—particularly if his people agreed with such an untenable position.

BLAKELY OBJECTS TO BEING STYLED "ANTINOMIAN"

Although his position clearly led to the conclusion that salvation is by faith alone without law, Blakely, an intensely emotional person, strongly objected when Highers charged him with "antinomianism."

Such alleged "brethren," who are taking such indefensible doctrinal positions all the while pretending to be desirous of "unity," clearly are making it impossible for us to have fellowship with them. How can brethren who are entirely committed to ascertaining Bible authority for anything and everything we believe, teach and practice unite with those who contend that all such authorization is unnecessary!

Highers pointed out that Blakely's position utterly repudiates the efforts of his own Christian Church brethren who have gone before in that he (Blakely) does not believe there are any regulations in the scriptures for worship whatsoever!

BLAKELY DID NOT KNOW WHO THAYER WAS!

Some of the turns in the debate not only were incredible but bordered on the ridiculous. When Highers cited Henry Thayer in defining a certain Greek term, Blakely not only was unaware that Thayer was one of the greatest Greek lexicographers who ever lived but mistook Highers for citing one of our own brethren as an authority!

Although Blakely contended to have been made "free from the (old) law by the body of Christ," he kept going back to the old testament seeking to show the use of mechanical instruments of music had been approved, hence was not offensive to God.

Highers showed by various passages of old testament scripture that God *also*, at that time, accepted religious dance, the burning of incense and burnt offerings. On what ground, he wanted to know, does God accept the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship and reject these!

(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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Editorial...

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR PREACHING THE TRUTH

"There is no substitute for preaching the truth." I heard Garland Elkins make this statement during his sermon on April 3, 1988, at Getwell church of Christ, in Memphis, Tennessee.

You know, he's right? If you don't believe it, go to any congregation where the truth of the gospel has not been preached in a long time and observe.

I was in Oklahoma City and had occasion to visit such a congregation in connection with a wedding some time back. Once noted for having stood for the truth of God's word, in more recent years this church was known to have turned from the truth to the fables of liberalism.

TRACT RACK GAVE THEM AWAY

As I made my way down the corridor, I happened by their tract rack. Just why they even bothered to have such a rack was not obvious. It seems to me if I wasn't going to stand for anything, I would not want to advertise it in such a way!

In going through that rack, I found publications by the American Bible Society and several denominational writers—also by liberalistic type preachers—but very few by sound, faithful brethren.

Remember that Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." In the case of "liberal" preachers and churches, you can almost know them by their tract racks!

DID NOT THE ELDERS CARE?

But, you ask, why did not the elders monitor what went into that rack? What did they care! Any eldership so careless of the truth as to hire a "liberal" preacher in the first place could hardly care less about what he put through the tract rack. If they were going to let him put his doctrinal poison through the ear in his preaching, why concern themselves about poisoning through the eye via the tract rack!

No, brethren, there is "no substitute for preaching the truth." Any congregation whose elders let down their guard at this point—even for a little while—is going to pay the price of liberalism, antiism, premillennialism, agnosticism, or whatever other "ism" happens to come along.

WE SHALL BE JUDGED BY THE TRUTH

Let us all recall Jesus' words, in John 12:48, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Since we all are going to be judged by the truth of God's word, let us preach it, teach it, print it and live it while we yet have time and opportunity. If the knowledge of God's truth (John 8:32; 17:17) is what it takes to make men free, nothing more, less or else will do.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

HIGHERS-BLAKELY

(Continued from Page 1)

HIGHERS PROVES AUTHORIZATION NECESSARY

Among the scriptures that Highers introduced showing that worship to God is regulated, and that Divine authority is necessary, was John 4:24, which says, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him MUST worship him in spirit and in truth." Highers showed that to be "in truth," worship had to be according to God's word.

He further cited that Colossians 3:17 teaches "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do ALL in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Turning to Acts 4:7, he showed that to do something in the name means by one's power or authority.

To Blakely's contention that for those who "know God," whatever they offer as worship to God is acceptable to Him, Highers pointed out that knowledge of God is inseparable from truth, that truth is his word or doctrine, and that II John 9 teaches that "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God..."

BLAKELY MAKES LIGHT OF CONTRADICTIONS

It seemed to bother brother Blakely not at all that his basic position of no authority being required to justify what is used in worship is contradictory. "Highers says my arguments contradict my predecessors," he observed. "So what!? Maybe my predecessors contradicted their predecessors!" He said that was not the point, but do they contradict God?

Making light of Highers' insistence that knowledge of God must be based on truth, Blakely affected to distinguish between what he called "experiential" knowledge and mere intellectual knowledge. In fact he was given to so many patently foolish, fatuous, irrelevant statements that one felt such had neither bearing nor consequence on the issues involved.

Blakely said that if instrumental music is wrong, it has to be wrong of itself, like sin, not because it violates scripture. I John 3:4 clearly meant nothing to him.

FEELINGS OF FELLOWSHIP NOT THERE

How strange it felt, as I listened to Blakely's sophistry, to be sitting next to a "Oneness" Holiness preacher and feeling closer to him spiritually than to Blakely and those standing with him, all of whom claim to be my "brethren." Why? Simply because, however much I disagreed with this Holiness preacher's position on "Oneness," at least he accepted the scriptures as authoritative, whereas Blakely clearly did not. I felt that at least some basis existed upon which the "Oneness Holiness" preacher and I could reconcile our religious differences, whereas, re: Blakely, there was none.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In discussing this very matter with brethren William S. Cline and Garland Elkins, afterward, Cline said that his reaction to Blakely's part in the debate was that he did not feel that he had been listening to a Christian brother but some sort of denominationalist. Elkins said that he agreed with this and that, in fact, Blakely's positions were a mixture of several different kinds of denominations' positions.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Although by far the majority of those in attendance at the debate were those in fellowship with Alan Highers and

those who stand with him doctrinally, it would be wrong to say that all of those there supposed to be "our brethren" could be thus described. For example, R. L. Kilpatrick, withdrawn-from editor of the doctrinally defunct paper he calls *Ensign*, was there. In announcing the debate in his issue for February, 1988, he demonstrated where his heart really lies, by saying, "If you would like more information you might write to Given O. Blakely, 10701 W. 125th Ave., Cedar Lake, IN 46303." And when Don Deffenbaugh, our preacher at Neosho, Missouri, who was in charge of the proceedings, made clear that the only displays of materials that would be allowed had to be either on Blakely's table or on Highers' table, in the foyer, Kilpatrick placed his paper *Ensign* on Blakely's table. So did Buff Scott, Jr., whose publication is called *The Reformer*... As for Olan Hicks, who still parades around the brotherhood pretending to be one of "us" while spreading false doctrine on marriage, divorce and remarriage, several of the brethren, including Dub McClish, Garland Elkins and others, reported seeing him feeding notes to Blakely during the debate.

Roy Key, formerly with the churches of Christ but now with the Christian Church, was invited by the College Heights Christian Church to appear on their lectureship one of the afternoons during the debate. In the question-and-answer period, Key was asked if he believes in the inerrancy of the scriptures. Affecting to feel insulted by the question, taking umbrage and refusing to answer, he said he would have to know the motivation of the question first!

It clearly was an embarrassment to Don DeWelt and others from the Christian Church that so few of their own people attended either the debate at night, our lectureship (in the mornings) or their lectureship (in the afternoons). In trying to explain their absence, DeWelt said, "This is a dead issue among our people." And they want us to unite with them! NO WAY!

Although brother Highers did his usual superb, effective presentation of truth in the debate, it came with considerable shock and disillusion that great numbers of our brethren learned how far apart the churches of Christ and the Christian Church really are. Many were heard to say that they had supposed the only thing dividing us was just the instrument. However, after suffering through four nights of Given O. Blakely's argumentational diatribes, practically all could see how useless it really is for "us" to be trying to unite with "them."

Note: Orders for tapes and videos of this debate should be addressed to Valid Publications, Inc., 312 Pearl Street, Denton, TX 76201.



Thank God I Am An 'Ignorant' Preacher

Bill Claiborne

Before you either agree or disagree with this, let's pursue this thought a little further. By this I mean one thing, I was not able to attend one of our higher institutions of learning and be taught that the first two or three chapters of Genesis are a myth and that all that is here came about by a process of theistic evolution. Several years ago after "Darwinism" or "Organic Evolution" began to be obviously too far fetched to believe even from a common sense viewpoint, then some of the great intellectuals even among our brethren tried to come up with a doctrine that would be

accepted both by the evolutionists and the creationists whereby both would be satisfied by a combining of God and evolution.

Frankly, I had as soon accept *organic* as *theistic* evolution. A God that can *guide* the evolutionary process over millions of years certainly can *create* all things as stated in Genesis 1:1, and I'm just ignorant enough that when inspiration said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", I believe that's exactly what happened—and that does make me ignorant to many.

ARE EDUCATION, DEGREES SAME AS TRUTH?

Too many churches have begun to equate education and degrees with truth, but this does not necessarily follow. Don't get me wrong. I am not against education; but it should be used as a *means* to an end, not the *end* itself.

I said that in order to say this. Some time ago, a good friend of mine moved to Nashville from one of the northern states. He went to one of the "big churches" in Nashville and talked to the preacher there. He asked him if he knew of a place in the area that he might preach full time. When asked about his experience, he said, "I've been preaching 25 or 30 years, have conducted a very effective radio program, worked in mission fields in this country in the north and northwest." "That's great" he was told, "but how much *education* do you have?" "What do you mean?" He was asked if he had any *degrees*. "No, but I have spent my life studying the Bible." Then he was told, "I'm sorry but just about all of the churches in this area will not even consider a man to preach for them that does not have at least a Masters Degree." This is enough to make a man who loves the church, the institution for which the sinless Son of God shed his life's blood to purchase (Acts 20:28) shed bitter tears.

It seems that plain, simple Bible-oriented preaching for which the great, good and godly men of the past spent their lives trying to restore New Testament Christianity, has gone the way of the Dodo bird. Sometimes I am almost ready to pray like one old man did many years ago, "Lord, I'm thankful that I'm ignorant and I pray that you'll make me ignoranter."

SOME OF US NEVER LEARN

It's funny how we don't learn something over the years. For instance, I'm still so ignorant that I believe, in Isaiah 7:14, that the word *virgin* means something other than just a young woman as some of the modern "perverions" are trying to get us to believe. A *young* woman might be a virgin and yet she might be everything but a virgin. Whereas an *old* woman might be a virgin and I believe I know some. Remember this was to be a *sign*, something unusual or out of the ordinary. What's unusual for a young woman to conceive? Wonder why in Matthew 1:23 when the angel spake to Joseph that he used the word *virgin*? You reckon he might have been ignorant? Well I am. I believe it just as it is written in God's words, not in some man's *perversions*.

I believe we have the last revelation of God's will to man, that it is all-sufficient, that it is inerrant, complete and that we *do not need*; indeed would be *better off*, *without* the so-called *new* versions which are no more than perverted translations and many times no more than one man's or several men's commentaries. Some may say "You're more ignorant than I thought." When I tell you that I still believe that the Holy Ghost dwells in the Christian the same way that God the Father and Jesus Christ dwells in a person *only* thru the word, you may say now that not only am I *ignorant* but *stupid* as well! So be it.

The sad part of this whole thing is that I just can't learn. Smart men such as Bales, Woodruff and others have been trying to tell me that Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 doesn't mean what it says, that the *only* scriptural grounds for divorce and remarriage is *adultery* or *fornication*. But I am just dumb and ignorant enough to believe what the Lord said and believe that all men are amenable to this divinely stated law of God Almighty. I'm pitiful, just no chance for me I guess.

WHAT OF THINGS NOT SPECIFICALLY CONDEMNED?

Space would not permit me to list all of the areas in which my ignorance is plainly seen. I have heard and read a lot lately about things not specifically condemned in God's word that are allowable in worship and service to God. That didn't sink in either but bounced right off of my hard head.

If I had known this when I was a child, it would have made life much more enjoyable at least for a while. When my father sent me to the little grocery store to get 10¢ worth of salt, 25¢ worth of sugar and a can of baking powder, if I had bought in addition to those items a coke, two bars of candy and a sack of marbles, you cannot in your wildest imagination believe what would have happened to me if I had told him, "Well, you didn't tell me *not* to buy these other things."

I started out in life being ignorant and I'm still ignorant enough to think when *specifics* are given, all else is excluded. I still believe we should go by the cry of the past: speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent. To speak only as the oracles of God, if that's ignorant, then I plead guilty, because I still believe that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17), and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. To me this means that what the word of God doesn't authorize is sin.

Some will say, "You're not just ignorant, you don't have any sense at all." So be it. Let God be true and every man a liar. I will (thru my ignorance) stick to God's word. In John 12:48, my precious Lord said, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him: (Notice) the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day."

Twice in the past eight months, I was given only a short time to live by my doctors. Had death occurred, I surely wanted Heaven as my home more than anything in this world. If the ignorant are scarcely saved, where will the great intellectuals, who either out-and-out deny God's word or change it to suit themselves appear?

—228 Stadium Drive
Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075

WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES

Bob Spurlin

In II Peter 3:16, the inspired penman states that the "ignorant" and "unstedfast" wrested the scriptures "unto their own destruction." The word "wrest" literally means to "stretch on the rack" and was associated with human torture. The accused were stretched on the torture rack until their limbs were severed from their bodies. The word is used in our text figuratively and means "to pervert, of one who wrests or tortures language to a false sense." The

word "wrest" is used to describe those who twist the scriptures from their intended purpose.

What are some ways in which the scriptures may be wrested?

1. **They may be wrested by lifting a verse out of its context and giving it the wrong application.** This is one of the more common ways in which a passage may be wrested. Frequently, sectarians use this method in establishing their errors.
2. **The scriptures may be wrested by just giving a part of a verse and omitting the remainder, which, if given, would set the matter straight.** The Christian who indulges in social drinking will seek to justify his position by saying, "...be no longer a drinker of water, but use wine..." He almost always will misquote the passage. I Timothy 5:23 says, "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." The text says, 1) a little wine, 2) the word wine may be fermented or unfermented (the text does not say), and 3) it was for sickness not a beverage to get drunk on.
3. **The scriptures may be wrested by extreme literalization.** So many fail to realize that figurative language is used in the Bible. Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 55:12, "The hills shall

break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Obviously, trees do not literally clap their hands, nor do hills burst into singing. The inspired writer frequently employs inanimate objects to get across a powerful lesson, but it should not be accepted literally.

4. **The scriptures may be wrested by failing to make a proper distinction between the covenants.** How often we see the misguided Bible student trying to justify "instrumental music" by appealing to the Old Testament. The faithful student must realize that there are various covenants within the Bible and must distinguish between them. A careful reading of such books as Hebrews, Romans and Galatians would show the student that the old covenant has been abolished and that we are under the new covenant. (Colossians 2:14).

Paul wrote Timothy, "**Study to show thyself approved unto God...rightly dividing the word of truth.**" (II Timothy 2:15). Let us make sure that we not only study and rightly divide the sacred oracles but that we never be guilty of "wresting" the scriptures.

—*Christian Messenger*
Algood church of Christ
195 Fifth Avenue
Algood, Tennessee 38501

When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry—II

Tom L. Bright

In a previous article under the same title, I stated that loyalty was commendable when evidenced in anyone's life. Without doubt, it elicits respect and admiration from our fellow man, even when we may not agree with the object of that loyalty. But when "loyalty" becomes blind idolatry and worship of man or things of man, then our admiration changes to disdain and our respect to scorn. This concept is evidenced in our great brotherhood, especially in the area of our "Christian colleges."

It is my conviction that when an institution operates under the auspices of being one of "our" colleges, it has a responsibility, not only to the present and former students and their parents (as well as to those of the future), but also to the brotherhood in general. I say this because of the very nature of what a "Christian college" should be and that for which it should stand. One of the strongest arguments made for these schools is that a much better environment is provided for our young people because they have the occasion to associate with other young members of the Church, a strong diet of Bible, and Christian teachers.

The truth of the matter is, that the influence of our "Christian colleges" has become so dominant in many areas, that many people feel that unless one has a college degree, he cannot be a preacher of the gospel of Christ. It goes without saying that many congregations are literally dominated by the influence that a particular "college" wields upon it because of the allegiance of its students. Nor can it be denied that some of the schools of preaching also carry such weight. As I stated in a previous article, many members of the Church will allow you to denigrate and demean any and everything until you begin to question their "school."

I do not believe that a person should be standing and waiting with eager anticipation for the first negative thing to be said about a "Christian college," and then pick it up

and "run with it." Nor do I believe that members of the body of Christ should have such allegiance to their *alma mater* that they become blind, even to the point of refusing to consider charges of a most serious nature, and then participate in a cover-up which is second to none. Such, we feel, has happened relative to the evolution controversy at Abilene Christian University, in Abilene, Texas.

In our estimation, there were many questions left unanswered by the "Abilene Christian University Institutional Statement." This was, of course, an official response to the charges leveled at ACU by brother Bert Thompson in his book *Is Genesis Myth?*, relative to theistic evolution being taught in the Science Department of ACU.

As far as we know, no attempt was made to question the contradictory positions affirmed by one of the charged professors over a period of approximately two months. To our knowledge, none of the people referred to in brother Thompson's book, other than the professors charged, were ever questioned or approached.

Based upon the actions of the University officials, it is clear that they did not intend to give an accounting of this evidence, but rather to participate in a cover-up that would cause the Watergate scandal of a decade ago to pale into insignificance. Moreover, when we begin to try to grasp the inestimable harm that such teaching can, and will do, to the Church in future generations, it makes our hearts heavy with grief.

Consider please, a letter from ACU President William J. Teague, addressed to an individual who desires to remain anonymous. This letter is evidently in response to a letter written by the person on May 12, 1986, asking for an explanation as to why they had received the "ACU Institutional Statement" in the mail. In the letter, dated May 22, 1986, which is on ACU stationery, Dr. Teague states:

"Thank you for your letter of May 12.

"The mailing that you received from ACU was sent to individuals who have been a part of the Herald of Truth mailing list. The elders at the Highland Church of Christ, that oversees this ministry, felt that the matter was of such great importance that they made the list available to us. Our desire in mailing the report to the more than 80,000 persons on that list was so that the truth of this situation could be known by all Christians."

Dr. Teague further states that the ACU students have spoken with resounding affirmation that they have never been taught theistic, or any other kind of evolution. He then states that many of brother Thompson's statements in the book were originally made in the context of the classroom, and understood by all of the students in that context, except the one who had taken the original complaint to brother Thompson.

If indeed, there was only one who understood that theistic evolution was being taught, then what about brethren **McLeod** and **Macleod** who, in personal correspondence with brother Thompson (and brother McLeod in a personal letter to President Teague), affirmed that they had been taught evolution while at ACU? What about the daughter of brother and sister **Jerry Lobley** of Texline, Texas, who told her mother that she was "confused" about evolution (their daughter graduated *magna cum laude* from ACU in 1984).

It makes us stop and with perplexed gaze look upon such situations that transpired on Wednesday evening, January 22, 1986, in Abilene, Texas. On this date, there was a meeting between ACU officials and the elders/ministers of the Abilene area, conducted at the University. At the conclusion, one elder asked **C. G. Gray** that, in light of the present evolution controversy, would the biology department be using any creationist materials to supplement their instruction? The answer was: "Absolutely not!"

Brethren, does this not give us a hint of what is happening? Have we become so blind that we cannot see what is transpiring right before our eyes? It is evident that the ACU officials had decided upon a course of evasion, subterfuge, and cover-up so stupendous in its implication, that if such is successful, it literally boggles the mind.

What happened to the young man who first corresponded with brother Thompson in bringing this information to light? In late December, 1985, this student was notified that unless he signed a University prepared document, he would not be allowed to enroll for his final semester—the consequences of which would be that he would not be able to graduate. He refused to do so because he found the conditions stated therein to be unbearable. Notice what they were: (1) His class schedule would be arranged for him by Dr. C. G. Gray, Vice-president of Academic Affairs; (2) He must seek counseling from an ACU-designated official; (3) He must immediately cease "harassing" his professors; and, (4) He would be on probation until his graduation in May. That, dear brethren, is the way a "Christian college" chose to treat a 27-year-old college senior!

WHAT CAN WE LOOK FOR NEXT?

Although I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, I would like to suggest some of the things that we might watch for in the future, as it pertains to this controversy.

First of all, I would suggest that an attack against brother Thompson and those closely associated with him will be mounted. We all know that it is a common trait of humans to attack the man himself when you cannot answer

his arguments. When the testimony of a witness destroys his client, the lawyer will detract from the character of the witness, attempting to show that he is not credible. An old debater's trick is, if you cannot answer your opponent's arguments, divert the attention of the audience by attacking the man. Concerning this present controversy, it already is happening.

It is sad, but nonetheless true, that innuendos, insinuations, and rumors, which are nothing short of a whispering campaign, are now circulating about brother Thompson. These tactics, borrowed from the world, touch just about every aspect of his life, in both the secular and spiritual realms. And even more sad is that some of these rumors have been documented as having their origin with those affiliated with ACU. This, brethren, we abhor! Certainly we are made to wonder why these innuendos and insinuations have surfaced ONLY after brother Thompson began to take issue with what was being taught in the Science Department of this college.

Secondly, I predict that we will see a classic example of "intellectual snobbery" become even more pronounced in our brotherhood. By this, I simply mean that concerned Christians will be looked down upon as inferior, less than intelligent, simply because they do not have the "degrees" to wave before the brotherhood. I have never held the view that one must have a "degree" to recognize error when it was being taught. Nor that one must have a "major" in Bible before he is qualified to call "professors" in question about a view which they might hold.

Thirdly, the breach will be widened. Those whose loyalty to a college supersedes their loyalty to Christ will strive even more to justify and defend such, regardless of right or wrong. On the other hand, doubts that many hold relative to the Bible departments of "our" schools will be multiplied, distrust and suspicion will increase, and confidence will deteriorate.

It is a shame that one more item has arisen which will affect our brotherhood negatively. But, of course, those whose loyalties to *alma mater* rise above loyalty to the Truth will attempt to paint those who are not satisfied with the feeble cover-up, those who will not blindly accept the *ipse dixit* of the ACU administration, as being unkind, unloving, unchristian, sectarian, Church-splitters, and maybe even "brotherhood watchdogs." Those who wanted, and were going to have, their mechanical instruments of music at all costs, used (and are using today) the same tactics. But we were not deterred then and we will not be so today. Those who demanded that they be allowed to preach the ungodly doctrine of Premillennialism have made the same arguments, but we did not apologize then and we will not apologize now.

With so much at stake over this issue, why is the administration unwilling to make a proper accounting of this issue? Why do they not simply manifest to this great brotherhood that they are willing to show beyond a logical and legitimate doubt that the charges are baseless and unjustified. If, however, the charges are shown to be valid, then let them take the proper steps to correct them, even if it takes an old fashioned "house cleaning" beginning at the top and working down.

Brethren, there is *no excuse* for this issue ever to have been raised. We call upon the ACU administration and board of trustees to work toward reassuring this great brotherhood that such will not be tolerated. And then let us get on with the Father's business of taking the gospel to a lost and dying world.

—111 South Curry

West Plains, Missouri 65775

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH—April/1988

Editorial...

Thank God For Men Like Bill Claiborne

Elsewhere in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* we are carrying a perceptive article by **Bill Claiborne**, longtime preacher to the church at Luna Lane, in Hendersonville, Tennessee, who has been sidelined for approximately the past year because of brain surgery and its after effects.

The article is entitled, "Thank God I Am An 'Ignorant' Preacher." Not that brother Claiborne is all that ignorant; but he makes some points that some of our more learned brethren might well ponder. Be sure to read it and see if you do not agree.

Across the years, Bill Claiborne has made his living principally as a building contractor, preaching for a lot less support than some others who degreed their way into the church treasury for a lot more salary, though many of them could not preach their way out of a paper bag.

NOT AGAINST FORMAL EDUCATION

Although *Contending for the Faith* has nothing against so-called "higher education," *per se*, nevertheless, we pay it "no never mind" when it comes to preaching. If having a college or university degree is required before elders and churches will hire a preacher, this not only would eliminate all of the *apostles* (with the possible exception of Paul)—but even *Jesus Christ himself!*

One of the most effective gospel preachers I ever knew was **J. D. Tant**. If he ever had a college degree of any kind, I never heard of it. His hand-writing was so atrocious that I always had to send his letters back to his wife, so she could tell me what they said. He was fond of threatening to go to Abilene Christian College—to teach penmanship! And I loved to hear him say that you can put a blue ribbon on a hog, but that won't put any more meat on his bones.

THE MEN OF ONE BOOK

In an earlier day, back in Kansas, some of those old farmer-preachers became known as "walking Bibles." They may not have known much of anything else, but if you wanted to know how many new passages of scripture they had learned during the day, all you had to do was go out to their farms and count how many new rows of corn they had plowed during the day. They would read a verse at the beginning of each new row—then repeat this verse over and over to the end of the row. So formidable were they in confronting the denominational preachers of their day, that it was commonly reported they were warned to beware of these "men of one book."

Former Speaker of the House of Representatives **Sam Rayburn** used to point out to young legislators that "the wisdom of the ages" was in that one book—the Bible. Show me a preacher any day who lets the word of Christ dwell in him richly in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16), and I'll show you a preacher who can preach rings around most of those who rely on a piece of paper on the wall attesting to the fact they have a college degree!

Brethren, we as a brotherhood owe a huge debt of

gratitude to men like Bill Claiborne, who, though they did not go far in *formal* education, nevertheless so prepared themselves in the word that they could lead great numbers of others into the path that leads from earth to heaven. How much better it is thus to school oneself in things that really matter than to be taught so much in some of our schools that isn't really so!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

THE CASE FOR INTOLERANCE

Maxie B. Boren

It is very fashionable these days to be quite tolerant of evil. Multitudes of people pride themselves in being broad-minded toward every perverted and depraved manner of conduct imaginable. Notice, for example, over TV shows like **Johnny Carson's** "Tonight" show, or the **Merv Griffin** show, or the **Mike Douglas** show, how sinful things such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, drunkenness, and such like, are the subjects of "jokes and fun," and the audience infers that anyone who would condemn such practices is an "old fogey" and "behind the times."

But regardless, the Bible still says, "Ye that love the Lord, **hate evil.**" (Psalms 97:10). It says, **Abhor** that which is **evil.**" (Romans 12:9). And again, "**Abstain** from every form of **evil.**" (1 Thessalonians 5:22). And, too, "...**resist the devil...**" (James 4:7b).

While Christians are taught to be tolerant of *some* things, *evil* is not one of them! Concerning it, we are to be most *intolerant!* Iniquity and evil are of the kingdom of darkness, and Satan's kingdom stands in stark contrast to the kingdom of our Lord, for *His* is the kingdom of *light*—of good, truth, and righteousness. The one is the antithesis of the other. Allegiance to Christ demands an attitude of *hostility* toward evil. To *love* the Lord is to *hate* evil!

Satan is the king of the abyss, the leader of the forces of wickedness, wearing the Greek name, *Apollyon*, which means "Destroyer!" (See Revelation 9:11). As the "Destroyer," you can be assured that he seeks the spiritual ruination of us all. He is our avowed enemy and there is no changing that fact. Therefore, there can be no compromise with him! He must be resisted at all cost, with the utmost determination! It is a matter of eternal life or death!

This is the reason it is so painful to realize that many Christians have unwittingly imbibed the philosophy of tolerating evil from a spiritually bereft society. A lenient attitude toward false ways and sin in general has permeated our ranks, and has lessened the distinctive stand for truth and right which once was the number one identifying characteristic of churches of Christ.

With the Bible telling us to hate evil, abhor evil, and abstain from evil, it seems to me that this is a strong case for the INTOLERANCE OF EVIL! Our stand must be an unequivocal stand for God's Way! Nothing less than that will do.

—Curry Street church of Christ Bulletin
111 South Curry Street
West Plains, Missouri 65775

MAKING THE PRESENT DIVISION "OFFICIAL"

Steve Gibson

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Gibson presented the following before the 10 a.m. Bible class, just before the Fort Worth Preachers' Luncheon, October 20, 1987, at Fort Worth, Texas.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor)

PURPOSE: To document the reality of present division among the churches and show why a more "official" recognition of it would be advantageous to the cause of truth.

INTRODUCTION:

- A. We are forewarned that preaching the word will appear to be the cause of trouble and division (1 Kings 18:17-18; John 7:43; Acts 17:6).
- B. Dividing the faithful from the hardened apostate is necessary and beneficial (Luke 12:51; 1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 11:19; 1 John 2:19).

DISCUSSION:

- I. There has been talk of division for several decades now.
 - A. Since at least 1970 the threat of division has been clear from the tone of debate over neo-pentecostalism, the non-distinctiveness of the Herald of Truth, Crossroadsism, Marriage-Divorce-And-Remarriage, Unity-In-Diversity movements, and such like.
 - B. In 1981 **Rubel Shelly's Firm Foundation** article "Must We Divide?" observed that the church was on the verge of open division and counseled that "talk of disfellowship be discontinued."
 - C. In March 1983 in Centerville, Tennessee, Shelly went even further and called on brethren to "rise up and repudiate" a so-called "right wing" which was vigorously challenging and marking false teachers within the church.
 - D. The most concrete outgrowth of Shelly's plea was a "Restoration Summit" Unity Conference between fifty preachers from Churches of Christ and fifty from Christian Churches in August 1984.
 1. The eighth small-group reporter from Churches of Christ reflected the prevailing attitude when he said that he and his co-workers were prepared to ignore the criticisms of "certain brethren" (even if they withdrew from him, seemed to be the implication) in order to pursue union with Christian Churches and others.
 2. This attitude was also reflected, for instance, by one of the most active local participants in the 1984 Summit. **Jon Jones**, preacher for the Richland Hills Church of Christ in Ft. Worth, returned home eager to propagate the Summit's plea. January 12, 1986, at the Southwest Christian Church, Jones practically apologized for stands Churches of Christ have taken against Christian Churches.
- II. It is now admitted on all hands that a division has actually occurred.
 - A. Our "anti" brethren have been objective enough to admit it. The November 21, 1985, *Guardian of Truth* recognized the formal existence of "A Split In The Institutional Camp."
 - B. The **Disciples of Christ** (Christian Church) has been objective enough to admit it. One writer noted an "ecumenical" movement" among Churches of Christ which "occurred more west of the Mississippi River in its early stages and now has spread all over the country." He said many churches associated with this movement could be found in "major urban areas: Dallas, Ft. Worth, Nashville" and "so on." He observed that the typical message historically associated with Churches of Christ was "dying out" (**Mike Casey**, *Discipliana*, Spring 1984).
 - C. The *Gospel Advocate*, the oldest and perhaps most influential paper among the brethren, was objective enough to admit it.
 1. Then editor **Guy N. Woods** reprinted Casey's remarks May 3, 1984, and added: "So it is, we sadly concede."
 2. Then June 6, 1985, Woods (who had opposed the Summit movement) was suddenly replaced as editor by **Furman Kearley** (who had participated in the 1984 Summit and urged that Christian Church preachers be eased through our classrooms into our pulpits).
 - D. Others on the *conservative side* of the present division have admitted it.
 1. **Gary Workman's** editorial in the May/June 1985 *Restorer* was "Will the Church Divide?" Workman said, "My answer is that it has *already* divided...I know it from the fact that where a definite stand is taken on these issues the pulpit is obviously closed to any from the other side."
 2. **Johnny Ramsey** then wrote: "Let us face the facts: division has already come and we will just have to take a stand!" He applied the words, "We do not think alike; we do not preach alike; we are not alike" (*Restorer*, July 1985).
 - E. Those on the *liberal side* of the present division have admitted it.
 1. In 1983 when the *Firm Foundation* changed hands the more conservative owners asked **Reuel Lemmons** to keep his name with the paper as "Editor Emeritus." When Lemmons heard who the new staff writers would be, he said, "I don't even *know* that brotherhood."
 2. At the June 1987 Whitney Unity Meeting **Jon Jones** said, "Today there is a *barrier* between brethren that threatens yet another division," one "more serious than that experienced in the 1950's" (Gibson's personal notes).
 - F. Those on *both sides* of the present division have jointly admitted it.
 1. June 1-2, 1987, there was a unity meeting at the Iron Springs Christian Camp in Whitney, Texas, involving two teams of brethren, in which I participated. The very existence of special unity meetings between "liberals" and "conservatives" in "mainline" Churches of Christ demonstrates the reality of division.
 2. In my opinion, discussions at Whitney did more to high-light our differences than to re-achieve unity. I talked to some on the "other side" who felt the same way.
 - G. Even the *general press* has reported this new schism.

An article distributed by the *Religious News Service*, which appeared in the *Christian News*, March 25, 1986, was entitled, "Churches of Christ Begin to Shed Separatist Image." The article asserted that churches of Christ are "loosening up a bit" and "reaching out to other Christians."

III. There are no good reasons why this division should not be openly and "officially" recognized by those involved in it.

A. Formally recognizing this division will *not* hinder those who stand for the truth from teaching those who have drifted into error.

1. It is not necessary to be in fellowship with an errorist in order to maintain the sort of personal tie necessary to teach him. In fact, conflicting signals keep erring brethren from thinking seriously and learning the truth.

2. In 1896 **M.C. Kurfees** wrote **J.W. McGarvey**: "The 'current reformation' has become a denomination in every essential particular, and it is no more necessary to be identified with it in order to oppose and correct its mistakes, than it is to be identified with the other denominations for the same purpose." This advice well applies to a certain class of congregations today.

B. Formally recognizing this division will *not* cause congregations in the right to "wither and die."

1. Realization that God is being obeyed in even a painful duty will boost the morale of true congregations (*c.f.*, Deuteronomy 13:1-11; Acts 5:11; II Thessalonians 3:6).

2. The feeling of being "left out" of projects churches generally are undertaking today will be replaced in faithful brethren by a close-knit sense of togetherness and common purpose that will strengthen and edify. This was what occurred in the division of 1906.

IV. There are good reasons why this division should be more openly and "officially" recognized.

A. Strong, sound congregations will be strengthened and safeguarded.

1. Congregations that have led the way with sound lectureships and publications are under constant attack from liberal men. Formally marking false churches would give them less chance of enticing weak members in sound churches away after worldly sensationalism.

2. When sister churches stand for and suffer for the truth the rest of us owe it to them to help them in the struggle (Numbers 32:6; Obadiah 11).

B. Conservative brethren in weak congregations will be encouraged by and attracted to churches taking a strong stand.

1. When Jereboam led the north into error, "the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to" Rehoboam, the rightful king of Judah (II Chronicles 11:13). By the time of Asa the Biblical stand of Judah so outshined the wild meanderings of the north that the spiritually-minded of various tribes "fell to him out of Israel in abundance" (II Chronicles 15:9).

2. Congregations purposing to remain willingly ignorant of destructive trends among us, naively thinking they can live in isolation from them, are doomed to be swept away by them. Therefore, as

many *individuals* ought to be saved as possible.

C. Weaker sheep will follow the example of these stronger brethren who take a stand and support those who do.

1. When the Levites resorted to Rehoboam, there followed "after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord" (II Chronicles 11:13-17; *cf.*, 13:9-12).

2. Whenever the humble left Israel for Jerusalem, northern liberalists "laughed them to scorn and mocked them" (II Chronicles 30:10-11). But Levites led the way in this painful change of place and association because they were still determined to come down on "the Lord's side" (Exodus 32:26).

D. The consequence of not *withdrawing* from the false teachers is being *leavened* by false teaching (I Corinthians 5:6-7; Galatians 5:7-10).

1. The Bible constantly warns us of the danger of becoming what we tolerate (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 5:11). How many good brethren and good preachers can you name who have drifted from the truth in recent decades? If we fail to obey God, could it not happen to us?

2. **Rubel Shelly**, for instance, contended earnestly against prominent errors, but when he came to the verge of division, the acid test of disfellowshipping, he halted. He has since accepted one after another several of the very errors he set out to oppose. If we "bounce off" this same "wall," could not the same happen to us?

V. Postponing formal division is to play right into the hands of digressives.

A. Digressives know that time is on their side.

1. Liberal churches have "dared" to cross "lines" of scruple and belief once generally recognized among Churches of Christ. They are like those "leading thinkers" that have pushed the limits of our nation's moral tolerance. The latter have gradually increased the cursing, sexual explicitness, and general depravity in the media, for instance, "daring" the public to retaliate. Churches on the cutting-edge of liberalism have, in effect, done the same thing with their weak preaching, gymnasiums, acceptance of worldliness and adulterous marriages, and fellowship with denominations. Whenever such border lines are crossed and protest is not maintained, innovations become "accepted." This is just what the progressives, in both cases mentioned above, are betting will happen. This is precisely what those who love the truth cannot allow to happen!

2. Liberals are attracting and training the vast majority of young people in the church, while death is constantly thinning the ranks of sound, older brethren. "Anti" historian **Ed Harrell** of the University of Alabama, saw the aforementioned conflict of the 1970's as "the inevitable confrontation" between "second and third generation leaders" in Churches of Christ since the 1906 split (*Florida College Lectures*, 1981, p. 248). If a last, great, decisive battle for the hearts of undecided brethren is ever to be fought, the time to do it is now.

B. Digressives are capitalizing on the popular stigma against "dividing churches."

1. Extremism in the church runs in cycles. In the latter half of the 19th century brethren were really very slow to divide justifiably over Instrumental Music and Missionary Societies. But when division came into vogue, some went too far and also divided over communion cups, Bible classes, and eventually colleges and orphan homes. This in turn has again built up a great resistance to division among brethren.
 2. Since some, like "the boy who cried 'Wolf,'" have cried "Digression" earlier in this century, a generation of brethren has largely lost sight of its obligation to practice church discipline and support justified divisions (I Corinthians 11:19; II Thessalonians 3:6). As liberal churches swell larger, it will become ever easier to convince the masses that sound brethren are "just a faction stirring up division." If anything, this attitude will be easier to overcome now than later.
- C. Failure to recognize this division is simply to postpone the inevitable.
1. Through the latter decades of the 19th century patient, longsuffering, brethren hoped against hope that division might somehow be averted. During those years no one manifested more determined forbearance than the calm tempered **David Lipscomb**. But in 1897 he finally admitted after a visit with some "Christian Church" folks: "I am fast reaching the conclusion that there is a *radical and fundamental difference* between the disciples of Christ and the society folks. These desire to build up a strong and respectable denomination. To do it they rely on strong and moneyed societies, fine houses, fashionable music, and eloquent speeches, too often devoid of gospel truth" ("The Churches Across The Mountains," *Gospel Advocate*, Jan. 7, 1897).
 2. None but the self-deceived deny the reality of a similar division which is almost universally admitted as a fact today. It is the nature of apostasy to accelerate and demand separation on the part of the faithful (Genesis 18:32; Proverbs 1:28-33; Ezekiel 14:14; II Timothy 2:16-17, 3:13).
- VI. How can formal division be accomplished?
- A. Good preliminary groundwork already has been well laid.
1. Sound local church lectureships have begun and are determined to continue annually.
 2. Sound training schools have been set up.
 3. Numerous papers have taken an editorial stand.
 4. Several useful debates have been held (e.g., Denton Discussion Forums, 1985 Freed-Hardeman Forum).
 5. Signed statements have been issued (e.g., "An Expression Of Concern," 1986).
- B. Suggestions for the future.
1. Perhaps a letter should be sent to leading digressive congregations documenting their advanced apostasy and calling for repentance.
 2. If this last ditch effort is not 100% successful, every possible effort should be made to *publicize* which congregations stand together in no longer recognizing the leading digressive groups as sister congregations.
 3. A letter also could be circulated inviting congregations to participate in the above statement.
 4. Additional statements from leaders in congregations should also appear in church bulletins and in religious periodicals circulated among all concerned.
 5. However it is effected, something more needs to be done.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We realize that the church is today challenged on many fronts.
1. Apathy is a problem even in congregations whose leadership is doctrinally sound. Such attitudes undoubtedly have contributed to the liberalism we see today.
 2. But consider this: When Japan attacked **Pearl Harbor**, December 7, 1941, President Roosevelt met with his cabinet. But they did *not* discuss changing the curriculum at the Naval Academy to produce a better generation of radar watchmen for the future. There was a *war* to be fought! Even so, our first order of business must be to strengthen ourselves against those threatening to take our members, our pulpits, and our church buildings, rather than pondering the remote causes of our problems. Brethren, there is first a *war* to be fought!
- B. "The children of Issachar" were "men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (I Chronicles 12:32). Where are the children of Issachar today?

The Pendulum Swings...Again!

Lynn Parker

For ages, the religious world has ridden the swinging pendulum of extremes. For example, men so drastically recoiled from the Catholic doctrines of salvation by meritorious works that they went "hook, line, and sinker" for a doctrine of salvation by "faith only." As any Bible student knows, both extremes are inconsistent with God's Word.

The pendulum has been swinging for some years within the Lord's body; apparently it is close to reaching its apex...again. A new extreme is snowballing. We call it

liberalism. Not content to "speak as the oracles of God" and preach "the whole counsel of God", some among us have decided to emphasize the positive themes of God's grace, love, and the need for unity *to the exclusion* of Bible themes concerning the defense of the gospel, the "old paths" of strict adherence to God's Will, the judgment and wrath of God, the silence of the Scriptures, the distinctiveness of the Lord's church, the error of denominationalism, and the commands (law, if you will) of God.

Now in vogue is a philosophy of pleasant sermons that

neither condemn sin nor rebuke the sinner; that tickle ears, but do not challenge Christians to be separate from the world; that encourage "unity with those in error, instead of urging the sinner to repent. Now to go along with this extreme of liberalism, no doubt we will see certain parts of the Bible "shelved" as being "too blunt", "caustic", "narrow", "confining", "intimidating", "inappropriate" (maybe even "knuckle-headed"!), or "irrelevant".

For example, the "new trend" must somehow get rid of II John 9-11 because it would not be "irenic" to read, "**Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God...**" And it would certainly not be "conciliatory" to talk about II Thessalonians 3:6,14. While at it, these "free-spirited" brethren had better remove from their Bibles Matthew 7:20-23, Matthew 15:13, Acts 2:47, Romans 16:16, Romans 16:17-18, Ephesians 4:4 ("one body" sounds too "definite"), Matthew 16:18, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:11,19, Hebrews 10:26-31, Hebrews 2:12, I

John 1:3-7, Jude 3, Revelation 22:18-19, I John 2:19, John 8:32, and Philippians 1:16. Then of course, in the Old Testament, you certainly would not expect these brethren to glean much from the account of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10), Noah's obedience in building the ark (Genesis 6), Samuel's rebuke of Saul (I Samuel 15:22), or the timeless question of Amos 3:3. After putting these Scriptures in "moth-balls", the liberal extremists still will not be satisfied with the Words of Inspiration.

Our plea is simple and certainly not new: come back up to the Bible! Forsake the extremes of the religious pendulum—whether it be the extreme of liberalism or that of legalism—and return to a "thus saith the Lord" in all that we do and say. Isn't that simple? And you don't even have to do any *editing* when you preach "**the whole counsel of God**"!

—1101 South Main Street
Baytown, Texas 77520



WHAT OF LIBERALISM?

Gary L. Grizzell

If any one force is eating away at the very foundation of Christianity today, it must be liberalism. Liberalism in its essence and heart is evil. It is destructive, deceiving and sly. Those who practice it remind us of the most subtle beast of the field, the serpent (Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:9). Liberalism is an attitude of a lack of respect and appreciation for divine truth. It is responsible for a multitude of false doctrines which have caused men to be eternally separated from the God of heaven.

Whatever form this deadly monster takes, it is just as damnable and hurting. However, it would seem that the most deceiving and harmful form through which it works is that of the wolf in sheep's clothing. Jesus warned, "**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**" (Matthew 7:15). Every true sheep should beware of the false sheep who seeks to devour. To "beware" implies the importance of knowing the characteristics for which to watch. Notice then, in playing the "Spot-the-Wolf Game," a few of the attributes for which to watch in turning the light on the evildoer of darkness. (Ephesians 5:11).

NOTICE FIRST THAT A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING LOOKS LIKE THE OTHER SHEEP. He grazes with them, he seems to follow the shepherd with them, sleeps and lives with them. In the church the false teacher (wolf) would have it no other way. His game is deception and he will talk, dress and act in whatever way necessary to win the score. The liberal plays the part of the faithful, conservative child of God. (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

SECOND, JESUS SAID THAT "INWARDLY THEY ARE RAVENING WOLVES." The divine Son of God, our Lord, in making this statement, exposes the self-serving motives of false prophets. The wolf in sheep's clothing is not out to help his fellow sheep correctly follow the footsteps of the shepherd and neither is the motive of the faithless hypocrite in the church directed toward exhorting fellow comrades on the path of duty. His desire is to see them in the ditch so that evil may triumph over their wayward feet. Did

not Jesus say, "**They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.**" (Matthew 15:14). "**In vain do they worship me.**" (Matthew 15:8). The false teacher in a congregation is not concerned with characteristics such as right motives, sincerity and such; his only thought is to claim as many sheep as possible to his denominational type philosophy of Christianity. Jesus said, "**Ye shall know them by their fruits**" and "**Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**" (Matthew 7:16, 20). Notice by the use of repetition the great emphasis of Jesus to "**KNOW THEM!**" (Matthew 7:16-20, emphasis mine, GLG).

STILL A THIRD CHARACTERISTIC OF A WOLF IS THAT OF CHARADING AS A MATURE, EXPERIENCED FOLLOWER OF THE SHEPHERD. Surely, one of the most sickening, disgusting and repulsive attitudes the faithful servant of God is forced to witness is that of the liberal as he poses as a mature, loving and wise Christian. The true child of God can see with exact spiritual eyesight the lying hypocrisy this form of evil takes. The uncommitted liberal has skin-deep love. He has learned to smile, talk softly and act intellectual, but he hasn't learned to love. He has learned to blow his trumpet and do his works to be seen of men, but he has not learned to pray in his closet and keep from the left hand what the right hand has done. (*cf.*, Matthew 6:4).

FOURTH, THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING LIKES BEING A WOLF. It is a challenge and a savage joy to him as he cowardly hides behind a mask and sneaks upon unsuspecting, innocent little sheep. The liberal in a congregation likes being so. He can appear to be a friend to young converts. But to the false prophet, the young convert is easy prey and he will not be satisfied until another conversion takes place, from true commitment to a lazy attitude toward the authority of the scriptures.

LAST, THE WOLF CARES NOT FOR THE SHEPHERD. He is not following the Shepherd but the flock. Neither does he hear the Shepherd's voice. The liberal in the church has no deep sympathy for the tremendous sacrifice

our GREAT SHEPHERD suffered in order to bring His flock into existence. He will not suffer persecution which comes only as a result of following him "who did no sin" (I Peter 2:22), even though "for even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (I Peter 2:21). The wolf in sheep's clothing does not hear the voice of the Shepherd because he is determined not to hear it. The false prophet in the church today has set his mind on leading astray weak, unwatchful Christians and is "dull of hearing." (Acts 18:27). Jesus revealed the fact that the false teacher who will not listen, hear and obey, responds such "because ye are not of my sheep...My sheep hear my voice...and they follow." (John 10:26-27).

Be it known that false prophets are evil. They are to be marked and avoided like the plague. (Romans 16:17-18). They seek to destroy the greatest institution on earth, the Lord's church. Their weapon is error and their tactic is deception. They will do everything in their earthly power to discredit the authority of the Word of God and those who boldly, courageously defend and preach the Word of God.

Brethren, in view of the evil influence of liberalism, let us rise up and put our armour on. (Ephesians 6:10ff). May we examine the fruit which uncovers wolves in sheep's clothing. We must know the enemy and having spotted him "be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not...wherefore rebuke them sharply...even their mind and conscience is defiled...they profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:9-11, 13, 15-16).

While we fight Satan on the front line in our evangelistic efforts to move ahead in a positive direction, let us not forget the destructive cancer that is eating daily in our barracks and ask the question, "What of Liberalism?"

—535 Laurel Drive
Laurel, Mississippi 39440

CHURCH POLITICS

Shan Jackson

More and more we're seeing our brethren jumping into the political arena. If this is their flair I'm all for them; but the thought of running for office is simply not my "cup of tea." I suppose the *running* wouldn't be so bad—but what if I *lost*! I'm just not so sure my fragile ego could stand such a shock.

But suppose for a moment that Christ's design for membership in His church was to be decided the same way that our political officials are elected. Suppose we had to run for church membership the way the mayor or city councilmen have to run for public office. If that be the case I wonder how many of us would win and how many would lose.

WHAT IF WE HAD TO BE RE-ELECTED?

Since we're just *supposing* here let us further suppose that our term of office was also predetermined like a public official's term is predetermined. Say that our church membership was for one year and after that year we would have to be re-elected. Also, our campaign would be based

solely on what we had or had not done during our previous term.

Just suppose we had to show what we have done for the Lord last year, would we really have anything to show? Would our fellow Christians, these fictitious voters, see a term of production which bore much for the Lord, ten fold, twenty fold, or an hundred fold? Or would they see a tree which is barren of figs and thereby cursed and condemned by the Lord? How many of us would win our re-election and how many of us would lose?

Changing illustration now—but not application—let us further suppose that the elders of our congregation were trying to update the church directory and every member was asked to defend why his or her name should be left in the directory. How many of us could defend our name staying in when we do so little, if anything, for the Lord? (Remember, it is not the *church directory* that is the record of the saved but instead the *Lamb's Book of Life*). Could we supply enough evidence to convince the elders to continue including our name?

WOULD THE CHURCH GROW OR DECLINE?

The old tried and true illustration which asked, if every member did just as much or just as little work as I do, would the church be stronger or weaker than it already is, is still a viable question. In that case, would the church be growing or declining? Would it be active or apathetic? Would I be striving or starving? Or would it be cold and dead? Suppose every member of the Lord's church had the same attitudes as I have, would we be planning to enlarge the building or close the doors?

A similar and equally effective illustration poses the question that if you would be arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence for a conviction? What is the answer? If Christianity was a crime, how many of us would be walking free on the streets and how few of us would be behind bars? Where would *you* be?

Sometimes it's fun to play "suppose" but sometimes it also is very enlightening. Suppose Jesus had only as much religious gumption as you and I have, I wonder if there would even be a church?

—Post Office Box 904
Palacios, Texas 77465

At What Cost Success?

Eddie Helms

In our society, businesses measure the success they enjoy or the lack of it on the number of their clients and the money they have made during a certain amount of time. If their expenditures exceed their income they certainly would not be considered successful, and rightly so. In order to be successful, then, they modify their product to meet the needs of the consumer. This is one workable philosophy to use in the business world.

Many, however, have brought this philosophy into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some no longer desire the pure product of God, the gospel. They desire to hear pep talks and sermonettes with entertainment provided. Since some church leaders equate numbers and contribution alone as success, to maintain these figures they modify the product God has given mankind. The result is something far inferior! Thus, these churches have gone the way of the church at Thyatira sacrificing their souls for the idol of success (Revelation 2:20). They think they are alive and

successful but are actually as dead as the church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1). They have no right to be recognized as a lighthouse of God (Revelation 3:5). Their man-made philosophy of success has cost them souls, the most precious commodity man has.

HOW GOD CONSIDERS SUCCESS

On what does *God* base success? Who among us would say *Noah* was not successful in God's sight, though he influenced only eight souls including himself? He was a success! (Genesis 6:22). Ezekiel's preaching did not deter the destruction and captivity of the rebellious people of God (Ezekiel 2:5-3:11). Yet, no one would consider him unsuccessful (Ezekiel 3:19). Stephen is another example of a man whom God considers successful. He had no *positive* responses to his sermon in Acts 7; in fact, that one sermon cost him his life. These men could easily have modified their messages and no doubt had many responses. They would have been considered successful in the sight of men, but would have miserably failed in the sight of God.

You see, brethren, successful churches are not based on numbers or financial contribution. We are successes only when we stand with the Bible. When we modify or change the Bible to suit the whims and fancies of men we will miserably fail and it will cost us souls!

WAS THIS REALLY A SUCCESS?

Just recently, in my area, an annual event for young people took place. These events take place on each Monday night of the month. At one event a singing group was singing spiritual songs accompanied by hand clapping, humming and pre-recordings of their voices sounding like instruments of music. One of the preachers at this particular congregation, near the close of the service, read Colossians 3:16 noting what they were doing was an expression of that verse. Later, this event was applauded as a success. **At what cost success?** How can this congregation hope to persuade others of the purity of New Testament worship when they have modified the message?

Israel was successful only when they were obedient to *God's* message and remained a distinct people. It was only when they began to measure success by *man's* standards that they miserably failed (1 Samuel 8:5-18). Brethren, when will we learn that God blesses when we obey? Let us learn that to be successful we *must* obey! Let us always strive to build congregations that are successful in the sight of God!

—Route 1, Box 316
Allons, Tennessee 38541

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

David L. Miller

The book of Deuteronomy constitutes a restatement or second declaration of the law. Its original setting and time were the Plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River, near the end of the 40-year desert meandering. The new generation of Israelites is on the verge of experiencing what its parents were not permitted to experience—entrance into the Promised Land (Numbers 14:29-31).

In the first three chapters, Moses recounts the 40-year period that preceded their current situation. In Chapter 4, he instructs, warns, and admonishes the people to be obedient to God when they enter the land and begin a new life. He articulates numerous stipulations to which they should submit themselves (chapters 5-6) and then summarizes: **"And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us"** (6:25).

By the time some religious orators get finished expounding their notions of God's grace and mercy, one is left with the distinct impression that individuals need not to be overly concerned about strict adherence to the specifications of the New Testament. "After all," they tell us, "we're saved by grace and not by works."

But too much of the Bible militates against this conception of "cheap grace." Moses understood that while God's love and mercy were incredibly great (cf., Deuteronomy 4:31 and Numbers 14:18), God demanded loving obedience from those who wished to be acceptable (Deuteronomy 5:10). Only by behaving in harmony with revealed law from God could a person please him.

Moses described such careful attention and respect for the details of God's will as "righteousness." The people could be righteous in God's sight, and therefore be saved, if they would conform themselves to divine doctrine. Only obedient truth (*i.e.*, faith) can enable one to be accounted righteous by God (cf., Romans 4:19-22; Genesis 26:5; James 2:21-24). As the apostle John wrote by inspiration for all people living today, **"...he that doeth righteousness is righteous... whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God"** (1 John 3:7,10).

May we follow God's written instructions with meticulous care and concern, out of hearts full of love and faith. In so doing, it will be for "our righteousness."

—Church of Christ Bulletin
P.O. Box 482
Olathe, Kansas 66061

Notes & Quotes...

Henry & Rita Large, of Blountville, Tennessee, renewed their own subscription, and sent in a new one, saying, "We are hoping to be able to get others in our congregation to subscribe (to *Contending for the Faith*)... The brotherhood—worldwide—needs to do this, instead of attacking it. We hope our brothers' and sisters' eyes will be opened to the truth and come out of their false teachings.

"If only they could realize the value of the Lord and his church. We have so many of them going back into the world now. This really saddens our hearts to see this. My wife and I came out of the Baptist and Methodist clubs. I call them this because they are not a church. If these false teachers knew the definition of the word church, they would be in the Lord's body, not a club. They cannot separate the Lord's teachings from his

church, I don't care how hard they try to do this. His church and words always will stand.

"Brother Rice, we are standing with you 100%. Keep up your good work of defending the truth, because there are not many left who are."

MANY CONTINUE TO ORDER SETS OF "CROSSROADS PACKETS"

Among those who continue to order whole sets of back issues of our "Crossroads" series, **Bob J. Henson**, of Benton, Kentucky, ordered a set; **Kenneth L. Webb**, of Kaufman, Texas, one set; **Edgar E. Holcomb**, of Elyria, Ohio, one set; **Mrs. L. Fleetwood**, of Bakersfield, California, ordered one set, saying, "I want to read all I can about this as my daughter and son-in-law have gone with the San Francisco Church of Christ (Berkeley Church of Christ—old name)"; **L. C. Bankhead**, of

Corosciana, Texas, two sets; **El Marie Kirby**, of Galesburg, Michigan, one set; **Daniel & Florence Brotherton**, of Modesto, California, one set; **Harold & Jean Bridges**, of Beebe, Arkansas, one set; **Ted R. Prater**, of Morrison, Tennessee, one set; **Hilda Parkhill**, of Hazel, Kentucky, one set; **Donald E. Southall**, of Spencer, West Virginia, ordered one set, saying, "My issues are about worn out from being passed around"; **Charlotte Richmond**, of Santa Maria, California, ordered one set, also enclosed \$20.00 on the Pearl Street/Crossroads Mailing; **Jerry Catchim**, of Herdon, Virginia, ordered one set; **Ezdore J. Tuller**, of West Covina, California, ordered one set, saying, "I do thank you for... your diligence in keeping this Crossroads issue in front of us"; **Stanley Dickinson**, of Springfield, Vermont, one set; **E. V. Wimmer**, of Bluefield, Virginia, two sets; **Cornell Watts**, elder, Joelton, Tennessee, ordered a set, saying, "Con-

tending for the Faith is a much needed publication"; **Flora Davis**, of Hiwassee, Arkansas, one set; **Phillip E. Strattis**, of Parisburg, Virginia, one set; **Gerald L. Cook**, of Glendale, Arizona, one set; **Albert H. Maxey**, minister, Sante Fe, New Mexico, ordered a set, saying, "We have heard that some from the Crossroads Movement are moving into this area, and we want to be prepared ahead of time. 'Forewarned is forearmed!' There is a group of them from a nearby city which has already claimed one of our college-age people; we don't intend to lose any more! May God bless you in your work, and we look forward to receiving these issues soon!"; **William Smart**, of Smithville, Ontario, Canada, ordered two sets, saying, "There is a great interest in these copies in Canada, such as, 'I did not know this teaching existed; please get me a copy.' It appears some brethren here in Canada are afraid of releasing the information regarding Boston/Crossroads. They are afraid of a split occurring which already had happened in Toronto, Ontario."

(NOTE: And still the orders continue to flow. As long as the demand continues, we shall continue to make them available. Please enclose \$9.95 (which includes postage) for each packet you order. Just say, "Send me the 'Crossroads Packet.' Mail your orders to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.)

Ernest L. Bentley, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, ordered two sets of our "Crossroads packet"—one for himself and one for a friend—enclosing "a little extra (\$30.00) for you to use where you see fit. We trust your judgment on the areas of most need.

"As you probably already are aware," he continued, "the Boston church, via the new Crossroads church in Atlanta, has targeted the Knoxville area as one of their new projects. While we hope they will not be successful, we are aware of their ways and methods and the fact that 'some people just can't be warned' as you so often say.

"More and more as Martha and I travel in behalf of Tennessee Bible College, we are seeing those we have had such confidence in going the way of the weak and liberal. Such is heartbreaking, to say the least. So far our TBC graduates have the reputation of being firm in their stand for the truth with no wavering. Pray with us that such will always be true. We surely do need a sound College in the present brotherhood and such is the goal of all the staff and administration at Tennessee Bible College.

"Keep up the good work even though there will always be those among us who have nothing but destructive criticism for those who have firm convictions and are ever ready to stand. May God continue to bless you in every good work and keep you in good health for we surely do need you in the forefront of the fight. Wish we could be more financially able to help in your work."

[NOTE: Much appreciation to brother Bentley for his most encouraging remarks, per foregoing. For those in other areas who feel you may have been "targeted" by Crossroads churches, whether from Boston, Atlanta or wherever, you need to order a complete set of our "Crossroads Packet," which is approximately 20 separate back issues that *Contending for the Faith* has published on "Crossroadism" thus far. They are \$9.95 per packet, postage included.

Once you have your packet in hand, please read and study the material carefully, then decide which of the back issues you should order for general distribution among the families of your congregation. Anticipating such general need, we printed "extra" of most of our "Crossroads" issues, though re: some of them our supply is getting low. You will find the rates for such bundle order on the masthead of any recent issue of *Contending for the Faith* on Page 2. The best time to do all

this is BEFORE "Crossroads" arrive; once they begin to surface, like termites, in a given church or area, as a rule it already is too late, since they already have eaten away the doctrinal structure from the inside.

Please address all orders, whether for "Crossroads Packets" or bundles of particular "Crossroads" issues of the paper to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.)**

Gwinn Adams, Cortez, Colorado: "We do enjoy reading your paper."

Raymond Burney, minister, Beatrice, Nebraska: "To say that you are doing more to destroy the Lord's church than any other person I am aware of in this age would be a gross understatement. I am almost assured that you are hardhearted and care only that you be heard and are not willing to listen... To compare you to DIOTREPHES in 3 John would be a most accurate description of you and your publication.

"You believe that you are the only one who is right and going to heaven... and only those who hold your views will go to heaven. (In your last publication you listed three men who had passed away. You named those who were saved and those who were condemned to hell... YOU made this judgment... not GOD or the scriptures... and I am convinced that you will be answering to the Lord for this unless you repent!)

"I read of several people in the scriptures who were sure that they were GOD'S people... in fact they had been assured... but something happened. They started relying on their own wisdom and laws and regulations, and putting off God's. BECAME A DENOMINATION, if you will allow me to say so. YET YOU ACCUSE THOSE WHO DO NOT CONFORM TO YOUR TEACHINGS OF BEING DENOMINATIONS... You are definitely walking on thin ice. Jesus rebuked these types of people... WHY? Because they put themselves on a high throne... and looked down on all of the others. JESUS CAME NOT FOR THOSE PEOPLE... BUT FOR THOSE WHO NEEDED HIM. He allowed no man to make judgment on another man's actions.

"I am convinced that if Jesus were in your presence today, you would be one of those questioning his actions. 'JESUS, TEACHING THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH MEMBERS... AND THE METHODIST... AND THE BAPTIST... SURELY HE IS NOT WHO HE SAYS HE IS!'

"I do not want your publication in my home. I will tell the members of this congregation to stay clear of it and YOUR teachings. WE WILL PRAY THAT YOU STOP YOUR CHURCH DESTROYING TACTICS... AND SEE JESUS' WILL AND NOT YOUR OWN!"

J. D. Henson, preacher, Gnat Hill church of Christ, Manchester, Tennessee: "Having received the May 1987 issue, there is only one thing to say to you—BRAVO! THANK GOD that men such as you are 'set for the defense of the gospel!'

"Being the new minister for the Gnat Hill church of Christ, I came into possession of your wonderful paper by mistake (it was addressed to a former preacher here), but THANK GOD it happened and enclosed is \$5.00 to assure its continuance is NO mistake. With your publication along with 'The Spiritual Sword,' I am assured of being in partnership of those who will 'declare the whole counsel of God.'

"Only two words, I have. First, take heart, for what you are doing probably is the most important work that any of us can do. In this age of untruth there are many who would undermine the church and seek to alter it from God's plan. Don't let those who criticize you thwart your defense!

"Secondly, be warned! Because of your stand for the truth, many will want you destroyed and that simply must not happen. May we always have the voice to expose and condemn error, trusting that God will, as long

as we are in the right (his word), help and sustain us.

"We will pray to our Father that he continue to bless and protect you as you seek to do as the apostle decreed—'Contend for the Faith'."

People are of two kinds, and he
Was the kind I'd like to be.
Some preach their virtues, and a few
Express their lives by what they do;
That sort was he. No flowery phrase
Or glibly spoken word of praise
Won friends for him. He wasn't cheap
Or shallow, but his course ran deep,
And it was pure. You know the kind.
Not many in life you find
Whose deeds outrun their words so far
That more than what they see, They are.
(Author unknown).

James R. Choate, Glen, Mississippi: "I admire the paper and I thank God for it. I was introduced to this paper by **Garland Robinson**."

FOR RICH FOLKS Jerrle Barker

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate." (1 Timothy 6:17-18).

I always have been tempted to pass up these verses. Paul was instructing Timothy on how to instruct rich people.

I once read that someone was rich when they could live on the interest of the interest that they had invested. I don't fit in that category.

But I read something written by **William Bolce** of Phoenix, Arizona, that has given me more thoughts on the subject of who's rich.

Dear Lord,
I have been re-reading the record of the Rich Young Ruler and his obviously wrong choice. But it has set me to thinking. No matter how much wealth he had, he could not—

ride in a car,
have any surgery,
turn on a light,
buy penicillin,
hear a pipe organ,
watch TV,
wash dishes in running water,
type a letter,
mow a lawn,
fly in an airplane,
sleep on an inner spring mattress,
or talk on the phone.

If he was rich, then what am I?
In view of my prosperity, I need to obey the commands,

1. Don't be haughty.
2. Don't trust in uncertain riches.
3. Trust in God.
4. Do good.
5. Be rich in good works.
6. Be ready to give.
7. Be willing to share.

Blessings are promised to those who obey God. They will be "storing up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." (1 Timothy 6:19)

Riches bring responsibility. Let's use them well.

—Bulletin
Cadiz church of Christ
1785 East Main
Cadiz, Kentucky 42211

Mrs. Robert Wynns, Minco, Oklahoma: "I really enjoy your magazine."

Lisa J. Moderacki, of Bradenton, Florida, soon after coming out of Crossroadism: "...if we could just do away with false doctrine, well, imagine how much more time we would have to preach the truth! If more churches of Christ would heed II John 9-11, so much more apostasy could be dealt with. It makes me mad to tears when I hear of sound churches being infiltrated by men teaching false doctrine. Brother, I can relate to the hurt of being misled by evil men. I have had to be "re-taught" so much scripture. At one time I was so afraid to read my Bible out of fear of what it would do to hurt me. That's how bad the false teaching was at Crossroads. Now I'm VERY happy to say that I understand the REAL TRUTH as preached in the *unperverted* gospel, thanks to **Bud Bayless** and many other fine preachers and teachers..."

In an issue of one of their bulletins, one of the leading congregations in Nashville, Tennessee, was bragging that **World Christian Broadcasting Corporation, KNLS**, Anchorage, Alaska, is heard over one third of the earth's surface, including Australia, Japan, China and the Soviet Union, plus more than 20 other nations. Also that the gospel messages are presented in a number of languages. And that in the Soviet Union alone more than 120 million shortwave sets are in use.

In that case, why did their president, **Robert Scott**, of Abilene, Texas, confirm to **Joe McDonald**, of Oklahoma City, that at least 85% of the broadcast time over that station is devoted to JAZZ MUSIC? It makes no sense at all!

Reg Rogers, old-time gospel preacher, Tulsa, Oklahoma: "Carl Rasmussen wrote to you in August '87 *Contending for the Faith*, to please stop sending the paper his way. He had taught a class on First Corinthians 13 (the love chapter). He had never seen in any paper so much malice as in *Contending*."

"Ira, I know that you don't claim absolute perfection and we all know that any of us who claim to be without sin deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (I John 1:8). But shouldn't those who earnestly try to please God be given a hearing?"

"Brother Rasmussen taught the love chapter; he believes you and the rest of us that support *Contending for the Faith* are full of malice. He has overlooked something in I Corinthians 13—"Love never faileth" (vs. 8). Carl's love, by implication, allows those in his class to go on in the dark about the fatal errors that are spreading brotherhood-wide. Love never fails to warn of danger. The false doctrine of Shelly leads to fellowship with the Independent Christian Church. That church preaches and practices that which divided the church over 100 years ago. The Crossroads doctrine that is distinctive to it is a false way. Charity, thank God, sends a warning. Where love is claimed that gives error free course is not the love we learned of the Father."

"As for Carl's charge of a paper full of malice, he must have been searching for malice and those who look too hard for it find it where it is not. Ira, I have read every edition of *Contending for the Faith* from Volume One, and I haven't seen any malice in it. I look for love—I found it in the Bible and I find it in *Contending for the Faith*... Brother Rasmussen should have cited something from the pages of *Contending for the Faith*, but he didn't. They seldom or never do. That is love?"

"Brother Rasmussen will not see this. He cancelled his subscription. If there are those on the fence, let them jump off on the side of love. They'll find a welcome."

L. V. Woolever, of Abilene, Texas, is now deceased.

Wilson Bryan, of Baltimore, Maryland, renewed for six more years.

Opal Montgomery, of Halstead, Kansas, subscribed for a club of six.

SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS

(Ephesians 6:10-17)

Raymond Bailey

Will Rogers, back in the '30s, used to write: "All I know is what I read in the papers. My remarks below are those that I have "read in the papers."

A committee of 11 in the Methodist Church has recently been trying to eliminate "Onward Christian Soldiers" from their hymnals.

"Stand Up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the Cross; lift high his royal banner, it must not suffer loss." Will the Methodists eliminate this song also? "Soldiers of Christ, Arise" and others could be mentioned.

Do the Methodists not know that Satan is "militant"? He was with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He was with Job. Read Genesis 3 and Job 1 and 2. He was "militant" with Christ. (Matthew 4). The text above pictures Christianity under the figure of "soldiers of combat." The religion of Christ does not use carnal weapons for this fight. In the Middle Ages, Catholics and Protestants fought "religious wars" to gain converts. Moslems did not hesitate to do so. Our warfare, as soldiers of the cross, is spiritual. The sword of the Spirit is our weapon.

Churches of Christ are not as "militant" as we once were. Debates are almost a thing of the past. Jude tells us to contend for the faith. Denominationalism is not "touched on" by many preachers today. Doctrine, if mentioned, is done in an apologetic way. Compromise is seen by many preachers today who do not think "instrumental music" in worship is so bad.

Crossroadism is handled "lightly" by many preachers today. Many preachers take a "neutral" stand on the matter. Infidels teach in our "Christian" schools. Witness the two professors of Abilene Christian University accused of teaching evolution as a fact.

I hear many sermons concluded today about like this: "If you need to respond in 'some way or any way' do so as we sing. People coming forward to put Christ on in baptism would not know what to do from these sermons. Have we forgotten the plan of salvation?"

Preach the gospel. (Mark 16:15-16). Preach the word. (II Timothy 4:2). Preach it in love. (Ephesians 4:15). But see that it is preached. **N. B. Hardeman** used to tell "preacher boys" that it was not enough to just preach the truth, but error needed to be opposed. Our Lord did. We need more preachers today who are not afraid to preach the gospel boldly.

—901 North Cedar Street
Searcy, Arkansas 72143

WHAT A WEEKEND!

"Our lectureship is now over—and what a great program it was!... The speakers provided a spiritual feast that was "gobbled up" by everyone present... If you had to miss for some reason, we soon will have the entire lectureship on video and audio tapes, so that you can listen and know what was taught. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to everyone who helped out in any way to make the lectureship a success."

—Tim Ayers
Cullendale church of Christ
2707 Mt. Holly Road
Camden, Arkansas 71701

(NOTE: Those interested in ordering either the video or the audio tapes of this lectureship, please get in touch with brother Ayers at the foregoing address. IYR Jr.)

Lawrence Johnson, from Korea, in sending greetings from "the land of the morning calm," enclosed \$25.00 "to help with operations cost," saying, "Thank you for providing excellent spiritual material."

L. A. Cook, of Buckner, Arkansas, in renewing for another three years to *Contending for the Faith*, also sent a check for \$100.00 to our *Far East/World Evangelism Fund*. Much appreciation!

BACK ISSUES SENT ON REQUEST FOR CIRCULATION BUILDING

Realizing that "forewarned is forearmed", *Contending for the Faith* continues sending sample bundles of back issues FREE OF CHARGE to those interested in helping build readership where they attend.

Recent sample bundles have been sent to **Virgil Roberts**, of Kenton, Tennessee, who said, "I agree the church needs the gospel more now than ever. We are a far cry from the church of 40 years ago," to **Jack Caraker**, of Hartford, Kentucky, who wrote, "The church in this area is very weak concerning the truth. It is hard for them to distinguish the church from the world and its worldly lust. Please send the bundle of *Contending for the Faith* and I will do my best with the help of God to see that some of the people in this area are informed;" to **Ralph Brinkley**, of Anchorage, Alaska, who said "I will be most happy to distribute any back issues of 'Contending for the Faith' that you can send me. Each month I put about nine or ten issues in the foyer on the table and they are picked up immediately. Brother **Clary** announces they are there and available... A new member **Wilbert Woolridge** (from Austin, Texas—Southwest church) moved up here about a year ago. In his first talk here in the congregation he said that the first time at South Anchorage worship, when he saw *Contending for the Faith* and the *Firm Foundation*, he knew this was a sound congregation and was where he wanted to meet. So those who are faithful appreciate your good work. Ira"; and **Mrs. Paul A. Faber**, of Woodsfield, Ohio, wrote, "Please send me some sample back issues of *Contending for the Faith* so I can try to get more brethren interested. I'm praying for you as you continue this very important work."

(NOTE: Others interested in helping sign up new readers by distributing such sample back issues of the paper, please write to us and let us know. Please address all such requests to: **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.**)

Jack Caraker, of Hartford, Kentucky, wrote that his wife had had surgery, "so I've been chief cook and bottle washer. She is recuperating very well, so we are thankful... I will still be available for a small congregation in July who cannot afford a preacher. I would prefer southern Illinois, far west Kentucky or the bootheel of Missouri. Of course others would be considered. If you could recommend me, they would at least know where I stood concerning truth... God bless your efforts for the cause of Christ and continue to stand firm."

(NOTE: Indeed I can recommend brother Caraker and his stand for the truth. Interested churches should address him % Church of Christ, 222 Washington Street, Hartford, Kentucky 42347 or you may telephone (502) 298-3800. (IYR Jr.)

Mrs. Harry Kaplan, of Aurora, Colorado, in renewing for another three years, said, "Keep up the good work."

SIX-YEAR SUBSCRIPTIONS CONTINUE

When readers sign up for another SIX YEARS, *Contending for the Faith* views this as a special vote of confidence. Among those so doing, not reported previously, are **Mr. & Mrs. G. P. Beaver**, of Farmers Branch, Texas; **William W. Davis**, of Denver, Colorado; **J. K. (Jim) Gazzaway**, of Conroe, Texas; saying, "Keep up the guard at the gate!"; **John R. Ledbetter, M.D.**, of Rogersville, Alabama; and **D. B. Swaringen, Jr.**, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Robert & Cheryl Lambert, Calhoun City, Mississippi: "We appreciate your effort in the Lord's work."

Wynema Chenault, of Lawndale, California, when subscribing for **Olin & Velma Shoemaker**, of Hawthorne, California, added \$5.00 for our *contending-for-the-faith fund*.

David M. Wright, 13 Brezemount Grove, Conlig, New Townards, County Down, Northern Ireland: "...the 'Fellowship' meeting in Holywood, County Down, preached by Jim McGulggan and Rubel Shelley was not advertised in any local newspaper nor are there any bulletins or circulars or whatever available, I regret to say. However, the meeting did take place and to the very best of my knowledge was on the theme of planting a New Testament church...I...cannot forward any written or verbal details. However, it would be fair comment to state that Jim McGulggan believes in the James Bales teaching on Divorce & Re-marriage, and that the use of the instrument in worship is not a test of fellowship.

"Maureen and I once met with the assembly in Holywood, our home town, for two years. We left as we could not agree with Jim's belief that for one to become a 'God-Parent' at a sprinkling was not an act of apostasy, but a personal sin. Jim's morals cannot be questioned. He is a very sincere person, but sincerely wrong on the current issues. If you wish to write and ask him about sharing that speaking 'Fellowship' meeting, his address is—116 Church Road, Holywood, County Down, Northern Ireland.

"You might also care to write to brother Bertie Ritchie, 14 Craigaboney Road, Bushmills, County Antrim, Northern Ireland...I would appreciate you writing. I want to have their position confirmed in writing, and you are much more experienced as to how one should question one on the current issues.

"We are so delighted to learn that we shall receive 25 copies of each issue of 'Contending for the Faith.' Would you please let me know who will be paying for them as I will wish to write and express my thanks. DO PLEASE BE FULLY ASSURED that every copy will be well used to keep the saints informed. We also look forward to the 50 copies of a special issue regarding the Shelley discussion at Freed-Hardeman. Those will indeed be so very useful, too. Once again, all I can say in reply is thank you so very much...

"At present I am trying to raise support for a young man in our assembly, brother Bruce Young, who has made application to attend the Memphis School of Preaching...Another young brother, Colin Graham, is attending Southwest School of Bible Studies in Austin, Texas. I managed to find Colin support at Cullendale church of Christ, in Arkansas, so, once again, I seek for Bruce. He will need his air-ticket to the States and support for two years. Brother Guy Woods has kindly offered to buy his books while attending the school, so, if you can help or advise me who one could contact on Bruce Young's behalf, it would be of such great help. Bruce met you once some years ago in Scotland and you advised for him to consider one day going to the school...this young man has a deep desire to preach and defend God's truth, so you did indeed influence him for the good. It is my intention to send as many of our young

men to old-paths schools in the States as new churches must be planted here in Ireland by faithful old-pathers. No other standard will suffice in reply to Jim McGulggan. I fully intend to win this spiritual war. Yes...we are at war. The time has come for the loving family of God to become once again the army of God!..."

(NOTE: "I can understand," I replied, in part, under date May 21, 1987, from Singapore, "that since the so-called 'Fellowship' meeting in Holywood, County Down, preached by Jim McGulggan and Rubel Shelley was not advertised in any local newspaper or bulletins, such would not be available for you to send me. It is my conviction that oftentimes such is deliberate on the part of errorists. They want to make it just as hard as possible to document their depredations against the truth.

"It is not my present intention to write to the brethren whose addresses you sent, however, thank you for sending them to me in any case. I just do not have the time necessary to get into correspondence with such; and when I write, and they reply, they always assume that there will be an ongoing series of letters.

"I did take the time to read the article by Roy Davison, of Weilen, Belgium, that you enclosed. In fact, today I plan to write him for any further items that he may have written in this regard. The one you sent was well organized and to the point.

"It was my pleasure to meet the young man you mentioned at Southwest/Austin, Texas, last month. I hope to mention brother Bruce Young's need in a forthcoming issue of *Contending for the Faith*. As for my possibly coming there for a gospel meeting, should the church invite me, I'll try to work it out. Meanwhile, please pray for me and mine as we continue working and battling in the cause of truth..."

Any church or individual wishing to get into touch with brother Wright regarding helping brother Bruce Young attend Memphis School of Preaching, you have brother Wright's address (see above). Please write to him directly.

Also, anyone wishing to underwrite our sending him 25 copies of each issue of *Contending for the Faith*, please make your checks out for \$12.09 each month, made payable to BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST, and mail them each month to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.)

Franklin H. Thompson, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: "It is not my intention to question motives or intent of those participating in public worship. It is however my responsibility to participate in the public worship scripturally and to see that all others present do the same. This is commanded in I Timothy 3:15.

"For a woman to lead in prayer and singing in the public worship is in violation of I

Timothy 2:11-12. It matters not if a woman is speaking or singing, as long as she is leading in the worship service it would still be in violation of I Timothy 2:11-12.

"All expedients must be kept within the confines of God's Word. The needs and desires of man cannot overrule the Word."

(NOTE: Brother Thompson asked me to comment on the error of using a woman as an interpreter whether she is speaking orally or by the use of signs made with the hands. As near as I can tell, from the above passage cited from I Timothy 2:11-12, the key words in the passage are "over the man." The woman is neither to "teach" over the man, nor is she to "usurp authority" over the man. As long as she is neither teaching nor usurping authority over the man, how could she be in violation of this passage?

In the case of a woman serving just as an "interpreter", I have some difficulty seeing that she is transgressing this passage of scripture. After all, it is the preacher or the teacher who clearly is over her in this case; all that she is doing is causing understanding of what the teacher (not she) has to say. Rather than her being "over" her hearers, it is the teacher who is "over" both her and her hearers—and she is only a "go between" to enable others to know what the teacher (not she) is teaching. Whether her interpreting is done orally or by the use of signs would make no difference, as near as I can judge. Rather than teaching, she herself is being taught, right along with those who hear or see her interpretation. IYR Jr.)

Mary Winstead, Ypsilanti, Michigan: "I pray that you are able to keep up the work you have done in the past regarding the cause of Christ. With more and more once-faithful brethren now drifting farther and farther from the truth..."

"The Lord's church in Michigan has been leaving the truth for several years now. I am proud to say the truth is still being taught and preached at the Bellville congregation. I am very fortunate to be a member of this congregation of the Lord's people. Brother Vance Cobb has been with us for over four years. We are a small congregation but we are growing and not compromising the truth..."

"I still enjoy *Contending for the Faith* very much. Keep up the good work."

Marlin Kilpatrick, Goldsboro, North Carolina: "Since completing my studies at the Florida School of Preaching, Lakeland, Florida, I have moved to Goldsboro, North Carolina. The church here is very sound and appreciates, sound gospel preaching. We continue to appreciate your work..."

"The Florida School of Preaching continues to wage its battle against error in every form. It is deserving of support from our brotherhood...Keep up your good work and may God richly bless you!"

Sue Bolln, Siloam Springs, Arkansas: "I hate to miss getting the paper."

Jim Franks, Crossville, Tennessee: "Keep up the good work!"

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

PLAYING POLITICS WITH THE TRUTH (The "Fellowship Without Endorsement" Theory)

Joseph Meador

(EDITORIAL NOTE: Of all the young thinkers now rising among the brotherhood of Christ, none (or so it seems to me) is more astute than brother Joseph Meador. In addition to serving as preacher to the North Main congregation in Madisonville, Kentucky, and directing The School of the Bible there, brother Meador also is the editor of a most attractive and effective monthly periodical, called In Word And Doctrine, in addition to which he gets out a weekly bulletin for the Madisonville church, entitled, INSIGHTS for Living Daily in Christ.

This Spring, he began a series of articles in his bulletin, which seemed too good to keep bottled up with the Madisonville brethren. Therefore, having secured his permission to combine the three segments of this series all into one article, we are pleased to present what he wrote, as follows.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor)

And Jesus said unto the Pharisees... "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. And he said unto them, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition." (Mark 7:6-9).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In late 1986 I received a letter from a preacher concerning fellowship between brethren. In his letter he penned the following statement:

Even sound gospel preachers differ on many points—some major, some minor. If the use of a speaker implies endorsement of every aspect of his belief, I seriously doubt that we could find any person we could conscientiously use. There would surely be some part of that person's position that most of us would have scruples about.

I would agree without argumentation IF the above quotation pertained solely to differences in matters of approved opinion (that is to say, those opinions which do not contradict the Christian faith). Yet, time and time again we are hearing this same cry from preachers in

reference to variances, not in matters of approved opinion, but rather in matters of faith and practice, e.g., doctrine. As a result, the unscriptural notion is being promulgated by some that we can enjoy spiritual fellowship with an individual or congregation without practicing doctrinal endorsement.

It seems that every generation is plagued by some disturbances over a misunderstanding or a twisting of a particular doctrine which is set forth clearly in the scriptures. Today, such a situation has arisen concerning the doctrine of fellowship, its scope and limitations, in that some, not content to let the Bible speak, have created the "Fellowship Without Endorsement" theory. This false doctrine is one of the cardinal tenets of the "Unity in Diversity" heresy as expounded by W. Carl Ketcherside, Leroy Garrett, et. al. (circa 1970 to the present). Therefore, this particular teaching is worthy of our careful and prayerful study in light of God's Word. (We might well note and consider the teaching of Christ in I John (especially 1:1-7), II John and III John before going further.)

FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES COMPANIONSHIP

A sacred psalmist of Israel wrote, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Responsible Christians Should Act —Responsibly!

While meeting one night in April with the elders of the church at Bellview/Pensacola (as I often do), it was discussed how certain false accusers were striking out in every direction with no evident thought at all as to whether the *facts* justified such carping attacks or not.

As is well known, I already honored these men, under whose oversight I have worked for nigh onto ten years; but what they said that night made me appreciate them all the more. They pointed out that *no matter how* irresponsibly they were being attacked by certain misguided brethren, nevertheless they themselves must always take care to behave toward others—*responsibly!*

"TRUTH CRUSHED TO EARTH SHALL RISE AGAIN"

Have you ever noticed that, with some, once they get it in for you, the wilder the charge the more they seem to feel justified in making it? In the short run, such mad-dog accusations may seem to have the advantage—and one may be tempted to reply in kind.

However, let us all remember that though truth, in the short view, may seem to be crushed to earth, yet, in the long view, it shall rise again. And let us never forget that on Judgment Day, by our *words* we shall be justified, also by our *words* we shall be condemned.

SPREADING RUMORS WITHOUT CHECKING

One phenomenon that always comes with some astonishment, however, is how quick some brethren are to latch on to such wild charges and start spreading them, *as fact*, without ever checking with the proper sources to determine whether they are *true* or *false*. Also how readily certain others will listen with acceptance to such charges, but how reluctantly they will listen to disproof of what so irresponsibly was said.

If we are responsible for what we *say*, are we not likewise responsible for what we *hear*? Does not Proverbs 4:23 teach us to "keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"?

THIS EDITOR HAS SPLIT NO CHURCHES

One example of such irresponsibility going the rounds is that I am supposed to have split a church somewhere. The man does not live who can prove such nonsense. It isn't so—and never was! Yet, because such a wild charge continues to be irresponsibly circulated, I find myself having to deal with it *as if it were true!*

Any reader of this paper who ever hears such a charge, please take down the *name* and *address* of the one making it and *demand the proof*. If one is going to claim to be a responsible Christian, brethren, the least he can do is act *responsibly*.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

PLAYING POLITICS

(Continued from Page 1)

(Psalm 119:63). In this one verse we have the two mandatory ingredients for divine fellowship: 1) oneness in a scriptural association, *i.e.*, the family of God (Acts 2:44-47), and 2) faithfulness unto the law of God (II John 9-11). Upon an examination of I John 1:1-7 one learns that fellowship is vertical (faithful believers with God) as well as horizontal (faithful believers with each other) and that true fellowship between believers exists only when such believers are in fellowship first with God. Unity then is the natural result of spiritual fellowship with the Father. It is not a goal or prize to be sought in lieu of doctrinal righteousness. Yet, many today would seek and strive for "unity" at the expense of doctrinal fidelity. When such occurs, fellowship with God is broken automatically (by not walking in the light), and, as a result, true individual Christian fellowship ceases to exist. Hence, spiritual unity cannot be realized.

In essence, fellowship between believers (resulting in unity) always is predicated upon first arriving at and maintaining fellowship with God (by walking in the light of sound doctrine—II John 9). Unity that is achieved in any other way (*i.e.*, through the schemes of men) is not spiritual unity, but rather carnal union, of the most sectarian stripe.

FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES COMMUNION

Amos, a great prophet of Judah, asked, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Herein the idea is revealed that fellowship involved agreement, *i.e.*, likemindedness in matters of doctrine. (*Cf.*, I Corinthians 1:10.) Thus, we note that true fellowship involves spiritual communion (oneness) of the highest spiritual order among God's people, which, as we have noted earlier, is established by first "walking in the light" of God's Word.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14). The point is graphically illustrated and the question is answered by Paul: "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate."

Christian communion, or oneness, exists only when there is first communion or oneness with God. This harmony was certainly in the mind of Christ when he prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John 17:20-21). True spiritual communion then is something that is very precious; however, it also is something which man easily cheapens and disfigures when, without authority, he offers it up for bid at so-called "Summits" or "Unity Meetings" and extends the "right hand of fellowship" to those who are not entitled.

FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES CONSISTENCY

Perhaps the single source of confusion to many brethren regarding the Bible doctrine of fellowship is the matter of consistency. It is a Bible fact that fellowship involves a strict adherence to the divine guidelines set out by God. Therefore, fellowship demands consistency.

In attitude toward those in error, the Christian should retain a spiritual composure. He should never lower himself by engaging in a personal diatribe against any enemy of the truth, but rather he must concentrate upon the issues at hand. Yet, in confronting those in error and in doing battle for the faith, some sincere brethren inevitably feel that such

faithful gospel preachers are too harsh and unloving. As a result, the mandate for consistency in matters of faith rests upon an emotional fulcrum whereby man's sympathies outweigh God's Word as the standard of judgment regarding fellowship, and hence the scale often is tipped toward unholy union.

However, this was neither the understanding nor the practice of the apostle John, the one "whom Jesus loved." This exiled preacher of the faith could not and would not extend Christian fellowship to anyone who did not "walk in the light," nor could he fellowship those who had ceased "walking in the light" of God's Word.

The beloved apostle John could not, and therefore faithful Christians today may not, render fellowship to those who:

- 1) walk in darkness,
- 2) claim they have no sin,
- 3) refuse to keep the Lord's commands,
- 4) hate their brothers,
- 5) love the world,
- 6) deny that Jesus is the Messiah,
- 7) live life-styles of sin,
- 8) do not have compassion on the deserving needy,
- 9) reject God's testimony about his Son,
- 10) go beyond the doctrine of Christ,
- 11) refuse to abide in the doctrine (teaching) of which Christ is the originator,
- 12) are dictators,
- 13) exert themselves and love to have the preeminence,
- 14) fail to receive apostolic instruction,
- 15) speak wicked words about God's servants,
- 16) oppose and criticize faithful servants of God, or
- 17) practice evil. (*Cf.*, I, II and III John.)

WHAT JOHN DID NOT SAY

In view of Diotrephes (III John 9), and using this erring brother as a test case, we may quickly realize that John, in regard to the doctrine of fellowship, did not say, as many are saying among us today, "Well, after all, he is my brother and he deserves my fellowship," or "He's my brother in error, and, after all, every brother is a brother in error" (but there is a marked difference in a brother who refuses doctrinal correction and one who walks in the light—*cf.*, I John 1:5-10), or "Even if I cannot *fully* fellowship him (F), I still can extend *partial* fellowship to him (f) while refusing to endorse his erroneous doctrinal beliefs," or "Although I do not agree with his doctrine, I will continue to fellowship him out of love, for God desires mercy and not sacrifice," or "Surely we can seek out a means by which there can be unity between us in spite of our doctrinal differences," or "I cannot refuse to fellowship him due to the adverse reaction it might cause with other brethren," or "Although he is actively teaching and promoting false doctrine I will spend a year or two studying with him before I mark him and cease fellowshiping him."

Let it be noted in all sincerity and in all seriousness and from a heart of deep concern, that anyone, whether preacher or elders, who has used any of these excuses in order to justify fellowship with one not entitled, is walking contrary to God's formula for unity. May God grant unto us the wisdom to realize the importance of being faithful unto Him and Him alone, rather than substituting our desire for His express commands. In so doing, some will avoid playing politics with the truth.

—1035 North Main
Madisonville, Kentucky 42431

The Leaven of Liberalism

Harrell Davidson

Some few years ago several of us wrote articles concerning the subject of liberalism. It seems that the time is right for us to point out again certain dangers concerning liberalism. In II Peter 3:16, we note: **"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."** I suppose that this passage alone describes liberalism the best.

"You are a liberal" is heard concerning many brethren and many times. If someone happens to disagree with us he is called liberal. We use the term too much and too loosely. It has a very precise meaning.

For example, after Peter had done wrong and Paul finally withstood him to his face, Paul did not refer to him as a liberal. There are things not binding that we might disagree on and the first thing that is heard is that So-and-So is a liberal.

The word is misused far too many times. Webster says that a liberal is one who is "broadminded, tolerant; especially not bound by authoritarianism, orthodoxy or traditional forms." Hence the liberal is not interested in scriptural soundness. A liberal is truly an individual who uses the word of God loosely. This person seeks to loose where God has bound. As Peter described, such "wrest" the scriptures. Liberals will use one passage against another. A liberal will not be consistent. He will be consistent as long as it pleases his own will and the will of his close-knit circle of friends. All others may be extremists or haters of truth.

LIBERALISM WORKS LIKE LEAVEN

Let us talk about leaven for a moment. Leaven is used in a good sense and a bad sense in the scriptures. A good sense is Matthew 13:33, where the Bible says, **"Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."** This parable deals with the growth of the New Testament church and leaven is used in a good sense. A bad sense in which leaven is used is found in Matthew 16:6-12. The leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees is called into question by our Lord, and a stern lesson is taught regarding the same. I use the word in the latter sense in this article.

In my time the "anti" movement tampered with the word of God. They sought to bind where God had not and has not bound. Anti-ism was capable of causing a devastating blow to the church. Many churches were split over such matters. Anti-ism sought to bind where God has *not* bound and liberalism seeks to loose where God *has* bound. Neither of them is right in the sight of God. One is just as far removed from the truth as the other.

We have had brethren say that "if I had to identify with one movement or the other I would identify with the anti movement." Such is downright silly. *Both* movements are wrong and we should not be identified with *either*. What is wrong with being identified with just the truth? What is wrong with taking a stand for what the Bible *says*? The church today is living in perilous times when we are going to splinter and pick each other to pieces unless we let the dust settle and go back to a "thus saith the Lord."

Jeremiah asked for the people to stand in the old paths (cf., Jeremiah 6:16). The people responded that they would

not stand. Paul was "set for the defence of the gospel." (Philippians 1:17). He sought to teach and to practice the whole will of God. We believe that Paul was right in this dedicated ambition that he manifested. He stood firm and steadfast to the end. We must also stand for the truth. This does not mean that we ought to take stands in matters of opinion. One person's opinion is just as good as another.

I believe that liberalism *still* is cutting the church to the bone and laying the flesh bare. It must stop. It cannot continue and we must not aid it, but try to destroy it and put it to rest.

LIBERALISM AND THE BIBLE

In some areas liberalism and modernism are about alike. Most liberals and almost all modernists deny the *literal* reality of the first 11 chapters of Genesis. By so doing, either or both, they deny creation and favor evolution. If a person cannot accept *Genesis chapters 1 through 11* as being verbally inspired, upon what basis can he accept *any* of the rest of the Bible as being inspired verbally? The answer is that one cannot. Then let's just throw the Bible away and make up our own doctrines. This is precisely what has happened in many cases.

This leads the liberal to question seriously the inspiration of the scriptures. The liberal then will not accept the sufficiency of the scriptures. A liberal will not be pinned down by agreeing to accept the Bible as an "absolute" blueprint for the Christian dispensation to follow. In fact, the liberal is not willing to accept absolutes. He says that we cannot know *anything* completely. These kinds of folks can preach sermon after sermon and write article after article and never refer to a passage of scripture. Liberals are not book-chapter-and-verse preachers. It must be noticed that passages like I Peter 4:11 are not respected.

Liberals are fond of quoting theological liberals. They would rather do this than give a "thus saith the Lord." This opens the door for them to poke fun at the reliable versions of the Bible. If a liberal has a Bible at all it is one of the new far-out versions. Have you ever stopped to wonder why this is the case? Might it be that the newer versions will teach exactly what the liberal wants taught? The Bible of the liberals is not the Bible of Christianity.

LIBERALISM AND THE GODHEAD

Almost all liberals have a false concept of God. They claim that he is found just as easily in nature as he is in the Bible. In fact, the liberals are fond of such expressions as the "universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man." So they attempt to associate God only with nature, which is the doctrine of Pantheism. God existed before nature and exists separate from nature. Liberals deny both the personality and the transcendence of God. Liberalism has a different God from the God of the Bible.

Many liberals deny the prophecies regarding Christ. They deny his eternal nature and that he was in the beginning with God. His virgin birth, miracles, sinless life, and the work of Calvary (including the death, burial and resurrection) are denied in part or whole by the liberals. The Christ of liberalism is not the Christ of the Bible.

The liberals fail to understand the personality of the Holy Spirit. They look upon him as "some kind of influence." They "feel" that the Spirit guides us the same

way today as in Bible days and to the same extent that he guided the apostles. Mind you that they are not talking about the Spirit guiding man *through the word* of God. They claim a *personal* guidance. They will not agree that the spirit gave to the apostles the truth of the first century church. The Holy Spirit of the liberals is not the Holy Spirit of the Bible.

We must know and study these matters on a constant basis and realize that there are those in the church today who would try to restructure the Bible and the church for which Jesus died.

LIBERALISM AND THE CHURCH

The liberal is not overly concerned about Christ and his *true* church. There is one church (*cf.*, 1 Corinthians 12:20,27). Christ said that he would build his church (Matthew 16:18). He also is the head of the church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23). The liberal considers that the church is filled with tradition. Some believe that we are nothing more than another denomination among denominations. The liberal wishes to make changes constantly in almost every phase of the worship and work of the church. Some want to sing during the Lord's Supper. The scripture does not give us that authority. The liberal wants everyone to do his "own thing." If one feels like starting a song from his pew, then get to it. The liberal constantly calls for spontaneity. (By the way, this idea originated with the Quakers. The idea of waiting until the "Spirit moves you" grew out of their train of thought.)

The liberals claim that we are 50 to 100 years behind the times. Things that worked in '58 will not work in '88 is their plea. They plead for fraternity with denominations. They want us to offer them half a hand of fellowship. (This has led to the thought of us giving up our opposition to instrumental music in worship.) They also want us to abolish partaking of the Lord's Supper *every* first day of

the week. It is not unusual for liberals to take part in sunrise Easter services with denominations and partake of the Lord's Supper on Friday or on Thursday night. Oh yes, baptism is okay if it is for the right reason. But they will not spell out the right reason is *for the remission of sins*. The greater the distance they can make from the church of the New Testament seems to be their vested interest.

LIBERALISM AND THE GOSPEL

It is rather obvious that if our definition of a liberal is true (and it is), the liberals' regard for the gospel is tainted. The liberals cease to emphasize the importance of doctrine. One such liberal said that he never brought up doctrine before unbelievers. (Compare his statement with the following scriptures: John 7:16,17; Acts 2:42; 5:28; and Titus 2:1). Liberals ridicule the gospel plan of salvation and those who preach it as being "five steppers." Liberals would rather preach and hear preached the social gospel. A lack of emphasis is placed upon baptism.

One such preacher who preached in this county for some time wrote a booklet emphasizing that the person who had never heard the gospel would be saved. What does that do to Mark 16:16? But if a person hasn't been baptized properly, we can accept that—or so the liberals believe. They are quick to substitute their own wishes for doctrine while letting the Lord's commands lie silent. They want us to cease any type of distinctive preaching and teaching.

Liberalism must be stopped at all expense. There is just no way that we can put the sword in the scabbard and be silent. Rather, we must pull out the sword never to put it into its sheath again until the last enemy of truth is stopped.

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THE BACKSLIDING CHURCH

D. D. Fry, Jr.

It is sobering and deeply disturbing to contemplate the fundamental changes which have taken place within the church of Christ over the last 25-30 years. These changes have been wrought, however, by a fundamental change in the *attitude* of so many members of the church. It seems that many believe that it is possible to hold God in proper, due reverence and respect while being substantially lacking in these attitudes toward his sacred word of truth. The inspired psalmist stated, "**But my heart standeth in awe of thy word.**" (Psalm 119:161). Modernism succeeded in killing this precious and essential spirit, to a large degree, among the Lord's people long ago.

Some will say that I am merely *asserting* these charges. Not so! I shall now submit the evidence to prove all things":

1. Bible? Which Bible? Many are they who criticize the religious world's attitude toward the idea of which church to belong to. The world's attitude is, "Choose the church of your choice." And yet many of God's own elect have exactly that attitude toward the Holy Scriptures. It is sad and deplorable that the *New International Version* has practically taken over the churches of Christ, being embraced by many, many souls as "the faithful word." And

yet this "version" has 17 whole verses omitted from the New Testament alone! It is guilty of omissions of names of deity as follows: "JESUS"—38 times; "CHRIST"—43 times; "LORD"—35 times; "GOD"—31 times; OTHER NAMES—26 times. Total number of omissions of names of deity in the New Testament alone—173! The *New American Standard Version* is even worse in total number of omissions. These facts can be verified by anyone who is willing to take the time and effort to investigate the matter. Just think of this great bleeding of the very word of Life of the deity of our God and then consider the words of the Lord Jesus, "**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.**" (Luke 4:4). By what, Lord? "By every word of God." I submit to you, brethren, that it is impossible to comply with this divine instruction using the *New International Version*. And this is not even to name the many interpolations within its pages which result in the implanting of denominational persuasions into the soul of everyone who has been deceived into embracing this perversion of the Holy Scriptures. Consider also that the NIV is written on a lower-grade level and you see at once that one cannot reach spiritual maturity using this counterfeit specimen of "the faithful word." Why then would so

many use this book as the very word of God? Are you ready for this? Because it is easier to read and because "that is what a lot of other Christians use, so it must be all right." We are reminded of the words of warning of Hosea, "**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.**" (Hosea 4:6).

2. "Church growth." The Bible plainly tells us how church growth is accomplished. It is *all* done by the power of the mighty word of God, both in terms of number and degree. Acts 2 is so plain in showing how numerical growth is achieved that it is not necessary to elaborate. All one has to do is look at verses 14, 41, and 47. These verses demonstrate the *one and only* way for the church to grow in number. With respect to *spiritual* growth (maturity) of the members themselves, the Bible again is too clear for anyone to be mistaken about it. The inspired apostle Peter states, "**As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.**"

Inasmuch as it is sinful to modify God's plan for man in any way, in any part thereof, it is sinful for anyone to modify his plan (pattern) for church growth. And yet, it seems that some of our men "have a better idea" to accomplish this essential work. Many millions of dollars are continually being poured into facilities which nearly rival some shopping malls complete with a large fountain (of the aesthetic type) and computer terminals at the entrances of the buildings so that each one entering can just punch a few buttons to go down the menu to choose whatever class or activity he/she prefers. And, not to leave out the "young and athletic at heart," a nice, big, expensive gymnasium, you know, to keep the kids out of mischief due to idleness. When I think on those things and then contemplate the many, many souls in Africa who literally beg for Bibles and tracts to teach them which I receive continually in a tremendous African work via written correspondence, it makes me realize that something is very, very wrong. And when I consider (from first-hand experience, no hearsay) that *very little* is being done by most members of the Lord's church to take the word of truth directly to lost souls around them, and the ultra-modern facilities as described above, it is plain to see that many are trying to accomplish "church growth" by luring or attracting the people to the church through the outward appearance rather than the power of the word of truth. It is the same as saying, "Lord we know that you said for us to attain church growth through the all-sufficient, powerful message of truth, but Lord, our people are just not into that sort of thing, so we thought of another idea." It is terribly, terribly wrong to (mis)use the Lord's money on things which are expensive, extravagant, and dazzle the eyes and tickle the ears, when those hundreds of thousands of dollars could be used to pay for Bibles and their shipping costs to people who are so openly starving for and begging for the truth, "which is able to save" their souls! If it is sinful to modify God's plan for music in the worship by adding a mechanical instrument (and it is, of course), then it is equally sinful to modify his plan for church growth by a substitution of method, or addition of a method. But then, it is hardly conceivable that our people can take the word of truth to the lost, because so many of our own are lost having "exchanged the truth of God for the lie" in the form of the NIV and other counterfeit perversions.

3. Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage. Not that the temple of God had to be defiled in doctrine only, but a great moral desecration also has entered into it. The great ungodliness of this world has caused many an overseer, preacher, and

Bible teacher to turn the "chaste virgin" over to whoredom by allowing for those living in adulterous marriages to be in full fellowship with the faithful members of the body of Christ. It is indeed sobering to hear the smooth, skillful arguments and perversion of passages by men such as **Olan Hicks**, who are subverting the souls of many, including their own, to the end result of a home in eternal torment with the devil and all the ungodly of this world. While it is not possible to cover all their points herein, one point does need to be specified, because it is so insidiously wrong. Olan Hicks teaches that the sin of adultery (Matthew 19:9) is committed *only* in the act of putting away one's wife (for other than fornication) and in the act of marrying another but not in the resulting union (relationship) itself of the subsequent marriage. All anyone has to do to see that this is a lie is to turn to Romans 7:2-6 and read Paul's teaching there carefully. He is contrasting the *relationships* between man and God under the old law and the new one. He very plainly gives the analogy of the woman being "an adulteress" by being married to a man while her first husband still is living. He says that by the death of Christ we are now "married to" him—a new *relationship*. The Galatians regressed back into practicing elements of the old law and thereby became spiritual adulteresses. Therefore, we may conclude:

- (1) In Romans 7:2-6, as the language plainly indicates, Paul is dealing with *relationships*—not isolated acts.
- (2) Paul teaches them that before the death of Christ they were in a *relationship* to God through "the law" but that through the death of Christ they were now in a new *relationship* to God, having been made possible only through the death of Christ.
- (3) It is, therefore, the *relationship* which is contemplated and condemned in the analogous words, "So then if, while her husband liveth, she **be married** to another man, she shall be called an adulteress...."

"Return, backsliding Israel, says the Lord; And I will not cause my anger to fall on you... Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against the Lord your God..." (Jeremiah 3:12).

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Compelled to Discipline

Shan Jackson

1 Corinthians 5 reads almost like a headline in a city newspaper. Word had come to Paul that fornication was being openly ignored by the brethren. It seems that their pride had brought on feelings of impenitence rather than repentance. Then he says in verse 6, "**Your glorifying is not good.**" At this point he makes observation that needs again to be made concerning the church today, he asks this question, "**Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?**"

For many years the churches of Christ have told the world that we feel compelled to speak where the Bible speaks and to remain silent where it is silent. This ascendancy on our part admittedly drove some away from us but those who stayed loyal to the truth became stronger and stronger. However, with the passing of time we no longer hear such or similar statements. Now it seems that more and more of God's words are being questioned or

ignored. The "little leaven" of pride once more has reared its ugly head.

DISCIPLINE IS ON THE DECLINE

In recent times we have seen an ever increasing decline in the disciplining structure of society. Discipline in the schools is almost non-existent and soon discipline in the home also will disappear. Governments are showing their disregard for discipline and, brethren, the church of our Lord is following suit.

Discipline is not for hurting feelings nor is it designed as such. Discipline is being misused if it is used for anything but protecting the purity of the church. As conscientious Christians we must feel compelled to discipline—not for revenge or anything else but to protect the purity of the church.

Paul said, in I Corinthians 5:7, **Purge out the old leaven...** Just as discipline should be a part of our schools, our homes, and our government, it must be a part of the church. We have been commanded to **"observe all things..."** (Matthew 28:20); and discipline is commanded.

God's plan for church discipline is outlined in his word. According to Matthew 18:15-17 we first are to go to the brother and discuss the matter just between you and him alone. There is no need to discuss it with your neighbor or another brother, the Bible says first to go to him alone. Many times the brother will see the error of his way and repent and as the Bible says, **"thou hast gained thy brother"**

(Matthew 18:15). But if because of pride he refuses to reason then you are to take two or three of the brethren that they might serve as witnesses to your pleadings. Then if he refuses to listen to you or them take it before the church. If he will not heed to desires of the church he must be withdrawn from. The church is compelled to discipline. We then cannot fellowship him; we cannot socialize with him; we must, as Paul says, **"put away from among yourselves that wicked person."** (I Corinthians 5:13).

DISCIPLINE IS FOR PURITY

With love in our hearts for that erring brother we must disfellowship ourselves from him in order to win him back. Discipline is not spiritual wrist slapping; discipline is for the purity of the church that Christ died to establish. However, this action is ineffective if it is not adhered to by the whole church. Therefore, this action must be voiced abroad and respected by other Christians apart from the local setting.

Of course, great care must be taken in such action. Personalities are not at issue but the old leaven must be purged and the house of the living God must be clean. **"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."** (Ephesians 5:27).

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Why All The Fuss?

Ray Peters

"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissention and disputation with them..." (Acts 15:2).

It is rather disconcerting, upsetting and embarrassing that religious debating has to be done. No one likes to fight. The apostles, as they met the Judaizing teachers in debate in the "Conference on Circumcision," did not necessarily "enjoy" the task that was before them. When those in the religious world, the world in general and in the church, see "religious confrontation," they often will exclaim, "What is all the fuss about?" The idea of "live and let live" and "peace at all costs" is the attitude of our society and therefore it carries over into the "religious arena" but is best descriptive of the attitude that also is displayed in regard to truth and one's posture and action.

Again, no one necessarily loves to fight. We all love peace. It would have been nice if our Lord and Savior could have been received "peaceably" by the Jews, but while here on earth he was found "disputing" with them on "worship" (Matthew 15:1-9), on their "hypocrisy" (Matthew 23), and the like. Surely, it was not pleasant, but necessary. Jesus also said, **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."** (Matthew 10:34). Our Lord went on to explain that households would be divided as a result of one obeying the gospel. Therefore, the answer to "Why all the fuss?" quite simply is: "To stand for truth!"

Jesus—he who was the very embodiment of truth (**"I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life,"** John 14:6)—was met with resistance. He is our example (I Peter 2:21), and if one follows him, the world is going to "fuss" with us! The Christ told his disciples, **"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake"** (Matthew 10:22). Therefore, the stage

is set (when there are two diverse attitudes) for "disputations," "debates" and such.

While "peace" is nice, there is something more important: TRUTH! The Psalmist put it very well when extolling the wonderful Word of God: **"Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way."** (Psalms 119:104). Jude 3 implores, **"Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."** Paul, to the young preacher Timothy, **"Fight the good fight of faith."** (I Timothy 6:12). Also, in his second letter to him, **"...reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."** (II Timothy 4:2). Then, as John directs us, we are to **"...try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** (I John 4:1). Hence, with these parameters before us, one can see that when one who is a lover of truth and is a follower of it encounters "false doctrine," he has no choice but to **"rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith."** (Titus 2:13). The result is a "fuss!" It is not a pleasant task, but "false doctrine" will damn one's soul. That is the bottom line to the answer, "Why all the fuss?"—the salvation of souls! One must ever be careful to keep personalities, self-interest and the like out of the way and to be purely motivated for the "love of truth" (II Thessalonians 2:10) and the "redemption of souls."

It is a thankless task, this "standing for the truth." Often it is so lonesome that one may feel like Elijah. But there are many who love the truth and will line up on the side of truth and not budge. Let us make sure the discussion is on truth and not on opinions and then let the "fuss" (?) begin.

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A Study Of Matthew 19:9

Will Montgomery

“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.” (Matthew 19:9).

Many men have sought ways to escape this passage for various reasons. In II Peter 3:15-16 we are told that some would wrest the scriptures to their own destruction. To wrest is to twist or pervert.

Jesus said in Matthew 19:6, **“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”** Jesus has all power and all authority as stated in Matthew 28:18-20. We believe that authority when it comes to the subject of baptism, the gospel plan of salvation and the worship of the church. Some, however, who defend so earnestly these matters, try to reject, twist or simply ignore the teaching of Christ on the subject of divorce. In dealing with this same matter in Matthew 5:32, Jesus said, **“But I say unto you,”** and again in Matthew 19:9, He says, **“And I say unto you.”** He is contrasting the old law with his new law which he came to establish.

In Matthew 17:5 God said, **“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him,”** meaning that we are to look to Christ for authority and guidance in all religious matters. We do not have the option of choosing to obey *some* of his laws and disregarding *others*.

SOME OF THE ARGUMENTS

Let us examine some of the arguments given about these verses.

Some have said that Matthew 19:9 was spoken only to the Jews and does not apply to the Christian today. They fail to realize that the word “whosoever” is the same word used by John, in John 3:16, and that it refers to the same class of people. Yet no one will affirm that John 3:16 speaks only to the Jews. Therefore Christ’s use of whosoever shows us that Matthew 19:9 is not for the Jew only.

Others try to explain away the teaching of Christ by saying that since it was spoken before his death and before his new law came into effect that it is not binding on us today. If that is true, then Jesus made a law that only lasted from the time he taught on this subject until his death on the cross. Which would have been less than 3 years, for we know that his personal ministry lasted only about 3½ years.

Still others have said, in an effort to remove Matthew 19:9, that the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are a part of the Old Testament and unless the teaching of these books are reiterated by an apostle or inspired New Testament writer then they are not binding today. In order to be binding, according to this theory, the teaching of Christ must be repeated somewhere else in the New Testament. This rule is of human origin. What proves too much, proves nothing at all. In Matthew 18:15,17 Jesus said, **“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained a brother... And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”** This statement of Christ is not repeated by an apostle or New Testament writer, it was spoken before the church came into existence and yet all recognize that this teaching applies to the church today.

WHAT DOES “EXCEPT” MEAN?

A further examination requires us to look at the word “except”. What does “except” mean in our text? It means the same thing that it meant in John 3:5, **“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”** We understand that it means there is no other way to enter the kingdom of God but by being born of the water and the Spirit—by being baptized into Christ. (Galatians 3:27). There is one and only one way to get into Christ and to enter the kingdom, the church. By the same reasoning “except”, as used in Matthew 19:9, shows us that there is only one reason acceptable to God for divorce, and that is fornication. Even then Christ does not say that divorce is a command, but that it is an *option* when fornication has been committed and reconciliation is not possible.

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.”**

Matthew 5:32: **“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.”**

Let us not attempt to get around or by-pass what Jesus has spoken by offering reasons that are neither logical nor scriptural. Let us accept what he has said as truth and obey it.

We must strive to teach the truth on Matthew 19:9 and instruct our young people and others that God’s plan is: *One man for one woman for life.*

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Are The Limits Of Fellowship Flexible?

Paul Cantrell

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

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” (Romans 16:17).

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us... And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.” (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15).

From the above passages it should be readily noted that the Bible is clear that there are those who once embraced the truth, who no longer can be held in fellowship. Not only are those walking disorderly to be avoided, but they also are to

be marked. Once marked, faithful brethren should also refrain from fellowshiping those in error, that they might be ashamed and repentance be brought forth.

For some reason, it is very difficult for brethren to understand that God knows best in these matters. When man arbitrarily sets aside God's law concerning fellowship, he has seized authority that is not his. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9), and since he is able to see the end of things from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9-10) we should obey his word (Acts 5:29); his word is right (Psalms 33:4).

MANY DISSATISFIED WITH GOD'S PLAN

Though the Bible is plain concerning the limits of fellowship, many in the church do not practice the Biblical concept. The practice for many is to fellowship the false teacher in areas of agreement and withhold fellowship in areas of disagreement. Many in the church today are not satisfied with God's plan of fellowship. Many seem to think they are as wise as God (*cf.*, Genesis 3:5) and able to make better plans than he. This is the reason many have tried to make the limits of fellowship flexible.

Flexible fellowship is created by acknowledging that one is in error, either in teaching or in actions, then after acknowledging the error, continuing to work hand in hand with the individual as though nothing was wrong. This is done under the mistaken idea that a false teacher should be avoided only *when* he is teaching false doctrine or practicing that which is contrary to the word of God.

The use of questionable teachers on lectureships, reprint-

ing bulletin articles by questionable teachers and using questionable teachers in gospel meetings and in our college classrooms is solemn testimony to the fact that the use of flexible limits of fellowship is widespread. The defence, that is set forth, by those who use such men is: "*They are not going to preach or teach on the subjects they are in error on.*"

Brethren, that is the most dangerous type of reasoning we can use. With reasoning such as that, there would be NO LIMITS to our fellowship. We could then ask **Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Robert Schuller, et al.**, to come speak to us and just ask them not to speak on certain subjects. I am sure they would be only too willing to accommodate. It is time we remember that, no matter how right a false teacher is in *some* areas, the error that he *teaches* is enough to destroy. We can not allow the influence of a false teacher to be spread among the churches of our Lord. Remember Jesus as he warned us in Matthew 7:15, "**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**"

Are flexible limits of fellowship practiced? You *know* they are! Does God condone flexible limits of fellowship? NO! The limits of fellowship are *not* flexible. For the church of our Lord to prosper in this and succeeding generations, we must *stop the mouths* of the false teachers (*cf.*, Titus 1:10-11). This can be done only if we avoid them (Romans 16:17) by refusing to use them on lectureships, as writers in our bulletins and in brotherhood journals, and such like.

—Church of Christ,
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"Pro-Choice" On Abortion Taught By Gospel Preacher

Weldon Langfield

If there is any single outstanding lesson to be learned from the Corinthian epistle, it is that the sins of the world end up in the Lord's church. The debauchery, lewdness, and carnal-mindedness that characterized ancient Corinth influenced the congregation in that location to be extremely disorderly and worldly. Likewise, the worldliness of modern American has taken its toll on the Christian faith. Worldly denominational thought has left the truth in shreds in many congregations. The battles against social drinking and dancing have been lost in many places. Adulterous relationships are "winked at" by thousands of Christians. Pressure from the world's denominations have led some churches of God's people to forsake their divine status for the status of a social club.

Another source of pressure from the world is abortion. Since the "*Roe vs. Wade*" decision legalizing, in essence, abortion on demand, approximately 20-million fetuses have been destroyed in the United States. In many places teenagers can get abortions without parental consent. Multitudes view this senseless slaughter as merely "after the fact" birth control without any spiritual ramifications.

In light of the widespread apostasy all around us, it should not be surprising if even within the Lord's church there is compromise on abortion. Indeed, such is the case. Several years ago, while I was preaching in the Los Angeles area, a rumor circulated that some leaders of an unidentified congregation in the San Joaquin Valley were permitting abortions among their members. I dismissed it as simply a rumor. When I moved to Bakersfield, California, in the

San Joaquin Valley, accusations grew more intense that abortion was being advocated at a church of Christ in the area. These accusations, too, were dismissed.

Then, about 14 months ago (at the time of this writing), I was seeking some study material on the subject of abortion. A fellow Christian, whom I will call Sister A, was, and is, deeply involved in the "Right to Life" movement, so I asked her if she might have any information I could use. While we were discussing the need for teaching on the subject, she confided that a man serving as a preacher, who had been the minister of a congregation in the greater Bakersfield area of many years, had once advised her that it would be all right to get an abortion. She was at that time burdened with an inconvenient pregnancy: no birth defects were anticipated (not that that would make a difference); nor was she the victim of a violent crime. He told her abortion "was like removing a tumor." She was, she said, shocked and troubled by his advice and fortunately, didn't act upon it.

PREACHER DENIES ACCUSATION

It was difficult to believe that a gospel preacher would endorse such a procedure; even liberal brethren weren't advocating abortion. The only Christian thing to do was to personally talk with the person so accused. As we sat down, I told him the statement the good sister had made. He immediately became visibly angry and said, "She's lying." I responded by saying that I had known her for several years and that she had always been truthful with me. He then accused her of being unduly emotional because of pregnancy

and not accurately remembering the conversation. I responded that she didn't seem to be the highly emotional type. Next, he asserted that she had no business talking with me about the matter because counseling is confidential. I pointed out that when someone counsels with me, I keep what *they've* said confidential. *They*, however, are not obligated to keep *my* advice secret. He finally, responded, "Everyone has to make her own choice about abortion; you can't live people's lives for them;" then he angrily stormed off.

The following Sunday morning in worship, that minister preached on the subject of abortion. Following are some statements made in the message, taken from notes made shortly after the sermon was preached.

1. "The Supreme court has okayed abortion—that's the law of the land whether we like it or not."
2. "The law (*i.e.*, permitting abortion) was enacted so poor people wouldn't have to endanger themselves with illegal abortion clinics."
3. "Everybody has to make her own choice as to whether or not to get an abortion."

He then told an illustration of a pregnant cheerleader who committed suicide because, "her parents took such a hard line on abortion." He argued that since abortion is acceptable in the case of a fetus with "Down's Syndrome(?)," it must not be murder. The "scriptural argument" the preacher used to support his position was based on Genesis 2:7, which says, "And Jehovah God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Since Adam was not a "living soul" until he breathed, the reasoning went, fetuses are not human until they start breathing, *i.e.*, at birth. He then referred to Luke 1:44, which tells about John the Baptist leaping in the womb for joy; he dismissed the obvious humanness of John as the normal kicking a pregnant woman experiences. The minister did acknowledge, however, that fetuses were "cute little buggers."

ONE WOMAN WAS ALMOST PERSUADED

That evening, I got a phone call from a woman in the audience I will call Sister B. After the aforementioned

preacher's sermon, she had explained to him that she had a "friend" who was pregnant, had "too many" kids, and was considering an abortion. She said she asked him how to advise her "friend." He responded, according to Sister B, by saying that abortion was a purely medical matter "like removing a tumor." She wanted to know what I believed, so I explained the biblical viewpoint. When she expressed reluctance to believe abortion was wrong, I implored her to ask any other preacher. About a month later she called back and confessed that she herself was the "friend." Sister B said that she had called another preacher anonymously; he told her abortion was wrong. Her gynecologist had likewise urged her not to get an abortion, so she had decided against it.

It has since become known that the above preacher has taught these views in at least one adult Bible class and has reaffirmed them in other personal conversations. Because he has been with the congregation so long, some members refuse to face the fact that this man holds these views, even though they have heard them taught. Generally speaking, however, his beliefs seem to be common knowledge among the members. Many there apparently do not consider these views to constitute serious error as they remain in a congregation in which he has influence. Jeremiah fittingly declared, "They were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush." (Jeremiah 6:15).

Some who have had the courage to stand up to this preacher and his erroneous teachings have been the victims of slander and false accusations. These facts have been written, not with animosity, but with love and concern for all involved; the one teaching these things, the souls of Christians, and, especially, the lives of the yet-to-be-born who may be effected. The Bible states that false teaching is like leaven (Mark 8:15). In times like these, the aforementioned doctrine is just the kind of thing that could take hold and spread. All of us are under the divine imperative to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11).

—2913 Brock Way

Bakersfield, California 93306

The Continuing Apostasy Of The Christian Church

Andrew M. Connally

Dave Reagan, the founder of his *Lamb and Lion Ministries*, is a member of the Christian Church and holds meetings and seminars for Christian Churches throughout America each year. His publication, *Lamplighter*, January 1988, (P. O. Drawer K, McKinney, Texas, 75069), shows the continuing apostasy of the Christian Church. Notice their seminar on *Renewal In Worship* (March 10 & 11, Hilton Hotel—Richardson, Texas):

"Randall Bane is an internationally recognized expert on worship. His specialty is the use of movement in worship of God. He is one of the featured worship leaders each year at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. He resides in Kansas City and travels extensively world-wide teaching and demonstrating the innovative use of movement in worship.

"Lora Allison is a worship leader and teacher with a heart for God. She is one of Christendom's foremost proponents of the revival of dance as an expression of worship. She also is a

gifted artist who uses her talent to design worship banners. She is a much sought after conference resource person who both teaches and demonstrates the use of pagentry in worship.

"The Olive Branch is a Messianic Jewish group of talented musicians and singers who travel nationally providing both teaching and leadership in Davidic worship. The leader of the group, Romona Dicks, serves yearly as one of the key instrumentalists at the Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem."

No doubt many of our liberal brethren who constantly harangue all of us to accept and fellowship "the instrumental brethren" will see nothing wrong in the above notice. But a great number of us are nauseated to the point of disgust over such.

As long as some of us live—"They Shall Not Pass"!

—Church of Christ
510 North Kaufman
Seagoville, Texas 75159

Notes & Quotes...

Bill Northam, Shreveport, Louisiana: "Many thanks for keeping me on your 'standing order' list for the annual bound volumes of *Contending for the Faith*. I have all 18 volumes, and they are a valuable source of reference to me...I enjoyed our fellowship together at the recent Cullendale lectureship in Camden, Arkansas. I think the lectures this year were their best ever."

Leonard Homer Mathis, 81, died January 16, 1988, at the Lewisville Memorial Hospital, in Lewisville, Texas. A member of Hawn Freeway church of Christ at his passing, brother Mathis was a retired postal clerk with the U.S. Postal Service, where he served for 34 years. From 1963 to 1977, he was a missionary in Puerto Rico. Even at their then advanced age, he and his wife Chloe, after his retirement, mastered the Spanish language for this purpose.

1988 LECTURESHIP A HUGE SUCCESS
The 22nd Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship has resulted in numerous generous statements and letters of commendation. We are encouraged by the kind response of appreciation. Of course, no effort of such magnitude just accidentally happens.

The theme of the lectures was "The Love of God and Man's Response—the Book of Deuteronomy," and each of the lectures was outstanding in its preparation and delivery. Each person in attendance it seems was amazed at the many practical, rich lessons from this significant Old Testament book for the Christian today. Indeed, it addresses such themes as the love of God, the proper response of man to God's love, the increasing of one's faith, how to be strengthened against falling, and the blessed assurance of the child of God.

The speakers on the lectureship were "men of the Book." They produced perhaps the finest volume (565 pages) ever written on Deuteronomy. The lecturers were from southern Florida to California to Illinois to Ohio to Texas. They included evangelists, teachers, a scientist, a medical doctor, authors, editors, and numerous alumni of and teachers of the Memphis School of Preaching.

The number of lectures/classes was greatly increased this year, offering sound Biblical instruction on an increased group of subjects.

The **Frank D. and Gracie Young Appreciation Dinner** was very well attended, and each speaker praised this fine couple's wonderful labors in the kingdom, including their nearly 11 years of service to the Memphis School of Preaching.

The Annual Alumni Dinner was also a wonderful occasion, at which time brother **Bob Knox** and brother **Roger Jackson** presented the elders with a special alumni donation of \$3,591. The new facilities were of great benefit throughout the lectureship, both in the meetings and in the various classes which met in the large meeting room and in the new library.

Brother **J. A. McNutt**, instructor in the School, has stated on occasion, "When one sees a turtle sitting on a gatepost, he knows the turtle did not get there by himself." Likewise, a successful lectureship does not happen by itself. Genuine appreciation is enthusiastically expressed to all who contributed so much to the success of the lectureship. Those who made this possible include the men and women of Knight Arnold who opened their homes to the guests and helped in countless ways, numerous ones taking time off from work; the faculty and secretaries of the school, the church secre-

tary, the students and their wives, those of other Memphis area churches who provided food and housing, those who advertised and attended the lectureship, those many alumni and other friends who were so helpful in so many ways, those who audio-and-video-taped the program, and such like. To everyone who helped, thank you very much. Without you, this great occasion to the Lord's glory would not have taken place.

—*The Knight Arnold News*

James H. Rohr, Massillon, Ohio: "Of all the mail I receive your publication is the most refreshing. Thanks for taking a stand on the truth. I had a great uncle—**Francis Thornberry**—who recently passed away and was a fine elder in the Massillon church. He read your paper and lived the attitude as well by taking a stand first and the keeping of 'friends' second. Thanks for all your help. I wish your paper success for the next 100 years and beyond, Lord willing."

"CROSSROADS PACKETS" ORDERED

Among those who have ordered our "Crossroads Packets" of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* especially on this subject are **J. B. Rainey**, of Winton, California, one packet; **Joe Gastineau**, of Santa Maria, California, one packet; **J. D. McIntosh**, of Streetsboro, Ohio, one packet; **Ray and Paula Young**, of Sheppard AFB, Texas, one packet; **Troy M. Cummings**, of Westminster, California, two packets; and **Marian Barton**, of Aurora, Colorado, four packets, saying, "Your work is essential. God grant you many, many more years."

Mary Newton, of Springfield, Missouri, subscribed, saying, "Please hurry and get me on your mailing list to receive your paper *Contending for the Faith*. Until recently when a brother in Christ showed me your paper, I thought the Crossroads issue had pretty much died out. Boy, was I wrong. I don't want to be in the 'dark' any longer on this subject."

Hugo Blackstone, of Canton, Texas: "Keep up the good work."

Russell Davis, of Kansas City, Kansas: "We praise your good work and stand for the truth."

Russell & Grace Thompson, Mesa, Arizona: "We enjoy *Contending for the Faith*. Keep up the good work."

Arlie P. Jarrell, of Green Cove Springs, Florida, is now deceased.

Tim L. Long, of McMinnville, Tennessee, enclosed two renewals and four new subscriptions, saying, "We continue to appreciate your fine publication. Keep up the good work."

No one can tell where roads not taken might have led.

Herbert E. Mitchell, of Seattle, Washington, in renewing his subscription for another three years, added \$47.00 onto his check, saying, "You are doing a great work. Please keep it up. I really hope that brethren will open their eyes to what is happening."

Loretta McLellan, of Purcell, Oklahoma, in paying for her BOUND VOLUME, added \$43.00 onto her check, saying, "Please use balance of check for anything that is needed. May God continue to bless your efforts as you strive to keep us informed."

Mrs. Jewel Pruett, of Daytona Beach, Florida, let us know that her husband, **W. A. Pruett**, now is deceased.

Roger & Damle Carter, of Chickasha, Oklahoma, contributed \$20.00 to our contending-for-the-faith fund.

Walter W. Pigg, Jr., Taipei, Taiwan: "A few days ago **John Grubb** received a tape from **Dorsey Traw** of two speeches (a sermon and a Bible class) of one **Charles Bishop**, a former worker at Klang, according to his comments on the tape.

"I heard his sermon first, entitled, 'God Loves the Weak.' It made me sick! The Bible class I heard next (it was like a sermon). It made me want to 'puke.' I believe this took place around December 10, 1986.

"Bishop lambasted Dorsey for his contending that **Hollingsworth** in Thailand is a false teacher. Bishop said he did not know whether **Hollingsworth** was right or wrong. But he surely upheld **Hollingsworth**. The many implications in his two speeches were liberal as all get out and he did a lot of appealing to the subjective in order to get his points across.

"The thing which concerns me most is what this means with regard to the congregation in Klang. Since a man like **Charles Bishop** was allowed to preach to the congregation, one wonders what kind of a lectureship will be forthcoming in December. I would hate to think that a building would be built at such expense if these brethren are going to tolerate such.

"Since I am to preach in a meeting at the Jurong congregation in Singapore the first of December, I had thought this would be handy to proceed on to the Klang lectures. It will be interesting to know who the speakers will be...Just thought I would write and express my concerns..."

(NOTE: In my reply of May 19, 1987, from Singapore, I wrote, in part, as follows:

"You wrote me in February wondering about a tape **John Grubb** had received of a couple of speeches made by **Charles Bishop**, a former worker at Klang, Malaysia. I promised to check this all out when I got back into the area. From all that I can gather, the sound brethren here in Singapore did not 'go along' with either speech; neither did the brethren at Klang. In fact, I understand that they have pretty well decided not to have **Bishop** back until such a time as he can correct his doctrine.

"I have so much work to do here in Singapore that it will not be until week after next that I may be able to go to Klang. However, I have sent word that I am coming and want to discuss this very point.

"It may not be realistic and be considered even a little unfair to expect the Klang brethren, not having heard **Bishop's** first speech, to react to it. After all, he was one of the early preachers at Klang, and he was not teaching that way *then*. However, now that they have heard what he was teaching with their own ears, it is a different matter. It is my conviction that Klang will come through on this matter with colors flying.

"We all need to be cautious, with so many rumors flying about, what we believe when we first hear something. *Much* of what we hear is *not true* to begin with. Also, as in this case, brethren may already have reacted correctly AFTER they have heard something to which they had NO WAY of doing so before the fact. I feel sure that Klang is going to have one of the best lectureships ever... More when I see you..."

SIX-YEAR RENEWALS NOTED

Among those subscribing or renewing recently for six years we note **Roger Robinson**, of Tishomingo, Mississippi; **Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Mires**, of Adams, Oklahoma; **Danny Hendon**, of Salina, Kansas; **Perry Sexton**, of Memphis, Tennessee; **Russell Taylor**, of Chickasha, Oklahoma; **Duane C. Brown**, of Dudley, North Carolina; **Don Rackley**, of Gainesville, Missouri; **E. Russell King**, of West Union, West Virginia; and **L. E. Wright**, of Hazel Green, Alabama.

Jeffrey G. Weaver, Tucson, Arizona: "I have to write to you. I would like to receive *Contending for the Faith* and keep in touch with you. I am a 25-year-old man originally from Kirbyville, Texas. I have been a Christian for 5½ years. I got mixed up in the Crossroads Movement about four years ago because I was ignorant of what was going on. I was at the TSTI campus in Waco, Texas, where a split at a church happened and I met with the people that then started meeting on the campus. I was so confused at that time. I knew what was going on was wrong but then I considered it a weakness of the brethren there. I wish I could go into more detail but I don't have the time.

"Anyway, I ended up going to the Tulsa Workshop in '85 and '86 and I thought it was the greatest thing to happen. But, in '86, I called my Mom back in Kirbyville and asked her to see if anyone from there was going to go. She called back in a few days after talking to the preacher there and said 'NO WAY.' At that time it made me angry. I finished at TSTI and went home shortly after that. I talked to the preacher to find out why he would not go. He presented evidence about the evils of the Crossroads Movement of which I had heard mentioned only a couple of times but didn't realize that I was mixed up in it because the people I was with didn't believe they were in it, but still they did the same things.

"After he presented that to me, I realized that they and I were Crossroads-influenced. I was shaken up about finding this out and at the same time glad. For a long time I tried to forget what happened to me when I was in the movement but now I am finding out that it is wrong to just forget it because everywhere I go people are affected by it somehow.

"In the preacher's evidence he gave me a lot of *Contending for the Faith* bulletins. The one I have is March of '86. I have just in the last three months been reading through them again and learning more of what is wrong with the Crossroads Movement and what to do about it. I am now in the Air Force and married and have a baby boy. I am stationed in Tucson, Arizona, at Davis Monthon AFB. I wish I could write more. But for now I wish that you could tell me how to get *Contending for the Faith* and maybe contact me. I need to know the latest things about this Crossroads Movement—nationwide and worldwide. My address is: **Jeff Weaver, 6534 E. Stella Road, Apt. P, Tucson, AZ 85730.** If you can, please have someone call my home phone: (602) 790-7096. I would like to tell more of my story."

(NOTE: Although brother Weaver wrote the above to us in November, it was not until December 17, 1987, in Singapore, that I could reply to him, in part, as follows:

"...Your esteemed letter of November 11, 1987, came to my hand in Memphis just as we were getting prepared to leave for missionary work in the Far East. As a matter of fact, it was primarily the threat of Crossroads against Manila, Singapore and Hong Kong which occasioned much of what we are doing to forewarn brethren out here—especially inasmuch as the Crossroads Movement now has 'targeted' these three great, strategic cities, and has so announced.

"I always am gladdened and deeply grateful when those formerly caught up in that error begin to find their way back to the truth of the gospel and get in touch for further help. The fact that you want to begin taking *Contending for the Faith* on a regular basis is most encouraging. I am enclosing a subscription coupon for this purpose. Perhaps you not only could sign up yourself but also encourage others like-minded to do the same thing. In this way, both you and they would be able to keep abreast of what is going on among 'us' on a more current basis.

"Another thing you might consider, which

would fill you in on things leading up to our present situation, brotherhood-wide, would be to order a FULL SET of our BOUND VOLUMES, going back to the beginning of this paper, then placing a standing order for a new bound volume as it comes out each year about this time. We give a 20% discount on all such standing orders, as you will see often advertised... There is no other source for the information you thus would obtain...

"Please forgive the unavoidable delay I had in writing this reply. Being 'on the road' as I am much of the time surely militates against my regular correspondence. However, please keep writing to me, and always know that I'll be glad to answer when I can.

"My wife and I have several weeks more work out here before returning to the U.S. on or about January 11th, 1988. I hope to see a further letter from you waiting in my mail when we arrive back home." (YRJR.)

Walt & Joan Moody, of Eagle River, Alaska, subscribed for themselves and seven more; **Jay Yeager**, of Overbrook, Kansas, subscribed for seven new ones, saying, "Over the years, I have greatly appreciated your love for the Lord and for His church. I truly believe that ignorance of those who are the enemies of the cross poses the threat, especially in these days when so many have lost their love for the truth. I pray that you will continue to expose those who teach error so that those of us who preach in small, out-of-the-way congregations can keep abreast of false teachers... I will continue to spread the word about the much-needed but difficult work you are doing. May God bless you!" **John R. Hogan**, of Memphis, Tennessee, in renewing for three more years, said, "I look forward to receiving your papers very much... May God continue to bless you in the good job you are doing."

Felton L. Harwell, of Terrell, Texas, renewed his own, sent one new; **Mrs. Donald Blacksten**, of Muncie, Indiana, subscribed for three, contributed \$20.00 "to help *Contending for the Faith*;" **Loretta McLellan**, of Purcell, Oklahoma, renewed for three years, added \$20.00 for us as needed in our work, saying, "May the Lord continue to bless you... as you strive to keep us informed throughout the brotherhood of things taking place that should not be;" **Carl W. McDaniel**, of Atascosa, Texas, renewed for three years, saying, "We appreciate so much the good work you and others are doing to alert or keep us informed of some of the dangers in the Lord's church today;" **Mrs. H. M. Goodwyn**, of Dallas, Texas, renewed for two years, added an extra \$10.00 "to help as you see need," saying, "I am really thankful for people like you that have the courage to speak out against error;" **Shelbie Hostford**, of Boonville, Texas, sent \$10.00, saying, "Use this money for whatever you see fit;" **Keith Hukle**, of Arkansas City, Kansas, renewed for three years, saying, "We enjoy your paper. Our prayer is that more people will stand up for the truth. We appreciate you and others for doing just that."

Jean Anderson, of St. Petersburg, Florida, renewed her own, sent one new; **Elmer Chick**, of Metropolis, Illinois, renewed for three years, contributed \$5.80 to our contending-for-the-faith fund; **Mr. & Mrs. Howard Adkins**, of Cisco, Texas, renewed for three years, saying, "We enjoy the paper so much and bid you God speed in your work;" **Lyndal Lee Werner**, of Henryetta, Oklahoma, renewed his own, sent one new; **Mr. & Mrs. B. R. Reynolds**, of Athens, Alabama, renewed for six years, sent \$5.00 extra.

Flora Davis, of Hiwassee, Arkansas, sent \$20.00 to use where we think it is needed more, saying, "I trust you know better where it is needed than do I. Thank God for your faithful work for the Lord. May he give you many more fruitful years in his vineyard and crown you with a beautiful crown when your work on earth is ended."

Edgar P. Jacks, Jr., minister, Bude, Mississippi: "We have started a church of Christ here in Bude, Mississippi. Our first services were March 1, 1987, with five members. We have been working very hard to spread the word in this part of the country. As of last Sunday we had 15 in attendance. We also have been blessed with one conversion and baptism two weeks ago... We are enclosing our check for \$20.00."

(NOTE: We appreciated brother Jacks' sending us this information and wish him well in planting the church in Bude, Mississippi. The \$20.00 he enclosed was forwarded to the Pearl Street brethren in Denton, Texas, in support of their getting out the special mailing written about earlier. (YRJR.)

Keith & Jeannie Wolfe, Swainsboro, Georgia: "We enjoy and appreciate your magazine so much."

A. Albert Reeves, minister, Stilwell, Oklahoma: "I know you are busy, but I hope you can take time to answer two questions:

"I am sure that you know about **Alvin Jennings'** mailing out his new book entitled, *How Christianity Grows in the City* or something to that effect. Then it was followed by a Texas congregation mailing out a *Critique of How Christianity Grows in the City*.

"I have just received the latest copy of **Alvin Jennings'** STAR BIBLE CATALOGUE for 1987, 1988. On page thirteen, he has included a statement titled, 'An Apology and an Explanation.' I am enclosing a Xerox copy of this page in case you didn't see it. My question is: What do you think of this statement? Does it appear to you that he is backing up somewhat, or maybe realized that he is out on a limb?

"Now for the second question: Did you attend the recent effort conducted by **Freed-Hardeman College** concerning the **BOSTON/CROSSROADS DISCIPLING MINISTRY**? How did it come out? What position does FHC occupy? What is coming down the pike? What results do you think will flow from it?

"Keep the faith..."

(NOTE: The "apology and explanation" by **Alvin Jennings** to **Jule Miller** alluded to by brother Reeves, per foregoing, reads as follows:

"AN APOLOGY AND EXPLANATION To Jule Miller, May 22, 1987

"Please accept my sincere apology for using the introductory statement you wrote for *3R's of Urban Church Growth* (1980) in my new book, *How Christianity Grows in the City*, (1985) without first contacting you for your permission.

"I regret that some brethren have associated your name with the Boston church because of commendations I expressed in the new book. Because of my long-standing and unwavering esteem and love for you in the kingdom of God, I would not have knowingly done this or anything against your wishes.

"When I wrote my new book in 1985 I endorsed the Boston church practically without reservation, based on the information then at hand. I am hearing some things now, however, that give me a concern.

"During recent months I have become the object of abuses and manipulations incited by young evangelists who since then have been re-baptized at the Boston church and received by them.

"I fear that the Boston church, despite her marvelous accomplishments through evangelistic diligence, will fall into further dispute among good brethren who, like myself, formerly supported and commended her good works, unless her leaders turn away from any further excesses and deviations that may be contrary to the faith once delivered.

—Alvin Jennings"

In replying to brother Reeves, from Singa-

pore, with regard to his letter and the above enclosure, I said, in part, "...Although you wrote to me some six weeks ago, I was 'on the road' (still am, in fact) and could not find time to reply. Please forgive the delay.

"You asked my opinion, re: Alvin Jennings' 'AN APOLOGY AND EXPLANATION To Jule Miller, May 22, 1987.' I think he had gotten his tail in a crack and was trying to get it out. Although Alvin has now been subjected to 'abuses and manipulations' such as we had been warning against for years, I do not believe that he has learned his lesson, re: *either* Crossroads or Boston, even yet. Any slight backing up he seems to be doing is for his own reasons, not for the cause of truth. He still holds to the so-called 'house church' philosophy.

"Yes, I *did* attend that FHC Forum re: Boston/Crossroads/Discipling Ministry. Though Claiborne and Edwards were too 'gentlemanly' toward their opponents early in the day, toward the close, they really got down to cases, so, on the whole, I felt the cause of truth was well served. I have no doubt as to the position of Claiborne and Edwards. O.K....(Signed) Ira Y. Rice, Jr.")

Tommy Alford, Hualien, Taiwan: "Last week we had a gospel meeting with brother Walter Pigg doing the preaching. We had one baptism for which we are thankful; the attendance ran pretty low due to typhoon rains and some wind."

Roy Pruitt, Freer, Texas: "I got a shock when I read the article in the Chichasha bulletin on the Acappella singing group. Thought you might be able to use it..."

(NOTE: The item that brother Pruitt referred to appeared in the September 30, 1987 bulletin of the church that meets at 16th and Florida, in Chickasha, Oklahoma, where brother Rod Carroll, preaches. It reads as follows:

"ACAPPELLA, THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND YOU

"One of the hottest and most popular Gospel singing groups today is called Acappella. Teenagers, in and out of the Church, love their music, not to mention the adults, including myself. Their new sound is not only appealing to the ear but also to the heart. On many occasions well over 1,000 people have gathered to hear them perform. But...and you knew this 'but' was coming. We are now faced with a personal decision. What do we do when they are performing in our community in connection with a religious body that is not our own? This Sunday night, October 4th, Acappella will be singing at the Parkview Christian Church. Should I go? Should they be there? What would my presence say? Well...I think the answers to those questions depend on several facts: Number one: *Why is Acappella coming to the Christian Church in Chickasha?* It certainly isn't wrong to preach and teach the Word to any group at any time. God wants us to and commands us to do so. I have preached in the Methodist and Lutheran church with the understanding that I would be there for the purpose of teaching only. I know for a fact, though, that this is not the reason Acappella will be at Parkview Christian on the 4th of October.

"The minister at Parkview is my personal friend. He has told me that the purpose of having Acappella was to 'kick-off' their fall campaign. I love the people at Parkview, but I cannot support their efforts to grow because of the error they teach. Number two: *Why should you go?* The Bible says that one reason Christians are to meet together is to spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24,25). Your presence at a function such as this could very well lead someone in the wrong direction. Your presence could very well say to others: 'He sees no difference between the church of Christ and the Christian Church.' There are times

when we should be willing to give up our rights as Christians for the sake of unlearned and weak brethren. Is your love of hearing ACAPPELLA greater than your overall concern for the direction that the church could be taking?

"The differences that exist between the churches of Christ and the Christian Church are far more extensive than the use of mechanical instruments to worship God. I deeply regret that it is so. Where has wisdom gone?"

—Rod"

In my reply to brother Pruitt, from Singapore, I said, in part, "I, too, got a shock from the article in the bulletin that you enclosed. I felt that Rod Carroll did a good job showing why it would be WRONG to attend that ACAPPELLA concert at the Christian Church. I plan to use it, Lord willing, some time soon." IYRJR.)

Nadine Z. Masterson, Jacksonville, Florida: "I lost Henry September 25th. I had always hoped that Ira Rice would be available to hold his service, but I am always late it seems. I guess I just take one day at a time. He was buried in his beloved Alabama on September 29th. I wish I could have taken him back for his last years but I just couldn't handle him by myself and had to work to pay the bills. He said he was going back to Alabama when he retired but I wasn't eligible to retire and by the time I did retire, he was unable to do things. I am speaking of retirement from Federal Government..."

(NOTE: Henry and Nadine Masterson have been ardent supporters of our work both in the U.S. and around the world for many, many years. Had I known of Henry's passing at the time, I surely would have tried to make myself available for his funeral... These things always catch us unaware, and I know that sister Nadine did her best for him. Brother Henry had Alzheimer's disease, and those final years must have been dreadfully hard both for him as well as for her in so many ways. God bless her as she continues faithfully serving the Lord—alone. IYRJR.)

Lowell G. Lee, Medina, New York: "I have just read and reread your September/1987, Volume XVIII, No. 9. I try to understand through the Scriptures the word of God.

"There is a point I wish to know more

about. On Page 18, second paragraph, the following statement is made: 'Before Dave (Hogan) went to Harding Graduate School, he never seemed to have any difficulty in word choices; but ever since returning from there he teaches doctrine which cannot be excused on such a basis.'

"I feel this needs clarification, as it appears to me that someone is saying Harding Graduate School is teaching error."

(NOTE: "...you got it right;" I replied to brother Lee's letter, in part, "someone is saying that Harding Graduate School is teaching error.

"In fact, across the past two decades, more error has come into the Far East via Harding Graduate School than through practically any other source. And more outright *division* has been caused in our Lord's body in the Far East as a result.

"Back in the '60s, when Samuel Miao attended Harding Graduate School, he was so schooled in the doctrines and commandments of men that when he returned to Singapore he was far more concerned with what Bonhoffer, Tillich, Barth, Kierkegaard, Brunner and other such 'theologians' had to say than what Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, John or any other New Testament person had to say. After checking with other graduates and students from HGS, I came to realize that it was *the way they were being taught* at HGS that was the problem.

"I have tried hard thereafter to persuade others not to attend HGS. For instance, there was Ken Rideout, one of our most effective missionaries in the Far East. He wouldn't listen, went to Harding—and lost his faith. He hasn't been worth anything (I mean anything) to the cause of Christ since returning to Asia. In fact, he now fellowships all kinds of errorists in the Far East. He wasn't that way before he went to HGS. He has been ever since he studied there. The same goes for young Dave Hogan. He was taught right in Asia; but when he went to HGS, they undermined the truth that he had been taught, and now he keeps doing the same in Singapore.

"This has been brought to the attention of the brotherhood for many years. But you just can't seem to warn some brethren... In the Cause of Truth, (Signed) Ira Y. Rice, Jr.)

If there is a life after this life — and there is; and if there is a judgment to come — and there is; and if every accountable person shall stand in judgment before the Christ — and each shall; and if this life is given us that we may prepare for the life to come — and this is the case; and if the Bible is our only and all-sufficient guide in making preparation for the judgment, and for the life to come — and it is; then, it has to be the case that a knowledge of the Bible is the most important factor in the life and education of an individual.— Roy Deaver

T. Patton, former missionary to Sri Lanka, questioned plans for lecturership there. The Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio church, where **Bob Fish** preaches, was shown lining up with the Christian Church. At least **one** bright note for the year was the Nashville Banner honoring **George W.**

DeHoff with a three-column article on his 74th birthday—and his 5,000th radio broadcast. Emphasizing the "Gospel's Only Defense: An Informed Membership," we reported large numbers helping us building up *Contending for the Faith's* circulation. **John R. Hall** was named

President of Northeastern Christian Junior college, effective August 18th. And **Jackie M. Stearsman** closed out the year by releasing "A Critique of the Multiplying Ministries of the Boston Church of Christ."

Is Religious Unity Possible Today?

Paul Curless

Throughout the world many people are asking, "Is religious unity possible in the 20th century?" Most likely a great number of these people have concluded that since there are so many religious denominations (over 2,054 in the United States alone), that it is impossible to have religious unity!

To answer this question, let us direct our minds toward God's word, which must be our final authority in religious matters (II Timothy 3:16,17).

RELIGIOUS DIVISION CONDEMNED

The inspired apostle Paul pleaded with the Christians meeting in Corinth that they should, "...all speak the same thing and that there be **NO divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment**" (I Corinthians 1:10).

From this scripture it is quite clear Paul is condemning religious division. Jesus informs us that God's word is truth (John 17:17), and that it is the standard by which *all* mankind one day shall be judged, *whether religious or not* (John 12:48).

THE QUESTION ANSWERED

To answer the question, "Is religious unity possible in the 20th century," let us prayerfully consider the following:

1. YES, religious unity can be achieved, if we, as God's creation, are willing to humble ourselves and respect the commands of Christ. Remember Christ prayed that all might be ONE, as he and the Father are one, in complete unity (John 17:20,21). Jesus, God's only begotten Son, would not pray for something that was not possible.
2. YES, if all are willing to put aside ALL preconceived ideas and notions which most have grown up believing pertaining to religion and then turn to God's word for complete guidance. As the Psalmist said, "**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**" (Psalm 119:105). So God's word is to be our only guide, which truly will provide adequate light for all, as we walk along the pathway of life. The prophet Jeremiah urged that man's wisdom is not a safe guide (Jeremiah 10:23).
3. YES, if all are willing to discard the many human creeds men now go by in favor of the Bible. It's evident that mankind can not be united upon that which has caused such religious division—*creeds and doctrines of men* (Matthew 15:9).
4. YES, if all are willing to obey God's commands. As Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, "**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**"

HOW RELIGIOUS UNITY IS NOT ACHIEVED

Religious unity never can be achieved at the expense of Biblical truth. Some "middle-of-the-roaders" would have

our good brotherhood to believe that the way to achieve unity is to compromise with the liberals, anti's, and the various denominational bodies, including the Christian Church. To agree with this certainly would not be unity in the Biblical sense, but so called "**UNITY IN DIVERSITY**" which has plagued the Lord's church for many years.

Obedience to God's word is the key to heaven (Hebrews 5:8,9). There just *isn't* any other way. Religious unity is possible in the 20th century **ONLY** when people yield to God's unchanging word—the Bible (Malachi 3:6; Galatians 1:6-9)—which is our sole authority in all things religious (II Peter 4:11).

—Duluth Church of Christ
4321 Trinity Road
Duluth, Minnesota 55811

"More Spiritual?"

Jesse G. Brown

There is unprecedented movement in the religious world today—mass departure from the orthodox. In addition to the increase of cults and eastern religions, there are thousands of people branching off from all churches to form "community" groups which they claim are not churches. Those recognizing that they are churches mask themselves as "Agape," "Ekklesia" and the like.

What concerns us most about this is that influential members of the Lord's church are in this trend. They justify their departures by saying that the church is "not spiritual enough." But, they fail to tell us how to *become* more spiritual.

Regardless of the inaccuracy of their assessment, we do need to be as spiritual as possible (Galatians 6:1), and of a nature to attract people (II Peter 1:4). So, what does the Bible tell us about this current problem? First of all, it presents two essential realms of spirituality: the personal spirit, and the Holy Spirit. The one who "walks in the spirit" is a spiritual person (Romans 8:6; Galatians 5:16; I Corinthians 14:15; John 4:24). In this sense, there are many who are not saved—do not have the Holy Spirit) but are devout and zealous in religion, thus spiritual of nature. They take their emotions and "good feelings" to be the Holy Spirit. However, scriptures such as I Corinthians 6:17; Acts 5:32 and 2:38 show that no one can receive the Holy Spirit until he is "joined to the Lord" by being baptized scripturally.

But, back to *our* need! Luke 12:48 states, "**Unto whom much is given, of him much will be required.**" Are we as conscious and appreciative as we can be of the "unspeakable gifts" that are ours? (Ephesians 1:3; 3:8; I Peter 2:9). It

must "frustrate" the Godhead to see members of the church acting and teaching in such a way as to cause some of our brethren (and the denominational world) to judge us "not spiritual." When we tell people that we received the person of the Holy Spirit the day that we received salvation—the day that we were "joined to the Lord"—we need to let them see that we appreciate his presence, and rely on his power (Ephesians 3:16; 5:18).

But, since they cannot see him or his power, we must cultivate his *fruits* as the only legitimate proof of his presence, and as proof that our personal spirit is subject to him and to his word (Galatians 5:22). We also need to

explain to the increasing number of confused religionists that there is no "second work of grace" or baptism of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit begins to dwell in the person the moment that he obeys the gospel (Acts 2:38), and can be augmented by the "hungering" Christian (Matthew 5:6; Ephesians 3:16; 5:18; Luke 11:13). But, this is not the answer to our becoming more spiritual. We increase in spirituality to the degree of our sublimation of our personal spirit, mind and emotion to the word of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9,14; Proverbs 28:9).

—Drawer I
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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

Abuse of the Bible and the Restoration Movement

Bill Lockwood

Let us examine current thinking in light of one of the most fundamental and foundational principles of the Bible. The principle is: the interpretation of the scriptures.

We would confine our investigation to the holy scriptures themselves except for the distressing fact that those who reject the Lord regarding interpretation are seeking to clothe their naughtiness in the garb of "Restorationism." Consequently, they torture the memories of Restoration leaders. It is timely, therefore, to demonstrate: (1) The modern digressives are in direct conflict with the Restoration leaders whom they claim to follow, and (2) they are in conflict with Jesus Christ.

I. REPUDIATION OF A RESTORATION PRINCIPLE

In 1866 W.K. Pendleton was called upon to defend the Missionary Society at its annual convention. In this speech he declared that Alexander Campbell did not oppose such denominational societies in principle but in practice. Jacob Creath maintained that Campbell had indeed rejected the very principle upon which the societies were based, that is, they were without scriptural authority. Pendleton's construction of history put a "new slant" on "speaking where the Bible speaks" and he became a forerunner of an apostasy which crystallized into the Disciples of Christ/Christian Church.

Today, there are some "new angles" foisted upon the Restoration. In fact, if the following samples are in accord with the Restoration Plea the whole thing has no right to exist! Most amazingly, these errors are proclaimed under the canopy of "Restoration!"

Bill Pile of the Christian Church concluded an article this way: "This is our hermeneutic, what is yours?" (*One Body*, July 1985, p: 20). James Fuzzell in the same issue urged all who claim to accept the Bible to work together and since no one is perfect in interpretation, all should

accept one another regardless of the instrument of music (p. 4). David Erikson (*One Body*, Spring 1987, p. 20) glorifies Rudolph Bultmann's contribution to interpretation, namely, that we are all subjective and no one can possibly be otherwise.

Among our own parallel thoughts, dispersed via this and similar media, Marvin Phillips (*One Body*, February 1984, p. 15) says, regarding the differences with the Christian Church, "They study, they desire to be right; their only reason for being 'inaccurate' or 'mistaken' is their human inability to perfectly understand. That this group of people is saved at all is called 'grace'." Olan Hicks chides the idea of definite interpretation of the scripture in almost every issue of *News and Notes*. Here is a sample: "No uninspired man today can claim infallibility, that they know for certain their interpretation is the correct one. The only premises about which we can be certain are those stated in scripture." (August 12, 1987, p. 3)¹ Rubel Shelly satirized the churches of Christ as having "our traditions and interpretations of Scripture." (*Christians Only*, p. 20). The Restoration Summits, he says, are attempts to reach beyond our "self-imposed boundaries with the gospel message..." Further, one goal of these Meetings is to "understand each other's view of biblical interpretation." (*Ashwood Leaves*, August 1984).

Obviously, these men cannot make judgments about the rightness or wrongness of practices like instrumental music if they relinquish the possibility of a definite interpretation

(Continued on Page 3)

¹Of course, Hicks loudly insists "the question is NOT, CAN men know the truth, but DO they know it!" See *Logic and the Gospel of Christ*, p. 16. He says, Yes, men can know the truth but no man can claim he KNOWS that he knows it. This is mere verbal gymnastics which amounts to the same thing. "We can know the truth but no man can be sure that he does," is exactly the same idea as is here being reviewed. Incidentally, we wonder how he knows for certain that "the only premises about which we can be certain are those stated in scripture"? Is there an express New Testament statement saying that? Who told him that?

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Editorial...

God Bless You As You Help!

Almost 50 years ago, while yet a young gospel preacher, I had occasion to visit one day with Foy E. Wallace, Jr., in the home of Thornton B. Crews, in Houston, Texas. The year was 1939. Brother Wallace was then editor and publisher of the *Bible Banner*, having previously edited the *Gospel Advocate*, in Nashville, Tennessee.

When I inquired of brother Wallace as to the then-present circulation of the *Bible Banner*, he told me it was something over 8,000. He went on to say that he would not trade the 8,000 readers of the *Banner* for the several times that number of the *Advocate*. I asked why. He said because the *Banner* readers almost all stood for something, whereas great numbers of the readers of the *Advocate* did not. I never forgot what he said.

OUR READERS STAND FOR SOMETHING, TOO!

What was true of the *Bible Banner* readers in those days it seems to me is equally true of *Contending for the Faith* readers today. I may not know what the readers of the *Gospel Advocate* may stand for now, but I know this: readers of *Contending for the Faith*, on the whole, probably stand for the truth of the gospel as much as those of any gospel paper now in existence.

They prove it in so many ways. You let some false doctrine rise up, and who do you find in the forefront of the battle for truth? That's right. The *principal* defenders of the truth—brotherhood-wide—almost every single one of them are avid readers of *Contending for the Faith*.

And when something *special* comes up needing and deserving our help, who is it almost more than anyone else who will dig down in their pockets and rally to its cause? That's right—readers of *Contending for the Faith*! (Cases in point: That *Special Issue* of the *Firm Foundation* two years ago; and that huge mailing of Wayne Coats' *Critique of "How Christianity Grows in the City"*, mailed out by Pearl Street/Denton, Texas just last year. In both cases the heavy funds for these mailings came from the hearts and pockets of our readers—and we are grateful.

OLD SUPPORTERS DYING: NEW ONES NEEDED

Trouble is that increasing numbers of our generous, self-sacrificing readers either are retiring—or *dying*. Hardly an issue of *Contending for the Faith* now comes from the press but that we have to report the passing of one or more of our long-time contributors. We cannot have this hemorrhaging of our support without new ones rising up to take their place and still be able to carry on the effective defense of the gospel the way we have for so long.

In moving about the brotherhood, we are conscious of those who look upon themselves as fellow-soldiers in the battle for truth. Yet many who want to be

looked upon as such seldom help more than to say "hang right in there" or "God bless you brother." Which is all well and good; but we need more than that.

It requires a great deal of financial resource to be able to mount battles for truth even *nation*-wide, much less *world*-wide, such as we habitually do through the pages of *Contending for the Faith*. Battles over such things as Liberalism, Modernism, Pentecostalism, Marriage-Divorce-And-Remarriage, False Versions, and all the rest of the manifold issues continually plaguing the cause of Christ.

WHAT THE MONEY GOES FOR

What does it all cost? Well, at *this* time, for instance, we have a solid circulation of approximately 8,500. Each issue of this paper costs \$240.00 monthly for *typesetting*, \$1,400.00-plus for *printing*, almost \$130.00 for *mailing labor*, nearly \$800.00 for *postage*—to say nothing of miscellaneous *secretarial* and *other* costs, bringing the total into the neighborhood of \$3,500 per month. Even allowing for no issue in December, this means we have to have more than \$38,000.00 each year for *Contending for the Faith* alone just to be able to break even.

Much of this total, of course, comes through individual subscriptions and bundle orders. Yet, each year, were it not for the many of our readers who contribute more or less regularly to our contending-for-the-faith fund, there would be just no way for us to meet our manifestly heavy obligations.

Even if what we have to have for publishing costs were all we had to raise, this within itself obviously would be a sizeable sum. However, over the past 23 years it has fallen my lot, as Chairman of the Board of Directors, to raise the support for teachers and students at Four Seas College (now running \$24,000 each year): also, as a missionary, I must raise travel funds for evangelistic efforts overseas, help current missionaries and others deal with financial crises, find sponsors and supporters for *new* missionaries so they can go and be effective on the field. It all takes money.

Over the past year, for whatever reason, contributions to our various good works have been running steadily behind. For a time we were unable to meet our regular running expenses for the paper itself; thanks to many who helped, this now has been largely made up. We got behind with our own missionary support; this now has been caught up, too. Nevertheless, we *still* are running far, far behind on *missionary* obligations having to do with Singapore, Four Seas College and elsewhere.

If we keep running behind, brethren, it should be quite obvious that something soon must be cut. Shall it be some of our efforts through *Contending for the Faith*? Shall it be some of our *missionary* efforts both in this country and across the seas? Or will more of our readers help to replace those who are retiring or dying, get in under the load with us, and help bear part of the burden? We need you with us. God bless you as you help. —Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Abuse & Restoration

(Continued from Page 1)

of scripture. Their dogma that we cannot KNOW that we have a correct interpretation of scripture is a complete repudiation of the Restoration Principle they claim to uphold. Dwaine Dunning (*One Body*, Spring 1987, p. 18) admits this: "From its beginnings, the Restoration has extensively used a non-Scriptural rule of interpretation... which has forced one division after another." Well, since the whole Movement was launched upon a foundation of sand it would behoove them to quit cloaking their functions of supposed unity in the robe of Restorationism. We shall show that the idea of a definite interpretation of scripture is a foundational cornerstone of the Restoration and even Christianity itself. There simply would have been NO Restoration Movement had our forefathers in the faith subscribed to the view of these modern sages. Consequently, even though the current "Unity Movement" declares: "Let's go back to the Restoration," they cannot "frame to pronounce it right."

Alexander Campbell's "back to the Bible" thrust was opposed on every hand by the dogmatics of sectarianism. One of the basic tenets—shall we say, the whole platform, upon which Campbell operated—was the principle of the *certainty* of Bible interpretation. One could not discern what is amiss in the religious world if it cannot be discovered what is absolutely correct. Even the issue of authority in religion is subservient to this question. For, if the sacred volume sanctions divergent views of its precepts

and prohibitions, it is pointless to discuss authority of the scriptures.²

"Now, unless these sacred writings can be certainly interpreted, the Christian religion never can be certainly understood. Every argument that demonstrates the necessity of such a written document as the Bible, equally demonstrates the necessity of fixed and certain principles or rules of interpretation: for without the latter, the former is of no value to the world (*Great Pioneer Papers*, p. 111, reprinted from *Christian Baptist*).

Great unanimity has obtained in most of the sciences in consequence of the adoption of certain rules of analysis and synthesis; for all who work by the same rules come to the same conclusions. And may it not be possible that, in this divine science of religion, there may yet be a very great degree of unanimity of sentiment and uniformity of practice amongst all who acknowledge its divine authority? Is the school of Christ the only school in which there can be no unanimity—no proficiency alike—by those who read and study it? It cannot be supposed, but by dishonoring God: for, as all the children of God are taught by God, if they are necessarily unintelligent in his oracles and discordant in their views, the deficiencies must rather be imputed to the teacher than to the taught; for the pupils in this school can be taught other sciences in other schools, with such uniformity and harmony of views as to

²Dunning insists upon three rules of the Restoration. (*One Body*, Spring 1986, p. 20). (1) Inferences from Scriptural premises, when correctly inferred, become the doctrine of God's Holy Word. (2) Such conclusions as are reached by logic or inference are binding only on the one who manifestly sees that they are so. (3) Conclusions from human reasoning must not become terms of communion." What Dunning fails to inform his readers is that all three of these come from the *Declaration and Address* penned by Thomas Campbell in 1809 and therefore, do not represent his mature thinking on the subjects—especially is this so regarding item 2. Further, it is interesting that Dunning would apply this to instrumental music when Campbell addressed the subject directly himself. Actually, the whole war on denominations would be in violation of his application of this portion of the *Declaration and Address*.

make it manifest to all that they are the disciples of one teacher." (p. 112)

"...we would only impress upon the mind of the reader, that the very fact that we have a *written* revelation—that this revelation was first *spoken*, then written—supposes that there is somewhere a native or an acquired art of interpretation; that the persons addressed were already in possession of that art; for without such an understanding there would have been neither wisdom nor benevolence in giving to mankind any verbal communication from God." (pp. 113-114)

Arguing that the "whole revelation of God is thrown into the laboratory of every man's imagination, and the key of knowledge forever taken from the people" if there is not a certain interpretation, Campbell concludes:

It is sometimes called a *single* eye, because it looks for one thing supremely. Every one, then, who opens the Book of God with *one aim*, with one ardent desire, intent to know only the will of God—to such a person the knowledge of God is easy; for the Bible is framed to illuminate such, and only such, with the salutary knowledge of things spiritual and divine. (*Ibid.*, p. 126.)

F. M. Carmack, writing on religious authority, notes that if the diversity of opinion which the world exhibits on scripture is necessary, it is essential that the church be divided into factions (either that or the unity-in-diversity concept proposed today!) because people cannot see the Bible alike. Carmack refutes this by showing: (1) If the word of God is so mysterious that we cannot agree as to terms of salvation, it follows that those who fail to see it at all will be punished for not doing what is impossible for them to do. (2) The responsibility of religious strife must be upon God. "Whatever you think is right" puts an end to authority in religion. Followed to its logical conclusion it means that if a person chose Paganism because it seemed right to him, he would be exalted! (3) There will never be harmony if men are to be regarded as the highest authority. (4) If Doctors of Divinity hold the key of knowledge there is no protection against false teachers. No, he answers, there is a higher authority than the words which man's wisdom teaches; a standard which even babes in Christ may use.

Now listen to Robert Richardson on the subject of "Faith Versus Opinion." (*Great Pioneer Papers*, p. 147. Reprinted from *Millennial Harbinger*, 1852.)

It may be objected here, that what may be clear to one mind may be doubtful to another; and that the Scriptures are constantly appealed to, by all parties, as affording to each sufficient proof of its peculiar views, which, in each case, conflict more or less with those of every other party. This may be true, but what follows? That the Scriptures are themselves a tissue of contradictions and ambiguities? That it is impossible to determine their true meaning? Nay, truly, this were to deny the fundamental principles of Protestantism, *viz.*: The Divine origin of the Bible, and the right of private interpretation. For God could not be the author of a volume of this character; and the right to interpret the Scriptures, presupposes the ability to comprehend them, since, without this, to concede the right would be but mockery.

Moses Lard (*Lard's Quarterly*, vol. I., p. 242) points out that sects defend themselves by saying "we cannot all see the Bible alike." If so, Lard contends, then we *must* have divisions. "It is a humiliating fact, I grant, that they *will not* see alike, but a grand lie that they *cannot*." Paul besought us to see alike and speak alike. Sects say, "let each man choose," but the question is: Do they have a right to do so?

The Reformers of the past did not teach the impossibility of correct interpretation and its natural conclusion, unity in diversity. Common honesty behooves our modern self-

styled Reformers to cease calling us back to the "true" Restoration while chiseling away at its very foundation in the fashion of Isaac Errett, J. B. Briney, J. H. Garrison, and others. The digressives today may strike a similar note with Campbell and company, but they are singing a different song.

II. THE BIBLE ON THE INTERPREATION OF THE SCRIPTURE

Our forefathers of the Restoration Movement, while erroneous on some points, were demonstrably on safe ground relative to the interpretation of scripture. There are *many* passages in which we are informed that it is possible for us to concur with the *intent* for which the scripture was written. This is implicitly understood in many of the statements Jesus made (John 8:32, *et. al.*) Let's examine a few.

(A) In Luke 10:25ff, a legal authority stood up and sought to "make trial" of our Lord by asking, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" The latter inquiry contains some interesting implications which address the subject at hand.

Jesus used a Greek word for "how" meaning "to determine how something has come to be, how it is happening, or should happen..." Further, the word for "readest" is one which signifies "coming to know accurately," hence, "to read." Jesus taught that there was a *correct* understanding of scripture and a *faulty* one or perhaps more than one. This is also evident in his reply to the lawyer's answer, "Thou hast answered right," or "correctly." That is, "you have interpreted properly." No one has a right to faulty interpretation of the scripture. The Bible does not lend itself to various understandings.

The lawyer, however, dissatisfied with the ease of Jesus' dismissal of his charade, was disposed to quibble over a definition of a word, "neighbor" (v. 20). This was to justify himself. (How many today quibble over plain declarations of scripture to justify themselves?) This attempt was similar to Pilate's skeptical turn of mind when he asked, "What is truth?" Jesus tactfully, from the succeeding parable of the sower, allowed the attorney to answer his own question and, in so doing, the lawyer defeated his own restrictions. As Christ illustrated, words are to be taken according to their accepted usage and statements from scripture, as the context dictates, at face value. How hollow, therefore, sounds the current reply which seeks to escape from Biblical teaching by "that's just your interpretation" (or "your hermeneutic"). Jesus recognized a *correct* hermeneutic.

(B) 11 Corinthians 1:13: "For we write no other things unto you, than what ye read or even acknowledge." Goodspeed paraphrases it: "For what I am writing to you is only what you read and understand..." According to Paul, the primary key to a proper hermeneutic is not to admit the subjectivity of the reader, but only, reading what is written!

The word for "read" is defined (*Vine's Dictionary*, p. 921) "primarily, to know certainly...is used of reading written characters." Note the connection between reading and knowing certainly. As the same apostle wrote in Ephesians 3:3, "when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ." Reading the Bible leads to perceiving, not inseparable differences. And, if two men both "perceive", they see alike.

"In 2 Corinthians 1:13 there is a purposive play upon words; firstly, 'we write none other things unto you, than that ye read' signifies that there is no hidden or mysterious

meaning in his Epistles; whatever doubts may have arisen and been expressed in this respect, he means what he says..." (*Ibid.*) What clearer statement of Paul is needed to know that he relies upon intrinsic ability to interpret endowed by the Creator. He even appeals to it to substantiate his honesty. It actually appears that the faction in Corinth had affirmed that some statements of Paul's former correspondence were designed in ambiguous phraseology that he might afterward so interpret to suit his purpose. This idea he challenged by appealing to the plain, obvious meaning of words. This is not to say that all passages are easily interpreted (II Peter 3:15) but we must be constrained to recognize a native art of correct interpretation. Without it language is useless.

(C) A third passage is Matthew 4:1-11. Christ quoted scripture in his rebut of Satan's first temptation. In the second trial, however, Satan himself quotes scripture (Psalm 91:11,12). Jesus informed Satan, however, by a counter-quotations of Deuteronomy 6:16 that he had misapplied the verse. This illustrates that it is possible to *misapply* and, to *correctly* understand a passage. If the scriptures are open to various interpretations, Christ did not refute Satan at all! And, if correct interpretation be possible only for the sinless Christ, why did he bother to teach man at all!?

Our modern digressives, instead of being good and coming to the truth on the subject, scramble for a way out. They suppose they find it in the fact of religious division. They think that factions, even in the Lord's church,

demonstrate their idea of impossibility of correct interpretation. Since the religious world is hopelessly divided into hundreds of warring factions and even the Lord's church is not exempt, it must be the case that God never intended for all to see alike. So their reasoning goes. However, do religious divisions teach us to recognize the impossibility of correct interpretation?

There happens to be an alternative answer to this problem of divisions which none of our wayward brethren seem willing to recognize, "for had they known it they would not slaughter truth on the crucifix of subjectivism." It is this: divisions result from the failure of men to lay aside preconceived notions when interpreting scripture. And this is exactly what we *must* do. Jesus required men to *relinquish* them, not simply "admit that we have them." Nathanael's predisposition said, "Nothing good can come out of Nazareth" (John 1:46) but he could not keep this notion and be faithful to Christ!

Yes, divisions will arise but they do not prove the impossibility to correctly interpret. They, rather, demonstrate man's weakness to consistently apply principles of proper interpretation and admit his own failures to do so. The blame then, does not lie with any "rules of interpretation," but with man's unwillingness to be corrected. The tragedy remains the same as always—men will shame Christ to justify self.

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Reaction to Some Sermons on "The Sermon on the Mount"

Roy M. McConnell

It is difficult for anyone to know when to apply Romans 16:17 and II John 10. Do these have meaning in our lives today? Did God intend that we should follow them? Recently, I heard two sermons that have made me think of the above scriptures. Read this and see if you agree.

I listened as this speaker commented on what is generally called the "Lord's Prayer":

...The kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven is neither the church nor the future state of the saved. It is the unfolding possibility in the life of every faithful disciple in the here and now...If there is any prayer/the believing existing imperfect church of Christ needs to pray in this world today it's precisely that petition. God, for this church let your kingdom come...

While I certainly see the need for spiritual growth, is it right to teach that the kingdom is *not* the church? Matthew refers to the kingdom some 60 times. Were not John and Jesus referring to the church by the term "kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 3:2 and 4:17)? When Jesus said the "least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11), was he not speaking of the church?

Our attitude toward the Word of God determines what we believe and practice. Our attitude toward inspiration determines how completely we are willing to submit to the Word. This preacher explained the origin of Matthew in these words:

...The sermon that he must have preached many, many times. The sermon that Matthew from memory, maybe from some notes he jotted down, hearing Jesus preach at various

times, maybe even written forms of this same sermon that others had pieced together and were circulating in written form. Jesus preached it in at least the form it comes to us. Matthew casts it for a literary purpose and it is an absolute masterpiece about discipleship...

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would give them what to say (Matthew 10:19-20). Paul said the Holy Spirit does this using words (I Corinthians 2:13). Peter said that "...holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). How can I believe this and accept the above account of how we got the sermon on the mount? If I believed such an account I would pay little attention to Matthew.

For 30 years I have taught that the Old Law was done away (II Corinthians 3:11). I have explained that the New Testament is really *new* (II Corinthians 3:6). That the New Testament is not a revision of the Old Law. That it is "**not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers**" (Hebrews 8:9). I have contended that it came into effect as Jesus' will (Hebrews 9:17). I cannot accept, therefore, these statements from this preacher:

...I'm not sure there is any sense in which the law of Moses is abrogated. Oh, I understand that the Sabbath commandment has been replaced by virtue of the resurrection of Christ... There is an old covenant which is a part of that covenant predicated certain things on commandments and in the new covenant these same basic things are predicated, not on law any more, but on grace; and yet the law is such as continues through both covenants...only certain ceremonial

aspects relevant to his worship under the old and new covenant have been changed...

Recognizing the eternal principles of love, faith and obedience will not harmonize such statements with the total change of authority demanded by Matthew 28:18-20. A floodgate of error has been opened and only time will reveal where it will lead.

In recent years I have seen many attempts to soften Matthew 19:9 and had begun to wonder what would come next? This same preacher made this statement on this subject as he explained the sermon on the mount:

...Jesus says, look, if you understand a court of law, just to get a divorce is to be guilty of adultery. Remember, adultery is not a sexual word. Fornication is the sexual word. The word adultery means covenant-breaking. Adultery means disloyalty to pledges and covenants. So Jesus says don't get involved in divorce because divorce itself is adultery. Forget remarriage—remarriage is not what makes it adultery—it's divorce that's covenant-breaking. Remarriage is incidental if it does or doesn't occur...

Such a definition separates the marriage that follows from the sin of adultery. Such a definition alleges that the lexicons and encyclopedias we have used for the past several centuries are wrong. More importantly, it will not harmonize with scripture. Jesus said, "...whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Does anyone seriously contend that such a one has "covenant-breaking" in mind? John 8:4 reads: "...this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act." How in the name of reason can this be merely *covenant-breaking*? To get around that passage, one must attack the translation. [Truman Scott tried that route in a discussion with Wayne Jackson and used the wrong Greek word. See *Divorce and Remarriage, A Study Discussion* by Wayne Jackson and Truman Scott.]

What does a false teacher resort to when scriptural proof is lacking? Emotional proof! I contend that this teacher does exactly that with the following illustration:

...Take a real-life case of a woman who is 19 years old and marries and the man she marries without knowing very well, after a few months and especially after a child is conceived, he never intended to have, and that she won't abort—he begins abusing her. First verbally, then physically and after the child is born is burning the child with cigarette butts—and she divorces that man to save her own life and her baby. And a few years after she marries a decent man whom she loves faithfully and six years after that she hears the gospel and she wants to be a Christian. Question: Is the gospel good news or bad news to her?

Are we back to situation ethics? What about Saul? Was the gospel good news to him? It cost him everything (Philippians 3:8).

When one begins to think in these terms, where does it lead? Here is the answer in this preacher's words:

I'll tell you the one thing I've decided I won't do. I'm not gonna ask anybody to try to cure a situation by committing adultery—that is by covenant-breaking. I'm not gonna ask anybody to break up a covenant in order somehow to come in line with the will of God that says don't be a covenant breaker. At ten years ago, I could have given you every answer on every complex marriage and divorce question in a five minute sermon and given you time to sing an extra song.

If John the Baptist had taken this stand, he could have saved his head. Mark 6:17 says they were married. Mark 6:18 says this union was unlawful. John condemned this union and lost his head.

What do you tell others to do? This speaker explains:

...I cannot be judged by your understanding nor will I allow

you to judge me. I will not do that to you and I'll encourage that each of us act in good conscience under God and that we throw ourselves on the mercy of God and ask his grace when we have done the best we know to do with integrity before his word.

I have spent 30 years trying to get others to study (II Timothy 2:15) and obey the truth (John 8:31-32). Must I now accept the supposition that God wrote a book that we cannot understand?

Yes, it is difficult to know when to apply Romans 16:17 and II John 10. But I believe that God has drawn the line and my duty is clear: I cannot support such a teacher in any way. What I do matters little to any except me, but what about you Christians in Nashville, Tennessee since this man preaches for one of the largest congregations there? What about you Christians that are associated with David Lipscomb College since a large part of your students and faculty attend where he preaches? What about you who are a part of the 20th Century Christian Publication Company since he is the Director of Publications there? It is my firm conviction that if we should not apply these scriptures here they have no meaning to us.

[NOTE: These statements are taken from Rubel Shelly, "Sermon on the Mount," #1 and #7, preached at the Ashwood church of Christ on February 7, 1988 and March 28, 1988. IYR Jr.].

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HEAVEN A Reward Motivation

Edward W. Loyd, II

If a person was to pinpoint the single most important reason for all that God does for us, both physically and spiritually, my conclusion would be: Because he wants us ALL to go to heaven. In the words of the apostle Peter, in II Peter 3:9, "He does not want any to perish but everyone to come to repentance." In order for us to qualify for that trip to the celestial city, first we must be redeemed (bought back) from the bondage of sin.

God has provided a way for us to be redeemed through the gospel of Jesus Christ and so he adds incentives in the Bible to motivate us in that direction. If all men and women thought alike, then God would only have to use *one* incentive to try and spark our spiritual interest, however, we are ALL different, and because of our differing personalities, God uses various motives to help us see reality.

Some people can be encouraged only from the negative standpoint, therefore our Lord warns us of hell and its impending doom for the disobedient.

Others can be reached by compassion, so God tells us of his great demonstration of love, in John 3:16, "God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son..." In light of that, he urges us to serve him faithfully until death.

Still others are stimulated by reward motivation. The incentive to live righteously, is to live eternally with the Lord. The proper incentive should cause one to take stock of himself and look introspectively into his own life.

God wants us ALL to go to heaven thus, through his word, he tries to stimulate that desire, through different avenues. My hope and desire is that he reaches all that would be receptive to his word.

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DEVELOPING CHURCHES AND LEADERS

Larry D. Mathis

Far too many congregations are struggling "underdeveloped" due to a lack of proper scriptural leadership. At this very moment I can name churches in various places that have been in this sad condition for years—and in some places the condition traces clear back to the beginning of the congregation.

Some of you will appreciate this illustration for you have witnessed just such a spectacle. Others may think it overdrawn but it is not.

Envision a congregation where, for the most part, the members are apathetic and uncommitted to the Lord's work. It is nearly impossible to generate enthusiasm among them. Lord's Days come and go. Their claim to fame is to meet long enough on Sunday morning to eat the "cracker." The rest of the service isn't really all that important! Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services are unimportant.

In said congregations a minimal number (usually one individual) shares in the work load. Perhaps the preacher, or another individual, is expected to do it all. If he *doesn't* do it, it's left undone! But if he *does* it, he's "running the church."

He may be expected to make all of the decisions, prepare and serve communion, lead singing, lead the prayers, preach, teach Bible class, be the treasurer, make announcements, set the thermostat, lock and unlock the church building, mow the grass, visit the ill, and whatever else needs attending to. How has all of this come about? In my judgment such churches have not and are not developing after the New Testament order.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

I certainly do not have all the answers but here's a suggestion: **TEACH INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.** One of the greatest responsibilities teachers and preachers have is to teach members to shoulder their individual responsibility in the local church. Jesus expects each local congregation to grow and to develop properly. This can be accomplished only "if" and "when" the members decide to grow into the likeness of Christ—accepting their obligations and responsibilities as Christians.

A considerable portion of the New Testament deals with Christian growth and development. When Christians grow and develop as they should, congregations will function as they should. And, too, part of a congregation's growth and development involves producing scripturally qualified leaders.

Something is sorely lacking in congregations that have been in existence for years but have never developed to the point of producing elders. God wants elders in every church (Acts 14:23), not some man-made arrangement.

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit revealed the divine plan for church leaders; yet, it often is ignored, tampered with, modified, or legislated upon. Each congregation is to have a **PLURALITY OF QUALIFIED ELDERS TO LEAD THE FLOCK: "Elders in every church"** (Acts 14:23). "**Ordain elders in every city**" (Titus 1:5). "**Elders of the church**" (Acts 20:17). "**Elders of the church**" (James 5:14). "**At Philippi, with the bishops and deacons**" (Philippians 1:1).

HOW FUNCTION WITHOUT ELDERS?

What is a congregation to do that does not have elders?

How are decisions reached? Exercise great caution. Even in congregations without elders the Lord's work must be carried on by his people.

Congregations without elders must function through some avenue to make decisions (such as a general "business meeting"). In such an arrangement faithful men will come together to plan the Lord's work. All decisions must be made according to Christ's will and not men's.

Do not become too fond of, or fall in love with, the general business meeting arrangement; it is but a substitute! God wants *elders* in every church overseeing the work (Acts 14:23; 20:28). Sometimes brethren like the "business meeting" arrangement and see no need for elders. This is a mistake.

Let us all take on cheerfully the obligations we have as Christians; let's all do our part. Let's all be committed to the concept of growing and developing into mature Christians. When this occurs the problems created by not having qualified leaders will be greatly reduced.

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My Rules For Life

George W. DeHoff

1. I try never to say anything behind a man's back that would give me the least embarrassment to say to his face.
2. I try never to speak back to personal critics—friends do not need to hear the defense and enemies would not believe it.
3. Every day I greet every person I see with a smile and make special effort to do so if the person is poor or in unfortunate circumstances.
4. The first thing when I awake in the morning I plan what my duty for the day is and try to go beyond it.
5. Every day I read from the Bible and some other good books. Feeding the mind and soul is more important than feeding the body.
6. I try to pay every debt I owe on time and always save something from every paycheck, however small.
7. I like people and never harbor any malice or hatred toward any person in the world. I like places and have yet to be anywhere that I do not like; I go there with the intention of liking the place.
8. I am a confirmed optimist believing that even in this life evil men will be punished by their own unhappiness and good men will be rewarded. It's better further on.
9. I try to close each day as if it were the last day I'd be on earth, closing the books on all regrets, worries and annoyances.
10. The last thing I do at night is to count one by one the blessings of the day. This makes me so thankful and happy that I soon drift into pleasant sleep. In this spirit I hope to close life's journey and drift into eternity.

—*Church Bulletin*
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Everyone Wants The Cream

Winfred Clark

[*EDITORIAL NOTE. Now and again one of our Editorial Staff writes something that is so good that it is picked up and reprinted in church bulletins and papers all over the brotherhood. Such is the following item by our own Winfred Clark. Read it!—The Editor*]

Everybody wants the cream, but nobody wants to milk the cow. On cold rainy mornings one doesn't find it too easy to get out of a warm bed to go through dirty cow lots and endure the foul odors, but if one is to enjoy the cream that is exactly what must be done. To have cream, somebody has to milk.

I'm sure you've seen a lot of folks in your lifetime who have wanted no less than cream but they would always depend on somebody else to do the milking. When the time came to enjoy the cream they were about the first ones to the table and you would think, to look at them and listen to them, that they had done the milking. Not so. They turned over and went back to sleep in a dry, warm bed while somebody else did what they needed to do.

We all want privilege and pleasure, but without responsibility on our part. Don't bother us with meeting our part of the responsibility. Oh, yes, we will be there to take the credit when the privilege is to be enjoyed and we'll have ways of making people think we were at the barn before daylight, but nobody knows better than we that such was not the case.

RESPECT HAS TO BE EARNED

Most of us know that in the church we have some folks who are dedicated and will do the milking even if others don't. Yes, we know we ought to, but don't; since they go ahead and do what we ought to be doing, we go along from the side. One comedian called such folks "The International Federation of Free-Loaders": people who are always ready for the handout, but are too lazy to do the milking.

How many times do we demand respect without deserving such? I find respect usually follows "the cream" of the crop. Respect comes from quality of life, not from demands. Anybody that has ever had anything to do with the selection of elders in a church for the first time can tell you this. Invariably, there will be a few men who will emerge

because they have those qualities and characteristics that demand respect. They have been willing to pay the price and do the "milking" when others found it easier to turn over and go back to sleep on cold mornings.

Everybody wants to be a part of a good working church. We all like to see souls saved and saints strengthened but too few of our people want to milk the cow. I don't find any record of any church that ever grew without a whole lot of preaching, visiting, studying and praying. Somebody was always talking to somebody else about his or her soul. When enough people were talking to enough people, sooner or later people began to obey the Gospel. They didn't just sit around in planning sessions hour after hour and allow it to go no further. They were out where the people were doing what they were supposed to do. In short, they got on with the milking.

IT TAKES HARD WORK

If we want the cream, we've got to milk the cow in spite of the weather, in spite of the contrariness of the cow, in spite of the fact that some who have milking jobs aren't doing the milking. In other words, there is going to have to be some individual effort on the part of each of us if we are to maintain a good conscience and keep our self-respect.

I visited a business place in town today. A certain clerk in that store would surely want to be paid at the end of the week, but if all showed the same amount of interest and concern that this one showed, that store might not have money to pay *any* clerk at the end of a week.

Somewhere along the way we seem to have forgotten that it takes hard work to accomplish anything worthwhile. In our instant age that may be hard for some of us to appreciate.

We can talk our way out of some things, but right-thinking people will soon remind us that all of our rationalizations and excuses will not suffice for the effort that is going to be required if we want the cream. They will soon say, "You've got to milk the cow."

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Family Life Centers And Entertainment

Joe W. Nichols

In 1979 my wife and I were privileged to travel with a church group to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend a work seminar sponsored by the Madison church in conjunction with David Lipscomb College. We were greatly edified by the program and classes presented by the church and college. However, while visiting the Madison church, we were introduced by the late Ira North to the construction of the first "Family Life Center" ever witnessed by us. Brother North personally stated that initially he was against the center but was later convinced by the elders and deacons that it could serve a good purpose. It always puzzled me as to why brother North was at the outset against the center.

Was it that he had convictions against it based upon the lack of scriptural authority? Was it that he could see the money put to a better use in other works of the church? Perhaps we will never know why brother North was against it, but later changed his mind.

"Family Life Centers" are much like fitness centers. They may contain indoor tracks, weight rooms, basketball courts, aerobic rooms, ping-pong and pool rooms, kitchen and dining rooms and even bowling and swimming facilities. Also added are offices, libraries, rooms for study and counseling and rest rooms. The latter are usually presented in argument to justify the former. In the defense

of "Family Life Centers," it is usually stated that much good can be accomplished: families are brought closer together, it keeps children off the streets and away from the temptations of the world, and friends can be introduced to the church in this manner. It all sounds good! Doesn't it?

Works of the church succeed or fail as they are justified by the scripture. God ordained there be three basic institutions: the government, the home, and the church. Each has its individual function and should remain separate from the other—"render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21). When Paul addressed a problem at the Corinth church, he stated: "What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" The common, or family meal, was to be eaten at home. Functions peculiar to the home should not be pressed into the affairs of the church. Could it be that one day in the future, the "Family Life Centers" will have apartments for all of us, and we won't have to go home at all? Would the home at that time cease to exist? Will we become a religious commune? Someone might ask, "Well what is wrong with that?" It is wrong because God did not ordain it!

Some statements from the past by preachers and educators sounded the warning to us about churches deviating into the entertainment and recreation business:

"...It is not the work of the church to furnish entertainment for its members. And yet, many churches have drifted into such practices. They enlarge their basements, put in all kinds of gymnastic apparatus, and make every sort of appeal to the young people of the congregation. I have never read anything in the Bible that indicated to me that such was a part of the work of the church. I am wholly ignorant of any scripture that even points in that direction...."

"Neither is it the mission of the church to furnish entertainment for its members, or for the world...."

"It is not the mission of the church to furnish amusement for the world, or even its own members. Innocent amusement in proper proportion has its place in the life of all normal persons, but it is not the business of the church to furnish it. For the church to turn away from its divine work to furnish amusement and recreation is to pervert its mission. If the church will discharge its duty in preaching the gospel, in edifying its members, and in helping the worthily poor, it will not have the desire or the time merely to amuse and entertain." [from an article by Steve Gibson in the *Flushing Reminder* of Flushing, Michigan, May 15, 1983]

WHAT IS NOT THE WORK OF THE CHURCH?

Some in our brotherhood have developed a false impression of the church's purpose and work. They would have the church to become a social institution, satisfying the desires and personal whims of immature brethren who desire a religion that satisfies the needs and desires of the flesh, rather than the spirit, and that pleases themselves rather than God. Such a human philosophy, ignorant of God's will pertaining to the church and its designed work, leads to practices which have no scriptural warrant. When a church involves itself in recreation and entertainment for the so-called purpose of edifying and evangelizing, it has certainly left God's will in the matter and has launched out on its own wisdom.

NOWHERE does the Bible authorize the church to be in the business of recreation and entertainment to convert the lost. True, denominations have been using these means for years in order to attract numbers to their religious beliefs. Consequently, such practices have led them further from the truth. It is a known fact that denominations, from their inception, have operated on human tradition and not

according to the truth. Now, some of our own brethren are establishing similar traditions.

There is not a single scripture to authorize the church to engage in recreation and entertainment. Neither is there a Biblical example of the early church engaging in such practices. If the early church didn't practice it, shouldn't we leave it alone?

To the contrary, the church's function is to save souls by the means of (1) Evangelism; (2) Edification; (3) Benevolence:

1. John 6:44-45, "They shall all be taught of God."
2. II Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."
3. Matthew 28:19-20, "Go...teach...baptizing them...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."
4. Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

The ONLY lure that God authorizes the church to use in seeking and saving the lost is the gospel:

1. Acts 8:4, "They...everywhere preaching the word."
2. I Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."
3. II Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Entertainment, recreation and gimmicks devised by immature brethren are used to slip up on the blind-side of an unsuspecting public. Church "ball-teams," "carnivals," "bazaars," "spectaculars," "youth organizations," and "old-age clubs" serve that purpose and the purpose of entertaining the Lord's people with the Lord's money. Can you imagine the church of the first century adopting such practices?

The churches at Jerusalem and Antioch of Syria are good examples of how congregations should conduct themselves:

1. Acts 2:42, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
2. Acts 5:42, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."
3. Acts 11:20-21, "They were come to Antioch...preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."
4. Acts 11:23-24, Barnabas, when he was come, "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord...and much people were added to the Lord."
5. Acts 11:26, "A whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

There is simply no mention in the New Testament of the church using any means but the preaching and teaching of the gospel to save the lost. It is evident, also, that recreation and entertainment were left to the home and family.

When Jesus cleansed the temple (John 2:13), he said, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise...." Some brethren today have some selfish and gluttonous motives, it seems, in their desire to use the church to their own advantage. They seek to please themselves by their practices at the expense of the Lord and drag the church

and the name of Christ through denominational rubbish. Personally, I am ashamed, embarrassed, and saddened by it all. Moreover, I am grieved for my Lord who "purchased the church with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Too, I realize that our work is now made more difficult because we will have to not only preach the truth more intently and effectively than before, but at the same time we will have to bear the burden of attempting to explain our own brethren

who have left the "old paths" and have adopted the ways of the world.

—Post Office Box 853
Vidalia, Louisiana 71373

[NOTE: The foregoing article appeared in *Light for Living*, church bulletin of the East Corinth (Mississippi) church of Christ, of which Garland M. Robinson is the Editor. IYR Jr.]

Humming, Hand Clapping and Choirs

Trent H. Wheeler

As we consider God's commands for singing in worship, we need to keep before us the importance of having Biblical authority for all that we teach and practice (Colossians 3:17; I Peter 4:11). We can rest assured that the scriptures do teach the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in worship by *direct command* (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), by *approved example* (Matthew 26:30; Acts 16:25), and by necessary inference (Romans 15:9; Hebrews 2:12). What I fail to find any authority for is humming, hand clapping and the use of choirs in worship to God almighty.

God's commands for us to sing are found in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. They read, "**Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord**"; "**Let the words of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**" God's specification for singing in worship is clear and concise. God said to sing! This excludes any and all other forms of music in worship (*i.e.*, mechanical, humming, hand clapping and any other human innovation).

Many attempts have been made to justify these and other unauthorized activities. In trying to find authorization for humming some of our brethren suggest that "humming is a way in which we sing with another or a manner in which we improve our singing." God does not judge our singing according to vocal quality or tonal beauty (if he did, my worship would be most unacceptable); God judges our singing by the heart of the worshiper. Singing in worship was not set up as a form of entertainment. We sing to worship God and to teach and admonish one another. The term "speaking" (Ephesians 5:19) comes from the Greek word *laleo* which means to talk, tell, or utter and involves the pronunciation and projection of correct sounds. An individual cannot "speak, teach or admonish" while he is humming.

With an ever increasing emphasis being placed on emotionalism in worship, hand clapping is becoming more and more prevalent. Again in our vain attempt to justify such practices I hear some of my brethren saying, "It adds to the spirit of the song," or "It helps us to maintain the right beat." Hand clapping may add to the emotional fervor, excitement and neo-pentecostal practices exercised by many today; but it also adds an unauthorized element to our worship to God. If this kind of emotional mayhem continues, it won't be long until we have "brethren" stomping their feet and dancing in the aisles.

Choirs and choruses have been around for a long time, but I have failed to find any authorization for them in our public worship together. Choirs were introduced into the worship of the church in the fourth century doing away

with congregational singing. As more importance was placed on artistic beauty and physical appearance, and less on true worship, it was not long until mechanical instruments of music followed. Soloists, choirs and choruses violate the term "yourselves" and "one another" in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, respectively. The Greek word *heautou* is a reflexive pronoun which denotes mutual participation and a cooperative exchange. Each is commanded to "speak," but this is to be mutual or cooperative; thus we arrive at congregational singing. The other problem we face with solos and choirs is that they promote this idea of tonal perfection and discourage the poor singer from fulfilling his God-given command to sing.

With so many of my brethren continuing to flirt with the Christian Church, the time has come to draw the line on all human innovations and return to the old paths. God commanded us to sing. Any addition or subtraction to this simple command is sinful and should be opposed.

—Post Office Box 352
Alachua, Florida 32615

What Is Humanism?

Humanism...

- 1) Denies the deity of God, the inspiration of the Bible, and the divinity of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Denies the existence of the soul, life after death, salvation and heaven, damnation and hell.
- 3) Denies the biblical account of creation.
- 4) Believes that there are no absolutes, no right no wrong—that moral values are self-determined and situational. Do your own thing, "as long as it does not harm anyone else."
- 5) Believes in removal of distinctive roles of male and female.
- 6) Believes in sexual freedom between consenting individuals, regardless of age, including premarital sex, homosexuality, lesbianism, and incest.
- 7) Believes in the right to abortion, euthanasia (mercy killing), and suicide.
- 8) Believes in equal distribution of America's wealth to reduce poverty and bring about equality.
- 9) Believes in control of the environment, control of energy and its limitation.
- 10) Believes in removal of American patriotism and the free enterprise system, disarmament, and the creation of a one-world socialistic government.

—Christian Messenger
Algood church of Christ
195 Fifth Avenue
Algood, Tennessee 38501

Sister Box Brings Us Up To Date

Sister Pauline Box, of Abilene, Texas, wrote, under date of April 13, 1988, saying,

"I appreciate so much the hard work you do to keep the churches free from all the evils that seem to be taking over everywhere.

"I thought you might be interested in the enclosed clipping."

The clipping she enclosed was from the *Abilene Reporter-News* for Thursday, April 7, 1988, and reads as follows:

Thursday, April 7,, 1988
Abilene Reporter-News

Letters to the editor

Ongoing dispute

On March 28, I noticed an article in your newspaper entitled "ACU Press releases 3 religious books." The article reminded us that "two years ago ACU was involved in the evolution controversy in which a student and an ACU graduate attacked two faculty members they said were teaching evolution as fact."

Incidentally, the name of that graduate, who earned his doctorate, was omitted from the university's 1987 alumni directory! Why? This dedicated teacher-lecturer simply chose to enlighten Christians about the controversy and help terminate teaching of evolution without appropriate instruction of creation also.

The dean of the College of Natural and Applied Science has left that position. On Jan. 15, ACU's "The Optimist" reported that Dr. Archie Manis, former biology professor, resigned to accept employment with the school system in Killeen. Another reason Manis cited for resigning was to get away from the controversy that started in 1984, "but, never really died down all the way." Today, your newspaper stated that Dr. C.G. Gray, vice president for academic affairs at ACU for six years, will leave that position and return to full-time teaching.

Occasionally people who recognize religion-related error and attack it doggedly can accomplish some good for the Lord. I haven't forgotten being startled to discover and read a short editorial in your newspaper on Feb. 19, 1986, entitled "ACU shows its integrity." I await the restoration of the University's long-admired image.

CLEO A. REEDER
Abilene

[NOTE: Much appreciation to sister Box for bringing the above item to our attention. The ACU administration may think the brotherhood has swallowed their false explanation regarding evolution being taught as fact there. Manis may be gone and Gray back in the classroom, but a confession of faults still is forthcoming. IYR Jr.]

Christian Responsibility

Danny Bennett

The world is on the threshold of a return to faith in the fundamental truth found in the Bible. One of the reasons for this shift toward Christianity is that they have had an overdose of morality from their respective denominations.

These people are seeking the church of the New Testament, the church of Christ. It is amazing to me that we are currently embracing the very same teachings which are causing a decline in membership of the denominational world. We are employing methods and techniques which emphasize the principles of secular morality over those of Christianity.

One of the results of this decreased emphasis on the principles found in the Bible is that many opportunities to spread the gospel of Christ are lost. Another result is the enticement of members from adjoining congregations to place membership, not the conversion of the sinner. It seems that we want only to increase our numbers by the most expedient methods. The inspired writer, Peter, speaking in II Peter 1:16, said "we have not followed cunningly devised fables...but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." And Jesus, being tempted in the desert by Satan, responded by saying in Matthew 4:1-11, "It is written." And we find these words of Jesus in Luke 5:32, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance." The main focus and duty of the church is to teach the will of God as revealed through the scriptures. John 4:34 says, "Jesus sayeth unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW IDENTITY

Those who are involved in promoting the concept of secular morality have taken a new identity with characteristics which are unfamiliar. Some are as follows:

1. Not perceived as a bad person
2. A member of the staff
3. Respected in the brotherhood
4. Uses every opportunity to be seen in leadership positions
5. Creates programs to justify job/salary
6. Utilizes/overemphasizes material selected from non-Christians in sermons, seminars and classroom texts
7. De-emphasizes the Bible
8. Uses church for furtherance of career and personal gain
9. Promotes the team-player concept to alienate those who are opposed to their programs/goals

The concept of secular morality is being taught using materials authored by non-Christians (those not members of the church of Christ). The literature of several authors are being given predominance over the Bible, which is unscriptural. We must see them in their true perspective—false teachers. The following are a few examples:

Charles Swindoll: Pastor of First Evangelical Free Church of California.

Lloyd John Ogilvie: Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of California.

Dr. James Dobson: "Focus on the Family Series." This person is included in my list because there are no references to the church of Christ in any of the biographical data supplied with his books, and because of some of his beliefs concerning the state of infants (he believes that they are born in sin (page 44), his belief on how one becomes a Christian ("Here I am Lord send me"—page 46), his belief concerning the church's role toward the single parent ("it is clearly the task of the church to assist you in your parenting responsibilities"—page 48). He further believes that salvation can be attained through prayer only (pages 418-20); and finally, he has false beliefs concerning providential circumstances and his own conversion experience (pages 484-85). [The above page numbers are referring to

those in Dr. Dobson's book, *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions*.]

We must take a firm stand, grounded in the truth, against the teaching of secular morality being given a predominant position over the Bible. We also must not allow the doctrines of false teachers to invade the pulpit and our classrooms. Otherwise, we are headed toward doctrinal error, spiritual ignorance and, worst of all, eternity without God. Good intentions and a strong sense of morality fall short of the principles of truth by Jesus. (Matthew 7:22,23).

—6205 Wall Triana
Madison, Alabama 35758

Dark Clouds Can Have Silver Linings

A man, long shipwrecked on a deserted island, had given up hope of ever being found. He made the most of a meager existence, with all of his earthly possessions crowded into a thatched hut.

One day he returned from a fishing expedition, finding his house in flames, and he despaired of life, having lost all.

Then a ship appeared on the horizon, the captain explaining that they came, having "seen your smoke signal."—**Bill Jackson**, *Southwest Church of Christ*, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748

REVIEW OF MOFFITT-BILLINGSLEY DEBATE

Dub McClish

On February 19-20, 1988, brethren **Jerry Moffitt** and **Dan Billingsley** engaged in a public oral debate as part of the second annual SHENANDOAH LECTURES, conducted by the Shenandoah Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas. The issue debated was the amenability of alien sinners to the law of Christ. Moffitt affirmed (and Billingsley denied): **"The Bible teaches that as is the Christian, the alien sinner is under law to Christ and is amenable to the whole new law."** Billingsley affirmed (and Moffitt denied): **"The Bible teaches that as is the Christian, the alien sinner is under law to Christ, but is not accountable to the whole new law until baptism."** At stake are such matters as whether or not alien sinners are accountable to Christ's marriage law (Matthew 19:9).

Moffitt demonstrated that the law or covenant of Christ (the new covenant) is simply the gospel. He pointed out that since the gospel is addressed to all men (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15) all must be accountable to it. He further stressed the authority of Christ over all men (Matthew 28:18) and that he exercises his authority through his law (the new covenant, the gospel). He argued forcefully that all men who have lived since the cross (including unbelievers) will be judged by the words of Christ (the new covenant, the gospel—John 12:48) and that men will not be held accountable at the Judgment for that to which they were not accountable in life.

In response Billingsley taught that the only part of the gospel to which alien sinners are accountable is the plan of salvation and that they become accountable to "covenant law for the church" only upon being baptized. He argued that if alien sinners were under the law of Christ as a whole this would mean they should partake of the Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-28) as *aliens*. He accused Moffitt (and others who have opposed his views) of teaching that alien sinners must partake of the Lord's supper. He asked where the Bible ever speaks of Christ as "King of the world," rather than King of his kingdom, the church.

Moffitt replied that no such terminology or concept exists in the New Testament as a "covenant law of Christ"

only for the church and a separate body of teaching only for aliens. He showed that it did not follow that if aliens are under the new covenant as a whole that they must therefore partake of the Lord's supper as *aliens* (and that neither he nor anyone whom he knew had ever believed or taught such a doctrine). He illustrated this by showing that if Billingsley's argument had any merit, a Christian man (one under the new law as a whole, conceded by Billingsley) must be silent in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34).

Moffitt then emphasized that while Christian men are under all of the New Testament, there are parts of it that do not directly apply to them (such as 1 Corinthians 14:34, which directly applies only to Christian women). He then pointed out that in the same way aliens can be (and are) amenable to the new law as a whole, while not *directly* amenable to particular commandments until certain prerequisites are met. He stressed the essentiality of observing Christ's law in Scriptural *sequence* (e.g., Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38) (for an alien to partake of the Lord's supper would ignore the Lord's sequence) and that observing this sequence (by their not partaking of the Lord's supper) did not remove them from accountability to the law of Christ as a whole. Moffitt applied Galatians 5:3 with force: when one is under a *part* of a law system, he is under that law system as a *whole*.

In response to Billingsley's "King of the world" challenge, Moffitt referred to Christ's being "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion" (Ephesians 1:21) and "ruler of the kings of the earth" (Revelation 1:5). Furthermore, he cited Matthew 13:37-41 where

Jesus called the world his "kingdom" in applying the Parable of the Tares.

An effective tactic Moffitt used in the debate related to Billingsley's doctrine concerning an alleged "Great Moral Law," separate from and independent of God's revealed will. (Billingsley affirms that this "law" is innate in all men apart from God's revelation and that those since the cross who die in rebellion to God will be judged by this "Great Moral Law" rather than by the gospel. This concept is practically identical with the "Law in the Heart" concept propagated by brother **James D. Bales**.)

In his first speech Moffitt asked Billingsley to place a copy of his "Great Moral Law" upon a tray provided so that we could read and learn what was in it. He continued calling for it in every speech. This obviously made Billingsley uncomfortable. His inability to produce his "law" dramatically demonstrated that neither it nor the doctrines built upon it exist. As a climax to the debate, in the very last minute of the debate, brother Moffitt had arranged for his moderator to place a specially prepared book on the aforementioned tray. The handsomely bound book was imprinted thusly: *The Great Moral Law*, "Translated by D. Billingsley." After feigning surprise that such a book existed, Moffitt opened it for all of the audience to see that every page was blank, graphically demonstrating the emptiness of the doctrine it represented!

This good study of the "amenability" issue is available on audio and video tape from **Tom Gardner**, 2229 Lotus, Fort Worth, TX 76111.

—312 Pearl Street
Denton, TX 76201

Notes & Quotes...

CAIRO NEWS

Several Christians from the **Smith Springs, Tennessee church of Christ** have provided the money for Bibles in the Arabic language to be purchased and distributed in Cairo. The money has been sent...

The cost of each Bible is \$4.00...

In addition to sending the Bibles, Smith Springs has shipped 300 sets of **John Hurt's Bible Correspondence Course**, and 100 blank 90-minute tapes to record sermons in Arabic to be distributed in Cairo.

JOSEPH MEADOR JOINS CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH EDITORIAL STAFF



It becomes necessary, from time to time, to add new names to the editorial staff of *Contending for the Faith*. While in a gospel meeting recently with the Robertson County church of Christ, in middle Tennessee, I telephoned to brother **Joseph Meador** to inquire if he might like to serve in this capacity.

"In response to your telephone call of yesterday morning," he wrote under date of May 6, 1988, "I want to formally write to say 'Thank You' for the invitation to be a staff writer for **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**. I shall consider it a deep personal honor to serve in such capacity in that I will be associated with you and your work."

Having known brother Meador for several years—ever since he was a student at Memphis School of Preaching, where he graduated in 1983—I always have observed him to be an

example of what Paul instructed Timothy in I Timothy 4:15-16.

While he was in school in Memphis, Joe and his family attended the Getwell church of Christ, where he also labored with **Garland Elkins**, as his associate preacher. Upon completion of his studies at Memphis School of Preaching, he moved to Poole, Kentucky, where he preached for several years.

Currently, brother Meador is preaching to the church at Madisonville, Kentucky, which congregation publishes a paper called *In Word And Doctrine*, a most excellent periodical, of which he is the editor. He also is the Director of *The School Of The Bible*, which is under the oversight of the Madisonville elders.

We welcome this exceptionally fine young thinker, preacher and writer to our editorial staff.—*Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor*

All of this should make a great impact for good in the land of Egypt!—*The Christian Letter, Northeast church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee.*

1988 NINTH ANNUAL CANE RIDGE RESTORATION WORKSHOP

The restoration of New Testament Christianity is a continuing quest and goal for all who love God. Surely we should strive to maintain the noble cause of the restoration of the primitive church of Christ. The Lord's church did not come into existence on the Day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ—by accident. That church established in the city of Jerusalem cannot continue as God would have her to be, unless consecrated efforts are put forth to maintain the church as it was in the first century.

The **Ninth Annual Cane Ridge Restoration Workshop** is set for **August 4-5-6-7**. There is still a great need today to call men back to the Bible and to re-emphasize the Christ and his Word. Devout men in the Bible were men of conviction (Hebrews 11). Men of the Restoration Movement who were successful in leading people back to the Bible were men of conviction. We are seeing today those who are willing to compromise God's Truth for the sake of unity. There is a need for Christians to stand up for the Word of God and we must be a people with conviction.

Pulpits need to sound the plea and manifest the commitment to restore New Testament Christianity. Paul directed Timothy to "**preach the word**" (I Timothy 4:2); and the restoration leaders sought to do just that. We know of nothing more needed today than the preaching of the Word of God and the practicing of the same in the lives of Christians. We urge you to join us in August of 1988 as we emphasize again the pleas for New Testament Christianity!

Ken Samuel, of Jeffersonville, Indiana, will again serve as our workshop song director. The singing has been a highlight of the eight previous workshops and the ninth will be no exception.

Two special lessons are planned for the ladies on Friday, August 5. These sessions will be led by **Mignon Doran** and **Emily Huffard**. We urge all ladies to plan to be a part of these two important lessons.

George Rogers will again direct our Restoration Tour on Saturday, August 6. Two air-conditioned buses are reserved for the tour with professional drivers.

Charles E. Moore will again direct the workshop, being assisted by his associate **Clifford May** and writer and lecturer on restoration history **Adron Doran**.

[NOTE: For further information regarding this Restoration Workshop, address inquiries to **North Lexington church of Christ, 549 Parkside Drive, Lexington, Kentucky 40505. [YrJr.]**

THE FIRST ALL SAMOA WORKSHOP

From January 3 through January 7, the first **ALL SAMOA WORKSHOP** was held here in American Samoa at the Nu'uuli church of Christ. In attendance were our brethren from Western Samoa (Apia and Savai'i) and Waihawa, Hawaii. The theme of this workshop was **TAKING THE GOSPEL TO SAMOA** and dealt with the Christian's responsibility to personal evangelism. With the exception of **Edwin Crookshank**, myself, and **Phil and Helen Potter**, the entire program was conducted by our Samoan brethren. Ed and I filled in for those speakers who couldn't make it for the workshop and sister Potter held a special ladies class during the workshop. Brother Potter opened our workshop with three special lessons on evangelism on Sunday morning and evening and spoke for us in our gospel meeting which was held nightly during the workshop.

Some of the topics under discussion in the workshop were The Local Church, On Caring for the Needy, Widows, and Orphans, Visitation, Salvation Depends Upon Evangelism, Preaching the Gospel in the Local Community, Opposing and Exposing Religious Error, Putting On and Using the Gospel Armor of God, What It Means To Be Eternally Lost, and Bible Verses Disobeyed By Failing To Evangelize. Each one of the speakers did a remarkable job with his topic and spoke plainly to address the needs for these things here in Samoa. It is my hope and prayer that we all will take the things taught and use them for the glory of God. The fruits of the workshop are already beginning to show. Please pray with us that the results will continue to be seen.

Visitors to the workshop as well as the members of Nu'uuli enjoyed lunch and dinner together everyday during the workshop. The food was provided by the participating congregations and this time was used as a period of fellowship and relaxation. This food was prepared by the ladies of the Nu'uuli congregation and in keeping with the idea of the

workshop, was all Samoan. It also was very delicious. The lodging for the visitors was provided by the members of the Nu'uuli church and also proved to be beneficial in the area of fellowship. The more we learn and know about one another, the closer we will be as the family of God.

One purpose of this workshop was to show our brethren that we are not alone in the South Pacific and to build a bond of unity between the Samoan brethren. I believe this was accomplished. In every activity in the workshop no matter how detailed, or trivial it may have been, there was the spirit of unity and complete cooperation and an attitude of brotherly love that prevailed. We pray it will continue. **Jimmie B. Hill**

June Blacksten, Muncie, Indiana: "My dear father **William Harry Roberts** departed from us February 9, 1975. He was born in Corning, Arkansas. At the age of 15 (1916), he attended a gospel meeting at Success, Arkansas, held by **Cal McCord**. . . . There he obeyed his Lord in baptism.

"When he was 18 (1919), he completed the Normal School of Music, taught by an old professor named **Oalin**, at Palatka, Arkansas. While at Palatka in the music class, he met his wife of 58 years to be, **Nora Ethel Masterson**. Five children were to make their marriage complete.

"It was at this young age he began serving his Lord in any way he could—mostly as a song leader. He was taught not to be ashamed of the gospel—and he wasn't! He could not tolerate false doctrine. He stood up against anti-ism, liberalism, and no one ever had to question how he stood when it came to defending the one and only *true church* against denominationalism. He was truly a warrior for the Lord.

"Among his faithful brothers in Christ proclaiming the gospel till the very end were **Calvin and Earl McCord, Will W. Slater, Rue Porter, Arthur Blackwell, Boyd E. Morgan** and so many more soldiers of the cross that are at peace now. Like old soldiers, they 'never die, they just fade away.' But truly they are a dying breed.

"My father also preached the gospel. He lived here in Muncie, Indiana, from 1940 to 1975. He was at worship one Sunday and the next was gone.

"He helped establish the Town Acres congregation here in Muncie, where we now are located (since 1968). His wife Ethel is 88

now; and the Lord has been good to her. She loves to read... Her eyes are not in the best of condition, but she keeps up with Crossroadism, and at times we worry about her blood pressure. She can't understand how the churches ever got so weak as to accept **Chuck Lucas** and his followers. She doesn't like the *New International Version*. She calls it their 'Lucas' Bible. She said all had better get back to the Bible and use the negative side, too. Be counted.

"Thank God for all people like you who write the *Contending for the Faith* and the people who help support it. I love Romans 1:16..."

Kirk Vogel, Dallas, Texas: "Please let me know if any back issues are available on the subject of the BOSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST and the DISCIPLING METHODOLOGY it implores. I have read your issue Vol. XVII, No. 1, January/1986 about the Crossroads movement.

"I have recently come out of a 'Crossroads/Boston' Movement in Dallas, and for this reason am interested in any writings you may have on file regarding this religion."

(NOTE: We certainly DO have back issues on Crossroadism, the Boston Church and the so-called Discipling Movement. We call it our "Crossroads Packet." It contains approximately 20 back issues of this paper which we have published on those subjects from 1979 onward. For each set of these back issues, please enclose \$9.95 and ask for the "Crossroads Packet," addressing your order to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.)

Mrs. Claudia Keller, Jonesboro, Arkansas: "If you still have the magazines of January and February, 1986, of the Crossroads issues, I would like to have several copies of these to pass on to members of the church who have not been aware of this subject, hoping they also will subscribe to *Contending for the Faith*."

(NOTE: One of the best ways to introduce new readers to *Contending for the Faith* is to do as sister Keller has done—order a number of copies each of several back issues of the paper and pass them to your friends who are faithful members of the church of our Lord. Please look in the masthead on Page 2 for how to order these bundles. IYR Jr.)

Walt A Minute by Reg is the title of a new publication by our old friend **Reg Rogers**, of 5021 W. 6th Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74129. Why not drop him a note and ask him to send you a copy. You might want to receive it regularly.

Eugene Greer, of Woodville, Texas, writes: "We would be most happy to receive a bundle of *Contending for the Faith*. I will work to have members subscribe to it. Many in this area do not know what is going on in these matters. I recently presented the first lesson this congregation ever heard on the 'Crossroads Movement.'"

Joseph R. Costilow, minister, let us know that "the church of Christ is no longer meeting in Westminster, South Carolina."

Mrs. Harold Caplinger, Akron, Ohio: "I surely don't want to miss a copy as its the best and most informative of all the papers that I receive."

John H. Hosek, Jr., Fort Worth, Texas: "I am enclosing three subscriptions for *Contending for the Faith*. I... am sure I will be able to get more. If it is convenient, I would appreciate it if you would send me a bundle of back issues and I will distribute them where we are now attending."

"The situation at the West Berry church of Christ has not changed. I will write you the details under separate cover. I will say this that 18 of us have left as a result... God bless you in your work."

Roy Sherrill, of Gainesville, Texas, passed away May 21, 1987.

CHARLIE NICKS WILLS \$1,000.00 TO CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

We always knew that brother **Charlie Nicks**, of Huntingdon, Tennessee, thought most highly of *Contending for the Faith*, for, while he lived, he continued to support our work on a regular basis, as the Lord enabled.

However, you can but imagine our appreciation and astonishment when, under date of April 12, 1988 we received a check for \$1,000.00 from his estate, being executed by **Ivey & Parish**, Attorneys-at Law, of Huntingdon. Their covering letter read as follows:

April 12, 1988

Mr. Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH
P. O. Box 26247
Birmingham, Alabama 35226

Dear Brother Rice:

Enclosed please find a check in the amount of \$1,000.00 representing a bequest made by brother **Charlie Nicks**, of Huntingdon, Tennessee in his Last Will and Testament.

Also, enclosed is a receipt and Waiver form which I would appreciate your executing and returning to my office. We are prepared to close **Mr. Nicks'** estate and must have the Receipt and Waiver to file with the Court.

Cordially,
IVEY & PARISH

(Signed)

Raymond L. Ivey

Well, of course, I have signed and returned the receipt and waiver form to brother Ivey, long since, ere now. Because of circumstances beyond our control our overall expenses of publication had been running somewhat behind. However, the Lord knows how to overrule such to his glory. This time he did it magnificently through brother **Charlie Nicks** re: his Last Will and Testament. We were running behind, but due to his thoughtfulness and that of numerous others, our *Contending for the Faith* expenses are almost current!

We still are running several months in arrears with our *Far East evangelism* expenses. However, if others will take **Charlie Nicks** as your example, before long we'll be caught up with these, too. God bless him—and God bless you, too, as you help.

Weldon Langfield, minister, Bakersfield, California: "**Foy Smith** (has) held two meetings here in recent years, and (has) done much preaching here in the valley."

W. Ralph Wharton, evangelist (since November 7, 1987) of the Lachine church of Christ, 760 44th Avenue, Lachine, Quebec H8T 2K8, writing under date of February 20, 1988, said, in part, "The 'BOSTON CHURCH' has shown threatening signs of invading here and has gained some sympathizers—just how much is not certain, but there is some evidence of it. There also is strong opposition. We are in the process of photocopying eight pages of your 'Contending for the Faith' of January 1986 (**Bronwen Gibson's** story) for distribution to our congregation. The 'opposition' could cry that in cutting up the pages the story has been altered, etc. So I need a whole copy of that issue to prove—if there should be a need—that the congregation is being given the whole 'Bronwen story.' Please rush me a copy... I trust the little check for \$2 will offset your expense. Thanks very much."

"As you see, in anticipation of approaching heresy, we are planning to *strike first* and head it off... May God's richest blessings be upon **Ira** and all of you who 'Contend for THE FAITH.'"

Of course, we sent the requested whole copy of the issue wherein we first published sister **Bronwen's** article. Then, under date of May 7, 1988, he wrote again, saying, in part,

"On December 9, 1987, I wrote you a long-winded letter telling about 'Crossroadism' in the church at Lachine. I've read that letter this

morning. Every word of it was true.

"I rejoice in the Lord at being able to tell you this Saturday morning, the 'disciplers' are out of Lachine. By talking with those involved, by preaching several times along the lines of going strictly by the word of God and doing all things in His way, followed by a real blast of 'THE BOSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST', which was well accepted, I am now confident that it has no holds here. Lachine is *clean*. Like, the leader whom I mentioned earlier, recently gave the 'discipling movement' a blast of his own.

"The Lord be praised! I am happy to share my joy with you. The faith of Jesus has won.

"May God continue to abundantly bless you in all your seemingly tireless labors in and about the vineyard! I love you dearly.

"**Glen Gray**, Washington, Georgia, is to preach here May 15-19 inclusive... **V. P. Black**, Chickasaw, Alabama, is to preach here for a similar period in August... In addition to doing a few other things, I now am teaching (began four weeks ago) a Preacher/Training class of 22 men and women for an hour every Wednesday evening. It is coming along encouragingly. We are using (30 minutes) New Training for Service, and the other 30 minutes my own resources..."

(NOTE: It is wonderful to me that so many faithful brethren, such as brother **Wharton**, now are taking up the fight against this most insidious, false, so-called "discipling" movement by the Boston/Crossroads heresy. They are "discipling" all right; however, it is to their own heretical doctrines, NOT to the doctrine of Christ. IYR Jr.)

Mrs. Jewel Pruett, of Dayton Beach, Florida, informs us that her husband **W. A. Pruett** has passed away.

Bob J. Henson, Benton, Kentucky: "Thank you so much for... making available *Contending for the Faith* at quantity rates. I am delighted to be able to create some interest in the paper because I believe it to be unique in a very necessary way. I am sending, under separate cover to the Birmingham office, payment and request for 12 subscriptions. It is my hope that at least some of these will renew at the appropriate time and continue with the paper in the years ahead. I suppose we can only guess at what attacks may be mounted against the church in the years to come and under whose banner Satan may march, but you and I would most surely agree that he isn't finished with his pernicious and insidious mission!

"Of all the things that trouble us, one that I see in this area is the growing use of the *NIV* and its accommodations of denominational errors. It occurs to me that it ought to be called the 'New Interdenominational Version', for it certainly is that and is the occasion of much erroneous teaching. To use a favorite expression of one that you and I both admire, brother **Robert Taylor, Jr.**, the *NIV* is 'inconsistency gone to seed—and then some!' Indeed, are none so blind as those who will not see!

"I would appreciate very much if you will send the bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* and I most certainly will place them. Thank you again for the opportunity to help. May our Lord bless you in your labor for good."

(NOTE: In my reply to brother **Henson**, I said, "Your idea for calling the *NIV* the 'New Interdenominational Version' is 'right on!' IYR Jr.)

Alfred H. Chetham, of San Lorenzo, California, ordered 200 copies of sister **Bronwen McClish Gibson's** tract, *Crossroads from the Inside*, saying, "I have read this tract and she certainly knows what she is writing about. It is excellent."

Mrs. Nell Corley, of Gainesville, Texas, is now deceased.

Charles M. Johns, of Tipton, Indiana, renewed four and sent in seven new ones.

Fred R. Bogle, Orlando, Florida: "We must keep up the fight for truth and right and expose the false doctrines on every hand. You remember that old slogan, 'Now is the Time for All Good Men to Come to the Aid of Their Country'? Well, it ought to be changed to say, 'NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEN AND WOMEN TO COME TO THE AID OF THE TRUTH, TO TEACH THE WORD AND THEN STAND FOR IT.' Don't you agree?"

(NOTE: I agree, IYR Jr.)

C. B. Short, Dallas, Texas: "Brother A. G. Hobbs' radio programs have been halted due to his ill health... This is something I truly regret, since his 15 minutes each day was the ONE source of light in KSKY's 'gospel day'... Certainly regretted the necessity of his curtailing this program.

"A. G. is in a rest home in Fort Worth, having had a stroke some time ago, plus having broken a hip recently. I haven't personally contacted him, but 'sort of' keep up with him through **Tommy Hicks'** bulletin sent each week..."

(NOTE: Having heard brother Hobbs' radio programs several times while driving through the Dallas/Fort Worth area, I know how truly good it was and that it will be sorely missed by the faithful there. IYR Jr.)

Bruce and Tisa DeMoss, of 901 Robertson Road, Murray, Kentucky 42071 are seeking sponsorship and support to go help evangelize Scotland. Interested congregations and individuals may write to them at the foregoing address.

Jim Gazzaway, of Conroe, Texas, preaches to the church at Thornton, Texas. "I would be glad to distribute any sample copies of *Contending for the Faith* that you send to me," he writes. "I wish it were not necessary to spend so much of our time fighting against false doctrine within the body of Christ, but since we have to, I am glad we have someone like you to 'contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.' Anything I can do to help you, I will surely do.

"I have been working with the church in Thornton since the first of November of 1987. Lois and I usually drive up on Sunday morning (125 miles each way), but with the weather becoming more moderate we hope to use the motor home to spend more time up there trying to encourage the members and to convert some in the community.

"The church there is close to 100 years old. The building was finished in 1915 and has been kept in excellent condition. It will seat approximately 180 people and when I was a child growing up, about a city block and a half from the building, it was full most Sunday mornings. The roll lists 28 members now and our attendance runs from 15 to 28 and averages about 22. The population of the city is 465.

"I have not found any evidence of liberalism or other apostasy since I have been there, but I think it wise to keep them informed of some of the problems to guard against."

(NOTE: "... Like you," I said, in part, in my reply, "I could wish it were not necessary to devote so much of our time fighting against false doctrine within the body of Christ. But there seems to be no way around it if truth is to survive this generation among 'us.'")

"That is quite a drive that you and Lois have to make both ways each Lord's Day. That motor home idea allowing you to spend more time actually at Thornton seems like a good one to me..." IYR Jr.)

Leon D. Schrel, as readers will recall, was one of the young men at Abilene Christian University who "blew the whistle" on those professors who were teaching evolution as fact. As a result of this action, it seems that no matter where he goes, things are continuing to be put in his way to discourage him. In a recent letter, from Portland, Oregon, he wrote, in part, as follows:

"... We left Loop and returned to our home (to me) of Portland, Oregon. I was so discouraged I had decided to leave preaching. However, through the encouragement of some local friends, preachers, elders and mother, I have decided to return to preaching.

"Interestingly enough, soon after that decision, before even looking for somewhere to preach, a local congregation contacted me, heard I was available, and asked if I would interview. I'm pleased to say that after two lengthy sessions together they have invited me to work with them and I accepted.

"The situation is one that I have prayed for. The congregation is on the east side of Portland, about 10 miles (Sandy, Oregon), about 30 members, two good elders, and an older preacher working in semi-retirement (a graduate of Brown Trail).

"We are aware of the vast amount of liberalism here (i.e., Crossroadism, divorce-remarriage, instrumental music). Columbia Christian College has a teacher of Bible who denies the verbal inspiration of Scripture. The elders, the semi-retired preacher and I hope to make a difference... My highest desire is to serve the Lord faithfully and to remain sound... Yes, we will distribute a bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* if you send them... We pray for the success of the gospel and for *Contending*."

Eldon W. Rogers, preacher, Ivanhoe, Texas: "I am deeply sorry that things have happened in the church in the city of Pensacola, Florida as they have. I had to weigh carefully the evidence on both sides of the question before I could come to a conclusion. I rather suspect if I had been there I would have stood with the elders. I do not believe that a thing is right simply because elders do it. However, I do not see that anyone has the right to make such a false statement as the preachers did in regard to the mailing list when the church there had made no decision to cancel. This seems to me to be close to a falsehood.

"There is one thing that puzzles me. What is wrong with the advertising of the books and the records as it was done in *Contending for the Faith*? I noticed your statement that such would be no more. When you reply please fill me in.

"I went to the preachers luncheon today and I came away in a sense of hopeless disgust. I believe that I heard more uncertain sounds today than I have heard in a long time. If preachers and elders don't start standing for the truth, what will be in the future? I also got **Jimmy Jividen's** book on 'Instrumental Music' and that is without doubt the most inconsistent thing I have seen on the subject... We are in the worst shape than I have known in my 62 years of living and nearly 48 of preaching..."

"Do you see any signs of Rubel Shelly coming back to the truth as he once was? Maybe I am just hoping that he will. Am I reading something into situations that are not there? I hope I am not. I know that taking the stand that we have in regard to 'Crossroadism' and the union of the church of Christ and the Christian Church is far from being popular these days. I will stand against these movements till someone shows me that I am wrong..."

"We have a big fight still ahead of us on the versions, the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, Instrumental Music, and Crossroadism. If we keep our guns loaded and our powder dry we will win the fight..."

"P.S. I had not mailed this letter when my *Contending for the Faith* came. I saw your letter in the paper on page 13 and I sensed a spirit of depression in it. I know your feelings. You could draw a line from Arizona to Florida, and from Florida to Michigan, then back to its beginning point, and this is the area I have preached in these United States. There is one thing that I have seen and that is when those who uphold false teaching and those that

challenge it and insist that the truth is preached, those that uphold error will take the following course of action: They will do all they can to discredit those that stand for the truth. If they can accomplish such, then they won't have to prove a thing. I suppose they think that no one will believe the one that stands for the truth if they can accomplish such. They are like the man that stole the turkey. He thought that no one was looking. But he forgot to look up.

"Brother Rice, above all things, don't give up the fight. You are only about eight years my senior. When both of us are gone the way of all flesh, there will be others that will follow in our footprints that will carry the battle and banner of truth to higher heights... Take courage, Ira, and keep your powder dry. We are still praying for you..."

(NOTE: "... I have no doubt that you would have stood with the elders had you been at Bellview when those two preachers and that faction arose in insurrection," I replied, in part, under date of May 26, 1988. "I am sure that something is not right just because elders do it; however, they do have the oversight, and unless they require something of us that is itself wrong, we are commanded to 'obey them that have the rule' over us.

"You are right. What that preacher wrote to the Post Office was a falsehood—and he knew it when he wrote it.

"I never did think there was anything wrong with my advertising of the books and records in *Contending for the Faith*—especially inasmuch as I had cleared it with the Birmingham postal authorities and was contributing all of the proceeds to religious work of various kinds. However, some of our supporters (conscientious brethren) seemed to find it objectionable; therefore, I suggested to the elders we handle such advertising another way—and they agreed. So now we are doing such advertising via direct mail to the same people, but not through the paper. The things we have to do sometimes to keep from offending unnecessarily are not always easy to comprehend.

"You asked if I see any signs of Rubel Shelly coming back to the truth as he once was. No. I am quite sure he is not.

"As for any spirit of depression you thought you detected in a recent issue of *Contending for the Faith*, I am not aware of it. Truly, we have had many heartaches of late, but are as determined as ever to keep on keeping on. God bless you for caring." IYR Jr.)

James H. Cannon, of Maryville, Tennessee, canceled his subscription, saying, "Drop me permanently from your mailing list. I do not want this magazine."

Earl M. Clark, of Culloden, West Virginia, ordered 12 copies each of our issues for October/1987 and for February/1988, adding an extra \$3.00 for use "as you see fit."

Dean Road Church of Christ, of Jacksonville, Florida, ordered 30 sets of our "Crossroads Packet."

The former **Nancy R. Stephens**, of Sonora, California, in renewing for another year, let us know, "I recently married, so you might notice my name change"—to **Nancy R. Gaines**. She went on to say, "Keep up the good work. I enjoy the paper so much."

Oren Bloomer, of Sparta, Missouri, referring to the announcement we carried of the preacher needed there, writes: "Thank you for the announcement in the paper. I have had a number of calls wanting the job but we have already hired brother **David Dugan**, of Silver Springs, New Mexico. Hoping he will be a good man for us."

Much appreciation to **David P. Brown**, director of Southwest School of Bible Studies, at Austin, Texas, for having me speak to their alumni and supporters during the Southwest Lectures, where I also spoke twice in April. **Bill Jackson** and brother Brown make a great team.

W. A. Brown, of Baldwin Park, California, renewed for six years, adding \$75.00 "extra" onto his check, saying, "If the Bibles cannot be sent to China, use in the mission work that is necessary."

Bonnie Marashi, of El Dorado, Arkansas, ordered ten copies of our February 1988 issue concerning the White's Ferry Road church and the formation of the International Christian Ministries, Inc., saying, "As you probably know, that congregation is not too far from El Dorado; and I am trying to warn the members here of the unscriptural and serious undertaking of that West Monroe congregation."

Anonymous, of Huntsville, Alabama, enclosed \$25.00 to help us mail extra copies of *Contending for the Faith* where they are needed. We need many more such contributors for this work.

Rufus R. Clifford, Sr., of Nashville, Tennessee, now has moved to Columbia, Tennessee.

Jim Parrow, who now ministers to the Ayers Street church, in Corpus Christi, Texas, writes: "I look forward to receiving your fine publication at the church address (here). I have just begun my work here at Ayers Street and know your continued efforts will help me to keep sufficiently informed and edified that I might be built up spiritually, and at the same time do my part to keep error from entering the church here."

Harry & Nancy Marlin, of Old Hickory, Tennessee, subscribed, saying, "Our family and I are interested in knowing all that we possibly can about the dangers of the Crossroads/Boston Movement. We have three daughters and a son-in-law who need to be aware of this movement"; **Harold G. Beale**, now of APO Miami, Florida, sends \$20.00 monthly to help us contend for the faith; **John J. Hosek, Jr.**, of Fort Worth, Texas, renewed his own, sent four new.

NIV PACKETS AVAILABLE

We continue to be impressed by the number continuing to write for our "NIV Packet", wherein **A. G. Hobbs** exposed the almost countless errors, both doctrinal and otherwise, in the *New International Version* of the Bible. Among those thus ordering, not previously reported, are **Lola Crisimas**, of Bakersfield, California, who also renewed for three years; **Ben Rozell**, of Branson, Missouri, one packet, adding \$21.50 to his check for us to use "where there is a need"; **Gene Nesler** of Paducah, Kentucky, 15 packets; **Joe Wilson**, of Kingsland, Texas, one packet; **Morris S. Thomas**, of Weatherford, Texas, one packet; **Clyde Everett**, of Exeter, California, ordered one packet, saying, "We enjoy *Contending for the Faith* so very much"; **Mark & Kathy Bland**, of Midland, Texas, one packet, also subscribing for one year; **Mrs. Don Neville**, of Burlington, Colorado, one packet, adding \$16.50 to her check "to be used in any way you see fit"; **Dallas LaFleur**, of Heber Springs, Arkansas, one NIV packet (also one Crossroads Packet); **Clyde C. Sloan**, of Hollis, Oklahoma, one packet; **Mrs. Ruth F. Sawyer**,

Jack Caraker, Longtime Supporter Of Contending For The Faith, Succumbs

Even though **Richard "Jack" Caraker**, minister to the church at Hartford, Kentucky, had had a serious heart condition for the several years, he did not let that prevent him from contributing regularly to the support of *Contending for the Faith*, which he did to the very end.

He and his faithful wife, sister **Cora B. Caraker**, were visiting her mother in Rosiclare, Illinois, when brother Jack became critically ill with a coronary problem in May. He was taken to the Hardin County Memorial Hospital, in Rosiclare, where he died unexpectedly, May 17.

Funeral services were conducted by **R. D. Parnell**, minister of the Rosiclare church of Christ, May 21, at the Hosick Cox Funeral Home, in Rosiclare. A military salute was conducted at the graveside preceding Parnell's final words at the Stone Church Cemetery, of Rosiclare.

Being 64 years of age, at the time of his passing, brother Caraker and his wife moved on November 12, 1985, from Evening Shade, Arkansas, where he had worked as minister of that congregation for four years. He served as minister of Hartford, Kentucky, from then until the time of his death. Previously, he had ministered with churches in Illinois, Missouri and Alabama during the past 21 years.

Born June 4, 1923, in Illinois, the son of **Earl** and **Myrtle Caraker**, Jack was married on January 3, 1948, to **Cora Bell (Coke) Carman**, who survives.

Other survivors include five children, **Carman Hesselrode**, of Phoenix, Arizona; **Cinda Alsup**, of Sikeston, Mis-

of Vero Beach, Florida, one packet; **Mrs. Paul A. Faber**, of Woodsfield, Ohio, one packet; **Mrs. Alla Mae Buchanan**, of Fresno, California, ordered one packet, saying, "I am teaching in the World Bible School and so many of my students request that particular Bible. I want to explain why I can not send it to them. It is used here in the College congregation and they even insist on it for the children in the Christian school"; **Bobby Harkins**, of Idalou, Texas, ordered one packet.



Richard (Jack) Caraker

souri; **Richard Dale**, of Nashville, Tennessee; **Tad Y.**, of Jacksonville, North Carolina; and **Cled**, of Nashville, Tennessee; ten grandchildren; four brothers, **Clarence** of Baltimore, Maryland; **Lloyd Joe**, of Elizabethtown, Illinois; **Carl**, of Manteno, Illinois; and **Billy**, of Rantoul, Illinois; and one sister, **Loisdene Smith**, of Tunnel Hill, Illinois.

Brother Caraker was a quiet-type man; however, he loved the truth, preached it, lived it, and supported it. We shall miss him.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor.

(NOTE: Any others who might like to order this packet, please enclose \$3.50 for each packet, specifying that you want our "NIV Packet," and address your orders to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. 1YR Jr.)

Nona Mae Roberts, of Lansing, Michigan, supports our contending for the faith fund \$5.00 each month. She writes: "So proud of the work you and sister Rice are doing, and wish I could help you more."

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

“Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So...” (Psalm 107:2)

W. Wayne Coats

It should be obvious to anyone but a corpse that we are undergoing some very drastic and devastating changes among the congregations of the Lord's people. This is not the whimpering of an alarmist, but this view is the result of continuous study, careful observation, and an intense desire to know what is happening in congregations all over the world.

The statement cannot be denied that two of the major problems which confront us are ignorance and unconcern. It doesn't interest me to join in with that marching cavalcade who glibly say, "I don't know and I don't care." This is a very elementary response and comes from extremely elementary minds.

The Psalmist wrote, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Psalm 107:2). Brethren, why is it that false teachers and heretics in the church brazenly will "say so," but so many who *claim* to follow Christ are afraid to oppose error? Before anyone gets upset, just get busy and disprove my observation. Only a colossal fool would even attempt such a denial. The church is reeking with renegades, rascals, and reprobates to the truth, while many of the redeemed recline on ivory couches and sip from their loving cups.

WHAT ABOUT BEING 'JUDGMENTAL'?

I recently received a telephone call asking if I had any information regarding the rumor that the Ashwood church in Nashville where Rubel Shelly preaches supposedly had requested the use of the David Lipscomb College Auditorium in which to meet for worship. This request was made due to some sort of building construction being done at Ashwood. It was deemed best to check on the matter, so

I called a member of the Lipscomb Board of Directors, thinking that I might at least get a wee bit of information.

When I told the fellow my name he immediately recognized me. Then I related my purpose in calling. This board member did not seem to know anything about Ashwood's request, but hastened to inform me that we shouldn't be judgmental of brethren. I never cease to be flabbergasted by these fellows who judge me for judging. Weak, spineless sectarians have used this crutch for years, but we can "out-crutch" any of them and this is due to the fact that theirs simply is ignorance of what the Bible teaches, but ours is fermented ignorance of the Word of my God.

Even a tyro should know that to judge means, "to try and determine a cause," rightly, to understand and discern. The *manner* of judgment ever must be of great concern to us, and for this reason my Lord said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). I believe I can do this in an objective manner and I earnestly pray that such ever will be my desire.

SHOULD THE REDEEMED KEEP QUIET?

If I were connected with some school, and a known Sodomite, or a drunk, was also a part of the institution, would I be judgmental if I opposed that person? Should I repose in blissful silence? I think I know what I would do. I think I would oppose error in every form and in every fellow. This could well be one, among many reasons, that I do not have any connections with some of "our" schools. I believe the redeemed of the Lord should have enough faith and courage to "say so."

When it became obvious that I had knocked on the wrong board member's door, I "judged" that I had better knock elsewhere, so another Lipscomb Board member was called. He seemed to be "up" on a few things and did

(Continued on Page 3)

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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Editorial...

Playing Church Politics With Our Colleges

Anyone who will take the time and trouble to check out the history of so-called "Christian Colleges"—particularly over the past 100 years or so—will find that when the digression over *missionary societies* and *instrumental music* came, without exception, *the colleges went with the digression.*

What caused this? In almost every case, it was church/college politics. However, it was not always easy to tell whether it was the *colleges* influencing the *churches* or *churches* influencing the *colleges* toward liberalism.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NASHVILLE?

Something appears to be happening in Nashville, Tennessee, which, if brethren who care do not do something about—and quickly, soon it may be too late.

We all recall, of course, that when **Rubel Shelly** made that compromising speech at Centerville, some four or five years ago, a hue and cry erupted to get him disconnected from Lipscomb College lest he undermine the faith of our young people there.

Well, at least *some* effort seemed to have been made along this line *at the time*; but the brotherhood's memory is erratic, and it was not long until great numbers of Lipscomb's students and a sizable proportion of her faculty were flocking to the Ashwood church where Rubel preaches.

GET YOUR CAR WASHED—FREE!

Ere long, Rubel had many of the college students and other young members at Ashwood canvassing the entire neighborhood around the Ashwood building apologizing to the denominationalists for all the mean things Nashville preachers had had to say about them and their doctrine in former days—and offering to wash their cars on a certain Saturday FREE OF CHARGE, evidently as some kind of atonement. [NOTE: I know this happened, because I was there and saw it with my own eyes! They even tried to influence one of our own daughters to take part! IYRJR.]

In almost no time at all this new *inter-denominational* character of the Ashwood church began to build their attendance. Soon they were having to have two morning services instead of just one. Talk began to grow about selling the old building and erecting a new, much larger one over nearer the Lipscomb campus.

GREEN HILLS GETS INTO THE ACT

While *inter-denominational* Ashwood was bursting at the seams, meanwhile, *non-denominational* Green Hills church of Christ, a couple of miles down farther out Hillsboro Road was wasting away. How it was even possible for Rubel and Ashwood to pull the

wool over Green Hills' eyes is a mystery to some of us who knew them both; however, what do you know—before long Ashwood had persuaded Green Hills to sell their building and bring their members and their money over to Ashwood, and combine forces!

This, within itself, was quite a "coup" on Rubel's part. However, it still must have rankled that, at least to some extent, he and Ashwood were being held at arm's length by Lipscomb. Not to worry. Why not just say to the Lipscomb Board of Directors that having to have two services every Lord's Day morning was too much of a burden! Why not just arrange with the Lipscomb Board for the Ashwood/Green Hills combine to start meeting in the Lipscomb College Auditorium!

MAYBE IT WON'T HAPPEN

I can just hear some of our self-deceived, naive pundits deriding such an idea as only the figment of a hyper-active imagination. Think so? It never seems to dawn on some folks that *Contending for the Faith* has sources of information which they know not of. With such a kindred spirit of Rubel's now in the presidency at Lipscomb, this is not such a far-fetched scenario as such might suppose.

Some may say, "It will never happen."

Maybe it won't. But we have reason to believe that it is seriously being considered. It would help head it off if parents of Lipscomb students and alumni would get in touch with individual members of the Lipscomb Board and let it be known where you stand on this matter. Once Ashwood ever gets ensconced in the Lipscomb Auditorium, the cause of truth there can be kissed goodbye! We tried to warn re: Don Finto and Belmont years ago, and they wouldn't listen. Will they listen this time?
—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

[NOTE: Another thing that might help would be to order bundles of *Contending for the Faith* for March/1984, which front-paged the article by Alan E. Highers, entitled, "Smooth And Fair Speech." In this article, brother Highers contrasts the CHANGED DOCTRINE of Rubel Shelly on 1) the nature of the church, 2) passing judgment, 3) whether we can say anyone is lost, 4) knowledgeable, devout Christians in all denominations, and 5) whether the use of instrumental music must be confessed as sin. We do not have a great number of these left—possibly a couple of thousand; however, as long as they last, you may order them for distribution at the BUNDLE RATE as listed on Page 2.

While you are at it, you may want to order bundles of our issue for just last month (June/1988) in which Roy M. McConnell exposed Rubel's new doctrines on 1) the kingdom of God (that it is **not** the church!), 2) that Matthew wrote from his **own human memory** or notes, rather than by inspiration, 3) that the law of Moses was **not** abrogated at the cross, 4) that adultery is **not** a sexual word or act, and 5) that he no longer is going to make adulterous marriages a test of fellowship! You may have these bundles, too, at the same rate.

Please enclose payment with your orders and address them to *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH*, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. Maybe if enough of these two issues can be distributed—hopefully many of them in the Greater Nashville Area—this dire threat to sound doctrine, especially at Lipscomb College, can be warded off. [YRJr.]

Say So . . . (Continued from Page 1)

indeed inform me that Ashwood had requested to meet in the Lipscomb Auditorium.

As an alumnus, I voiced my objection to any such arrangement. The board member seemed to be completely unaware of any error which might be taught at Ashwood. He stated, "I wouldn't want to say you can't worship there." I asked if he would agree for Don Finto and the Belmont group to use the Lipscomb facilities. Oh, no, that wouldn't be allowed.

[Many of us who were former students at Lipscomb remember the times in days of yore when we went to Belmont to worship. The Belmont church doesn't even claim to be what it once was. We recall in more recent years how some of the faculty from Lipscomb became enamored with the Belmont heresy. In fact, some of my former classmates were among the number.]

SOME, CONCERNING FAITH, HAVE TURNED ASIDE

Men, as well as congregations, have turned aside from the faith—and it is my firm conviction that **Belmont** and **Ashwood** in Nashville are TWO CLEAR EXAMPLES. Anyone who can read will be able to learn that **Rubel**

Shelly plainly states that he has changed his views on different points. A person can get the evidence first-hand—but many do not know and do not care what he teaches. Others just judge that we should not judge.

We plead with brethren to open their eyes to what is happening. Become informed about the tricks and tactics of those who would sell out to the devil. I believe the Lipscomb Board could never justify letting an apostate preacher use the campus facilities to spread denominational dogmas. Instead of coddling heretics, it is time for the board and faculty to arise and oppose everything which is contrary to sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1:10). This would include getting rid of those members of the faculty who support Shelly and his wild theories.

Does the Board go along with Rubel in his tomfoolery that the church and the kingdom are *not* the same? Do they agree with this preacher that the kingdom has *not* come? Do they accept the silly notion that Matthew got his information from notes before he wrote the great letter which bears his name? (I was exposed to such rot while in Vanderbilt Divinity School, but somehow I had enough sense to reject these foolish ideas—and I even know how to disprove the junk!) Do those board members and Lipscomb professors support Shelly's view that *adultery* is merely *covenant-breaking*?

WHAT OF PARENTS SENDING CHILDREN TO LIPSCOMB?

Can you imagine parents sending their sons and daughters to Lipscomb and putting them in an environment where flagrant error such as the above would be proclaimed? Should we not shun the very appearance of evil? How and when do we receive false teachers into our house and bid them God-speed?

Of course, it would be so much simpler to opine that we should not judge. When we have no backbone, we usually find some sort of crutch. It is a sad spectacle to see so many lame, halt, limping, and fearful soldiers who do not know how to march with Christ and who do not care. John warned of Diotrephes when he wrote "...unto the church" (III John 9). The reprobate Diotrephes paid about as much attention to John as some of our modern brethren when they refuse to listen to signal warnings of apostasy. It simply doesn't bother some of us.

The great apostle had to contend with false brethren and he even *named* them. There were Phygellus and Hermonigenes (II Timothy 1:15). Demas turned aside from the truth (II Timothy 4:10). Others had erred from the faith (I Timothy 6:21). At one point, the brethren were so fickle, cowardly and weak that Paul wrote, "**At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me...Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me** (II Timothy 4:16-17).

It is still the best of times and the worst of times, but **above all it is high time for the redeemed of the Lord to say so! Or is this just being judgmental?**

—184 Hillview
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122

Wayne Coats Is Added To Editorial Staff Of Contending For The Faith

Even before writing *A Critique of 'How Christianity Grows in the City,'* Wayne Coats, of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, already was widely known as a gospel preacher and song leader as well as a writer. Since the appearance of his above-mentioned book (now having been distributed to every church of Christ both in the U.S. and around the world), his services in the cause of truth are in demand brotherhood-wide. It is with distinct pleasure that we announce herewith brother Coats' being added to the editorial staff of *Contending for the Faith*.

Born and reared in the State of Mississippi, after finishing high school in three years, he left home at 17 to enroll in Freed-Hardeman College. In pursuit of his dream of becoming a faithful, effective gospel preacher, he sat at the feet of N. B. Hardeman, L. L. Briggance, W. Claude Hall, and others, where profound faith and deep respect for the word of God were instilled within his young heart.

Upon graduating from Freed-Hardeman College, he enrolled in and graduated from David Lipscomb College, finished a Master's Degree at Middle Tennessee State University, then completed a divinity degree at Vanderbilt University. He was recommended for further special studies at Harvard University, but declined.

While a student at Freed-Hardeman College, he met Elaine Wright. After a few years of courtship, they married. Their home has been blessed with four children.



Wayne and Elaine now reside in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, where they own and operate Mt. Juliet Funeral Home, Mt. Juliet Memorial Gardens, and Mt. Juliet Pet Cemetery. Even with the busy schedule such entails, he preaches twice every Lord's day and teaches a class on Wednesday night as well as conducting several gospel meetings and appearing on numerous lectureships each year.

As brother Coats' initial participation on our editorial staff, we recommend his first article as it appears in this issue: "**Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So!**"—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

WHAT HAPPENED?

Warren Wilcox

I don't know what happened. I don't even know if I knew it was happening. But sometime in the last 15 or 20 years a lot within the church changed.

Used to, you could go to almost any congregation in any large town and hear the same thing taught. Now, it seems you could hear much of the same things denominations are teaching—except it's in *our* pulpits.

Used to, you went to the congregation closest to you because *where* you went wasn't as important as *what* you could do through the church as you taught and served and worshipped. Now, people drive past many church buildings either to hear sound preaching or to find a place to have their ears tickled—whichever they prefer.

Used to, people within the church tried to believe and practice what the Bible taught. If they didn't want to do that they left the church. Now, it seems, some want to stay in the church—but change what the Bible teaches.

I know when you get older you get "old fogey", "set in your ways", and otherwise stubborn. But it seems to me that this characteristic of "stubbornness" actually is taught

and encouraged in the Bible. I believe it comes under the heading of "faithfulness", or "soundness", or "old paths." Sure, tradition is condemned (WHEN it makes the word void). We aren't talking about something man has a choice in, however.

We are talking about knowing what the Bible commands. Believing it. Preaching it. Teaching it. Standing up for it. It's the only thing that makes the Lord's church different from the world. Is it too late? I don't think so. Let's be those unique, "peculiar" people that God desires who will "do the will of the Father who is in heaven."

—*The Cullendale Harvester*
Cullendale church of Christ
2707 Mt. Holly Road
Camden, Arkansas 71701

Come Down From The Cross

Shan Jackson

The soldiers that surrounded the cross must have been sensationalists if they expected him to come down from the cross. With this act he could have proved not only the scribes and chief priests wrong but he could have ruined Pilate and the reputation of the high priest. By doing something like this, something spectacular, he could have silenced the mob and proven his Messiahship. Their desire was to see something stupendous rather than a silent picture of sacrifice and self-denial.

However, to those who understand the message we see that remaining on the cross and accepting God's will is much more spectacular and stupendous than stepping down from that rugged cross. When he did not do it, in boredom, they parted his garments and cast their lots.

Completely unaware, they were playing out their part of history. Within their sight was the greatest drama ever played, the greatest sacrifice ever seen, and the greatest love ever shown—but rather than seeking truth they were looking for sensationalism.

Today we see many religions built on sensationalism—people looking for God to perform like an actor on the stage. Their impression of Christianity is not based on truth but on how entertaining it is. Not, "is it true" but "is it dramatic," is their catch-word. They want emotion over logic, entertainment over truth. They cry again, "Come down from the cross." So anti-dramatic is pure religion that many leave its safety to find another gospel. Their desire to be overwhelmed by God's spirit confuses their need to serve his cause.

People with the desire to find God in the spectacular often miss him because he's found in every humble deed and every simple word. Naaman challenged God to cure him in some dramatic way, but God was not concerned or impressed with dramatics then or now. Naaman found his healing—but only in God's simple way. Without fanfare Jesus called them to "follow me"; but in their following they found the key to eternal life.

Too many are missing Christ today because they want him to "come down from the cross." They're looking for a sign, not the truth. They are looking for something grand—but not in a simple way.

Salvation is sensational, but not in the way many want to see it. Faith is emotional, but again not in the way many want to see it. Like the soldiers at the foot of the cross, many miss its simple meaning.

—*Post Office Box 904*
Palacios, Texas 77465

THE GOSPEL PREACHER

God ordained the calling and work of the gospel preacher. His work is of the utmost importance. (II Timothy 4:1-5). In scripture, the man who fills this God-given work is called a minister or a servant, an evangelist. He is a bearer of good news. (II Timothy 4:5). A preacher is a proclaimer of the greatest news men can hear and understand. (II Timothy 2:7).

What kind of preaching do we hear today? So many today go to worship services hungering for the word of God only to receive some form of teaching that is not Bible centered. Far too many of our own preaching brethren are preaching everything but God's word: politics, civil-rights, funny stories. When you see some of your brethren today, they begin by saying, "Have you heard the latest joke?" We receive current events, philosophy, psychology (and occasionally they will toss in a verse of scripture), while the church goes on and on hungering for righteousness but leaves starving for the word of God.

GOD'S CONCEPT OF WHAT A PREACHER IS

In the past few years, people have had different views of a preacher. Among some of these are without a doubt unscriptural views of what preaching really is all about. God's people should be concerned with the Bible concept of what a preacher is and what he is to do.

The gospel preacher works for God and is accountable to Him for his life and ministry. (II Timothy 4:1-5). He is not a hired performer just for the local group. Although he works with them, to the best of his ability, he is ready to teach or preach wherever the opportunity presents itself.

A preacher is on assignment with his local work at all times. He will assist in all their programs to increase the kingdom of God and in evangelizing the world.

He helps the congregation to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. (II Peter 3:18). He is a member of the congregation he works with. He is to teach and encourage men to so live as to become elders and deacons in the Lord's church. When the congregation has elders, he works and serves under their supervision as do the rest of the congregation.

CONGREGATION SHOULD ENCOURAGE PREACHER

The congregation supports the preacher financially so he may fulfill his mission for God in preaching the word of the Lord. (Galatians 6:6). They, in turn, benefit directly from the fruit of his ministry in their midst.

We must, as the people of God, learn the scope of our ministry. It is larger than our local community. Although this is part of it, we must realize that our ministry is world wide. (Mark 16:16). We must be concerned that the gospel is to be preached to the whole world.

A preacher with any degree of talent and ability will be called upon to speak on lectureships, gospel meetings and other such meetings. The congregation can share his talents with the brotherhood.

There is one important thing to remember: your preacher benefits greatly from visits made to lectureships and gospel meetings and other speaking engagements. This helps him to grow stronger in the Lord.

Be happy for your preacher. Encourage him as he is called upon from time to time. Let us all be thankful to God for sound gospel preachers and uphold them as they work for God. Always remember that God begot one Son and He was a preacher.

—*Benjes News*
Benjestown church of Christ
Millington, Tennessee 38053

The Heart of the Matter is the Elders

Bubba Phillips

Those who are concerned with doctrinal and moral purity realize that a congregation is no stronger than its leadership—her elders.

Why do many congregations allow liberal preaching? The heart of the matter is the elders. If elders would not allow such there would not be unscriptural messages coming from most pulpits!

Why do many Bible school programs have teachers who espouse some form of modernism? Because the elders either do not know or they do not care. The elders—there is the heart of the matter!

Why are brethren allowed to miss service after service and very little or nothing is done about it? Is it not because the elders are not doing their JOB? Once again—the heart of the matter is the elders.

Why are some brethren allowed to curse, drink a little and dance? Because the elders do not have enough backbone to confront such brethren. It's the elders once again—they allow such!

All elders need to realize they are *definitely accountable* for the souls they shepard. How many elders care enough—love enough—to work with souls that are in spiritual danger? Do such elders believe the Lord is going to overlook their negligence in these areas?

We are thankful for elders who fulfill their work as shepherds. We are so appreciative of knowing elders who have the courage to do what it takes to lead souls in the right direction. May their tribe increase!

Notice what the Hebrew writer writes about elders. **“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”** (Hebrews 13:7). **“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”** (Hebrews 13:17).

—Post Office Box 4069
El Paso, Texas 79914

Was Jesus Railroaded?

Gary L. Grizzell

By the use of the word “railroaded” we mean “to push through hastily or without due consideration; to convict with undue haste and by means of false charges or insufficient evidence” (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*). So the question that is being asked has to do with whether or not Jesus was condemned—and thus crucified—as a direct result of a lack of due consideration, undue haste and by means of false charges by his enemies. The answer is unequivocally, “Yes!”

The fact that Jesus was the victim of railers is obvious from reading the accounts of his life. A “railer” is one who speaks injuriously to the hurt of another's character without sufficient evidence of wrong doing. The church is commanded to have no fellowship with railers (I Corinthians 5:11).

First, consider the fact that Satan, the evil one, was behind all schemes to condemn and crucify Jesus. Satan mounted a campaign to destroy the Lord the moment he heard God's prophecy that the seed of woman would come into the world and bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). Jesus knew his fight was not against flesh and blood primarily, but against that old serpent the devil (Ephesians 6:11-12; I Peter 5:8; Ephesians 2:2; II Corinthians 4:4). Satan tried in vain to corrupt Jesus in the wilderness at the beginning of Jesus' ministry; thus he manipulated puppets among men to secure the murder of the Lord (Matthew 4:1-11).

Second, Judas was to share in the guilt of the innocent blood. If it had been the custom to erect tombstones in those days, Judas' tombstone could have read: TRAITOR. Yet, some today try to justify Judas from any blame saying that he simply was fulfilling prophecy. Not only does this confuse predestination and destroy the freedom of the will but it ignores the fact that Jesus himself warned this betrayer: **“Woe unto that man through whom the Son of**

man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had not been born” (Matthew 26:23-24). Judas was warned and could have denied the impulse to betray Christ. However, after he sold the Lord to the will of his enemies he admitted, **“I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood”** (Matthew 27:3-5).

Again, some hold the view that Judas meant well by his action and only was trying to force Jesus to come to blows with his enemies. Thus, Jesus would destroy them and proclaim himself the material Messiah which Judas and others wanted him to be. But repeated declarations of Scripture show that the devil had taken possession of Judas, **“The devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him”** (John 13:2). Judas became a thief and stole from the treasury of the little group (John 12:6). He plotted with Jesus' enemies to betray him (John 12:4). Judas certainly played his part in the railroading of Christ.

Third, the Roman authorities shared guilt in the railroading of the Lord. True, the move to destroy Jesus did not arise from the Roman government. The Jews were the most stubborn and turbulent people with whom the Romans dealt! The Romans made every effort to allow freedom of religion and customs to the Jews in Palestine. Roman customs were kept out of Jerusalem:

- 1) The Romans refrained from unnecessary breach of the Sabbath-Day regulations;
- 2) Did not place the effigy of the emperors on the coins in use in Judea;
- 3) Allowed the Jews to try cases where Jews only were concerned but did not allow them to exact the death penalty (this is where Roman Law contradicted Moses' Law).

Obviously, the Roman authorities did not consider the work of Jesus of a militaristic nature but purely spiritual or

the government would have punished him before the time he actually was crucified. Even when Jesus sent word to Herod Antipas that he (Jesus) considered him a "fox," Herod did nothing about this since he considered Jesus no threat or competition to the military King of the Romans (Luke 13:31-32).

But if the ministry of Jesus did not clash with Roman authorities, why then did they put him to death? Simply stated, a Roman governor condemned Jesus to death because the Jews demanded it! The Jews did not possess the power (Roman power) to destroy Jesus, so they demanded Pilate to do it. In the cases of the stoning of Stephen and the attempted assassination of Paul, the Jews did not hesitate to override Roman authorities and indulge in mob violence! Why did they not attempt to destroy Jesus in mob violence as well? Well, they surely tried from time to time. There were two reasons why it wouldn't work: 1) the Pharisees feared the multitudes (John 7:13), and 2) it was not his time (implies miraculous escape—John 7:8). Yes, the Roman government played its part in the railroading of Christ to a terrible and cruel trial and death.

Fourth, the Jewish religious leaders played a significant part in the railroading of Jesus. The Jewish Sanhedrin, made up of half Pharisees and half Sadducees, railroaded Jesus on the ground of blasphemy because he claimed to be the Son of God. They could not procure conviction from governor Pilate on this ground since he would not care whether Jesus believed he was the Son of God or not. After all, no Roman law condemned the blasphemy of the God of the Jews. Inspired Luke states the false charges made by the Jews to Pilate:

- 1) "We found this man perverting our nation;
- 2) And forbidding to give tribute to Caesar;
- 3) And saying that he himself is Christ a King." (Luke 23:2)

The first charge was that Jesus was a revolutionary, *i.e.*, that he was a troublemaker among the Jewish nation. But he only was teaching the correct applications of the written Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets. Truly, "**He came unto his own but his own received him not**" (John 1:11). In view of the indifference of the Jews, they NEEDED more stirring up! Actually, he was trying to convert that which already was perverted.

The second charge was false. He did just the opposite in that he commanded the Jews to pay their taxes (Matthew 22:15-22). He had even performed the miracle of removing money from a fish's mouth to illustrate the need for paying one's taxes. Caesar need not fear Jesus' influence here.

The third charge sounded true, but Pilate soon found that Jesus was no rival with Caesar. In John 6:15 when the multitude tried to crown Jesus an earthly king he would not stand for it. He was not the slightest bit interested in being a military king with an army of well-equipped soldiers to storm Rome and remove the Emperor from his throne.

Interesting enough is the fact that the Jewish religious leaders controlled Pilate, who was basically a coward. For a short time Pilate tried to save Jesus saying, "**I find no fault with him**" (John 19:4). But why did Pilate deliver Jesus unto the will of his enemies if he believed Jesus innocent of the three false charges? Why would he literally wash his hands of the whole matter when he could have tried to save Jesus from the cruel, railroading procedures of the Jews? Because there was the double threat of starting a riot and placing charges against him at Rome. This could

very well have meant that he would have been considered a traitor to Roman interests! He did not dare try risking the Jews to appeal to Caesar against him! Why, what if Caesar believed the false charges and that this Jesus was telling multitudes not to pay their taxes to Caesar?

We have already established that Pilate was guilty of the blood of Christ, but Jesus himself said that Pilate's guilt was not as great as that of these wicked, diabolical, conniving, political backscratching Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees. "**Pilate therefore saith unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee and have power to crucify thee? Jesus answered him, Thou wouldest have no power against me except it were given thee from above: THEREFORE, HE THAT DELIVERED ME TO THEE HATH THE GREATER SIN.**" (John 19:10-11). It is immaterial that the Roman soldiers were the actual ones to drive the spikes into the hands and feet of Christ. The blind, ignorant and stubborn leaders of the Jews schemed and plotted to bring about this whole sordid affair.

Fifth, it would seem that simply stating that Satan through Judas, the Roman governor Pilate, and the Jewish leaders would be enough to establish the identity of those responsible for the railroading of Christ. But one more class needs to be mentioned. That class of compromisers is the multitude among the Jews who followed the blind guides. **THE PEOPLE CRUCIFIED CHRIST!** It is useless to blame only the Romans and a clique of Jewish teachers for the death of Christ. Matthew 27:20, 22 and 25 reveal these statements of fact:

"The Chief Priests and the elders persuaded THE MULTITUDES"

"THEY ALL SAY, Let him be crucified"

"ALL THE PEOPLE ANSWERED AND SAID, His blood be on US and ON OUR CHILDREN." (all emphasis mine, GLG)

It is doubtful that a greater piece of hypocrisy ever could have been perpetrated than when, after the death of Christ, the pretentious Sanhedrin charged the apostles:

(You) "intend to bring this man's blood on us." (Acts 5:28).

ALL JEWS NOT TO BLAME

Not all Jewish people were responsible for the underhanded, railroading procedures practiced against our Lord. The eleven apostles were not to blame even though they failed him in his hour of need. Nor were the faithful disciples and women who supported him and followed him to Jerusalem to be blamed. The Jews who were outside of Palestine are not to be blamed, who knew nothing of the wicked and hateful plan. But Jesus was crucified at Passover, so the city was thronged with multitudes of worshippers from all over Judaea and the Roman empire.

The Jewish mob—*these* were the ones who so wickedly cried, "**Let him be crucified!**" Their problem? They put their faith in mere men, literally the *big name preachers* of their day. Never mind the fact that Jesus had warned,

"Let them alone, if the blind lead the blind, BOTH shall fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:14).

I do not know if it is true in secular realms but I know it is true in the religious realm, "The majority of people think but little and follow their leadership blindly." As one preacher who now is dead was noted for saying, "The only mental exercise most people get is jumping to conclusions."

Someone may ask, "You mean the follower is condemned as well as his religious leaders if the religious leaders are

corrupt?" That's what Jesus said. When Jesus condemned the populous cities of Galilee for their unbelief, he did not say, "Woe unto the little group of intellectual leaders of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum!" But he DID SAY: "Woe unto you, Chorazin, Woe unto you, Bethsaida!" (Matthew 11:21-24).

The condemnation of the people AS A WHOLE is to be noted! Consider also that Jesus wept over the WHOLE CITY of Jerusalem, not just the blind guides, as he pronounced its doom in Luke 19:41-44 and Matthew 23:37-38. So the followers who jumped on the bandwagon of the false, hypocritical leaders crying, "Let him be crucified" shared in the guilt of the wicked and underhanded rail-roading procedures against our Lord.

THE QUESTION TODAY

Where would YOU fit in if you had lived as one of God's children in the days of Jesus? With whom would you have stood in relation to the known railroading of Christ to his death?

1. Would you have stood with Judas who had skin-deep love for Jesus and his teaching? Judas, who loved things of this world more than he loved truth and Jesus?
2. Would you have stood with Pilate and his Roman political friends who desired peace at any price? Pilate, who desired peace at the price of truth and an innocent man?
3. Would you have stood with the hypocritical religious leaders, some of whom preached the right doctrine (Matthew 23:3) but who were too selfish, politically and cowardly to practice the truth they so fervently preached?
4. Would YOU have stood with the multitude of followers who were so willingly gullible and naive?

Or would you have stood with the few faithful and loving disciples who followed our Lord and refused to deny him? Each person must make up his own mind as to which category he falls into and then make adjustments if necessary (Luke 13:3).

DOES RAILROADING TAKE PLACE TODAY?

Some today who read of the railroading of Jesus in the Gospel accounts, with the behind-the-scenes working of Satan and his helpers, simply will not believe that such ever could be imitated today. This can only illustrate the fact that many profess to believe the Scriptures but refuse to make the application. The apostle Peter spoke of those who "willingly are ignorant" of truth (II Peter 3:5).

May it ever be remembered that I Peter 2:21 teaches the Christian to follow in the steps of Jesus Christ. Two immediate consequences will follow if you are faithful in following truly in his steps:

- 1) You will be controversial, and
- 2) You will make enemies.

Any Christian who is not controversial (and I do not mean contentious) is not living the FAITHFUL Christian life! II Timothy 3:12 says that the truly faithful Christian will suffer persecution. The reason the faithful Christian is controversial is because he walks in the steps of the most controversial individual who ever walked the face of the earth, the Lord Jesus Christ! The message he preached was the most controversial message in existence then and the gospel is the most controversial message in existence today! The same gospel that makes some glad (Acts 2:41) will make others mad (Acts 7:59). The sun softens butter yet

hardens clay—just so the gospel softens some hearts and hardens others (II Timothy 4:2-4).

The reason the Christian will make enemies is the same that Jesus made enemies. If one follows—really follows—in the steps of one who made enemies, it is only logical that he also will make enemies. Jesus told his apostles, "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you" (John 15:20).

When persecuted for righteousness' sake we should do three things:

- 1) Rejoice (Matthew 5:12; Acts 5:40-41);
- 2) Pray for those who spitefully use you (Matthew 5:44);
- 3) Be ready to give an answer concerning any controversy you have had (I Peter 3:15).

THE GULLIBLE AND THE NAIVE

Today, we are sorry to say, as during the days of Jesus many seem to become "yes men" to hypocritical religious leaders with political and selfish ends. Those leaders who so use these simpletons (Romans 16:18, "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple") are those who subconsciously believe that godliness is a way of gain, but the inspired writer said: "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (I Timothy 6:6).

A case in point in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ was the multitude who followed the misguided leading of the Scribes and Pharisees at the trial of Christ. Thus, possibly some of these very ones who had cried so loudly, "Let him be crucified, Let him be crucified" may have in humble penitence later confessed him as Lord on the day of Pentecost or thereafter. But, there was no way those who had allowed themselves to be used as puppets of such religious politicians among the Jewish nation EVER could go back and undo their evil contributions to the diabolical scheme to railroad the Lord. When the truth has been twisted to set a trap for fools, men seem to be just too ignorant in the word of God or perhaps just too stubborn to listen to reason.

DEVICES OF RAILROADERS

Suborning men was not beneath the dignity of the great religious pretenders who proceeded to railroad, smear and slander Christ and it was not beneath those who railroaded the great servant, Stephen (Acts 6:9-7:1-60). When his enemies could not "resist the wisdom" by which he spake, they suborned men (vs. 11). The word "suborn" here means:

"To throw or put under, to subject, denoted to suggest, whisper, prompt...to suborn in the legal sense is to procure a person who will take a false oath. The idea of making suggestions is probably present in this use of the word"

(definition taken from *W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words*).

Since basically all that the enemies of Stephen could say in regard to Stephen was, "Well, we don't like him," such was not evidence he was guilty of any wrong. But they hated him and hate must vent itself. So while pretending to be sound, dedicated men of God the Jewish religious leaders "set up false witnesses" (vs. 13) who testified lies against him. YOU MEAN THEY SET UP FALSE WITNESSES?!, some modern day simpleton might question. Yes, that's what the Bible says they did. What else could they do? They had been rebuked by the gospel and they *certainly* were not going to repent of their sins! That never even crossed their minds.

Please note that these "yes men" who allowed themselves to be used in the railroading and stoning of Stephen were divided into two classes:

- 1) Those who were such simpletons that they would testify falsely against a brother if they were suborned, *i.e.*, if it was hinted at and subtly suggested to them to do evil. There were those who had not learned to discern between good and evil and thus were "sitting on ready" to be stirred up (vs. 12) at the suggestion of those they considered prestigious in the brotherhood. Jude spoke of those who have men's persons in admiration because of advantage (Jude 16).
- 2) Those who were openly dishonest and would jump quickly to the opportunity of being a false witness for some self-seeking gain (vs. 13).

Yet still, in spite of these examples of the railroading and assassination of the Lord and of Stephen some will not believe that railroading takes place today particularly in the church of the Lord. Sadly enough when such personality types herein discussed DO wake up to the Biblical reality and possibility of railroading, they may foolishly possess a misplaced sympathy by calling good evil and evil good (Isaiah 5:20). This they do by their inability to identify the *true* railroader. Those who have had their good name dragged through the mire of misrepresentation for the truth of the gospel KNOW EXACTLY what I am saying!

Another device of Satan's ministers in railroading, slandering and misrepresenting Jesus was the false standard of THE MAJORITY RULES. The majority rules concept NEVER has been the way to determine truth. God's word is truth (John 17:17) and is the standard by which man will be judged (John 12:48). Did the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Governor Pilate and the Jewish followers know this? If they didn't they should have! But when it came time either to release a noted criminal or condemn Jesus, those looking to vent their hate for the one who had reproved them for their sin turned the whole process into a popularity contest. This was mob justice through and through. The problem with a mob is that although it has many heads it has no brains.

Jesus was not condemned because the evidence was stacked against him. The so-called "evidence" was nothing more than the *trumped-up accusations* of his enemies. These enemies had kicked around in his past for some semblance of wrong doing and came up with nothing but testimonies of others who had despised the truth he had preached.

"An ungodly man diggeth up evil:

And in his lips there is as a burning fire" (Proverbs 16:27).

The only way to condemn such a one as the sinless Son of God, whom they saw as a threat to their goals, was to join hands in circulating a litany of lies concerning him. Making the Lord the subject of much talk cast suspicion over his head as an evildoer. But few there were who judged righteous judgment (John 7:24).

HOW DID JESUS REACT TO GOVERNMENTAL AND RELIGIOUS RAILROADERS?

When the Lord was investigated by the Roman authorities he did not cooperate AS PILATE THOUGHT HE SHOULD HAVE. The reason was he knew that Pilate would soon wash his hands of the whole matter. Besides, Pilate had rejected the evidence already available to him concerning the deity of Christ, therefore, why should Jesus have given him any more evidence to reject? What sense

would it have made for Jesus to cast his pearls before such swine? (Matthew 7:6). Jesus knew by now that Pilate was playing politics with the Jewish leaders and that he was only going through a mock trial for appearance sake. Pilate knew what some who are members of the Lord's church have not learned, that most people make decisions about crucial matters based solely on appearance! The text says that the governor " marvelled greatly" that Jesus wouldn't answer a word (Matthew 27:14). Was Jesus to be considered guilty because he did not cooperate with those who had taken the unscrupulous advantage of peddling lies against him? Obviously not! And Jesus knew that Pilate, who would go with the majority, would one day be exposed for his side-stepping of the truth. No doubt after this railroading process was complete Pilate would congratulate himself that he was a highly courageous man (regardless of the fact that any coward will take a stand against the righteous when it seems to be the popular thing to do). And no doubt some would be silly-minded enough to believe him.

THE COVER UP

Perhaps the worst practice and trick of Satan's ministers was that of trying to cover up their shameless exhibition of railroading the Lord. Deliberate deception was not beneath the hypocritical maneuvers of the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day and it is not beneath men of such character today.

Some good things may have even been said about the religious leaders who persecuted the disciples. They were NOT ALL BAD. Some of them preached the law of God rightly. Some of them had done many good works. But, those seemingly pious, seemingly humble, well-known preachers among the Jews joined hands circulating a lie against the apostles, saying that the apostles were going about slandering them by proclaiming to the people of Jerusalem that they (the Jewish leaders) were guilty of the blood of Christ. They arrogantly and confidently said:

"And behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us" (Acts 5:28).

The application? The application of this example of arrogance is obvious to those who presently are walking in the steps of Christ (I Peter 2:21). It is obvious to those who have in times past stood for the truth of the gospel. The application is crystal clear to those faithful members of the church who have seen the blessed church of the Lord torn asunder by liberals and then survived the crisis long enough to see the faithful condemned and the wicked upheld! Where there is controversy for the truth's sake by the faithful child of God there will be "good brethren" who will seek to assassinate and batter the reputation of any child of God who gets in the way of their self-seeking goal of restructuring the church.

Through private negotiations the enemies of Jesus kept the political anti-Christ machinery moving at full force. Yes, the divine plan was that Jesus die (Genesis 3:15, the heel of the seed of woman was to be bruised by Satan). And the disobedient Jews were certainly going to help that along! By the preaching Jesus did, by his calling a religious hypocrite just what he was, he stepped into the face of the oncoming, fast-paced, self-serving purpose of the religious leaders who had hidden themselves among God's people. However, those very individuals presently are suffering while Jesus is now in heaven. Their religious politics to keep their place and their nation did not work then (Matthew 24, destruction of Jerusalem) and it certainly

isn't working for them now (Luke 16, torments for the wicked).

EXPOSING CHURCH POLITICS NOT POPULAR

Speaking out about church politics is not a popular thing today, but it is going on in some quarters nonetheless. I fully expect some to judge the motives of my heart just for writing an article on this subject. However, if you want to find out for sure if church politics are going on in the Lord's body today, don't ask a church politician for the answer. A wolf in sheep's clothing will never tell you he's a wolf. Some would not know a wolf if he bit them on the nose.

If you know of any faithful Christian(s) being railroaded, slandered, misrepresented by those who possess the same mentality of the enemies of Christ:

- 1) Be open to the fact that someone may try to suborn you, *i.e.*, make suggestions to you to entice you to bear false witness against the innocent; **"All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt"** (Psalm 41:7).
- 2) Don't become a false witness no matter what the gain: **"A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue"** (Proverbs 17:4). If some prestigious brother(s) wants you to play tail to a kite flown by him, say "No!" Don't listen to those who have some personal axe to grind; instead say, **"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good"** (I Thessalonians 5:21).
- 3) Don't stand with your friends when they are in error (Galatians 2:11-14). Instead, defend the one you know is innocent: **"A true witness delivereth souls: but a**

deceitful witness speaketh lies" (Proverbs 14:25). Some religious people even have transgressed by taking money for delivering an innocent man unto the will of his enemies, for example Judas. May it never be said of you, **"In secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor"** (Psalm 12:3).

4) If defamed, entreat (I Corinthians 4:13).

Was Jesus railroaded? Yes! He suffered all that he suffered because of railers: the shame experienced at his trial, the cruel mockings, the emotional pain of being separated from those who had been closest to him, the physical suffering of the cross along with his feeling of the removal of God's presence as he cried, **"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"**

May we learn from this and never be a part of such a wicked device of Satan. We are to have no company with a "railer" (I Corinthians 5:11). **"For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"** (II Corinthians 5:10). Let's be sure and give a fair and impartial hearing to any brother who claims he has been the victim of railers.

Jesus' overall response to those who crucified him? During his ministry he taught all things concerning his identity (John 8:24). And although he was mostly passive during the railroading trial of pretence, AFTER his resurrection and ascension into heaven he marked the religious pretenders and thus warned the sheep of the ravening wolves (*cf.*, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John).

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- 1:00 p.m. Devices Of Satan Garland Elkins
- 2:00 p.m. When Brethren Refuse To Be Warned Bill Clayton
- 3:00 p.m. ICM—A Trojan Horse Joe Nichols
- 3:45 p.m. Discussion Forum Elkins, Dobbs, Nichols, Clayton
- 7:30 p.m. The Mission Of The Church H. A. "Buster" Dobbs

- 1:00 p.m. Respect For Divine Authority William S. Cline
- 2:00 p.m. Church Discipline Neil Kucera
- 3:00 p.m. Latest Developments In Boston/Crossroads Eddie Whitten
- 3:45 p.m. Discussion Forum Kucera, Whitten, Cline
- 7:30 p.m. The Current Digression Continues Goebel Music

Friday - July 22

- 9:30 a.m. Restoration is "On-Going?" Ernest West
- 10:30 a.m. Bales/Hicks Doctrine Randy Kea

Saturday - July 23

- 9:30 a.m. Grace And Law H. A. "Buster" Dobbs
- 10:30 a.m. Dangers Facing The Church Goebel Music

First Annual Know Your Bible Lectureship

August 7-11, 1988

"WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?"

Anniston City Auditorium 1128 Gurnee Avenue Anniston, Alabama

The lectureship will begin Sunday, August 7, with congregational singing at the Oxford Church of Christ building from 7:30-10:30 P.M. led by Roy Williams. Lectures begin each morning, Monday through Thursday, at 8:30 and continue through the day with breaks for lunch and dinner, concluding with an open forum each evening at 8:00.

Speakers include: Curtis and Annette Cates, Jimmy Clark, Wayne Coats, Charles Crump, Barry Cunningham, George DeHoff, Garland Elkins, Joe Gilmore, Marty Glenn, John Harris, Alton Hayes, Ronny Johnson, Ron Laughrey, Glann Lee, Don and Jane McWhorter, James Meadows, James Pilgrim, Aubrey Prestridge, Clyde Ray, James Rogers, Robert and Irene Taylor, James Thompson, James Watson, Eddie Whitson, Roy Williams and Gracie Young. Those on the forum include: Brooks Boyd, Wayne Coats, Mitchell Covington, Wayne Dunaway, Garland Elkins, Joe Gilmore, Richard Hooks, Eugene Jenkins, Jimmy Kennedy, Elbert Lewis, James Meadows, Gary Shaver, Gordon Smith, Dewayne Spivey, Sorrell Wesson, and Bill Williams.

A book is being published by the *Firm Foundation Publishing Company* and will be available for a pre-publication price soon. Lodging will be made available

in the homes of area Christians and the lectures will be taped. For further information, contact Roger Jackson, Lectureship Director, at (205) 831-0375 or (205) 831-0651.



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"What Does The Bible Teach?"

August 7-11, 1988

In Downtown Anniston, Alabama at the City Auditorium

For information call (205) 831-0375 or (205) 831-0651

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- Premillennialism Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
- The Thief On The Cross James Meadows
- The Blasphemy Against The Holy Ghost James Rogers
- The Godhead John Harris
- The Two Covenants Curtis Cates
- The Identity Of The Church Alton Hayes
- Denominationalism Garland Elkins
- Worship Don McWhorter

- Instrumental Music James Pilgrim
- The Sabbath Joe Gilmore
- The All-Sufficiency Of The Scriptures Wayne Coats
- Divorce Glann Lee
- Baptism George DeHoff

FOR THE LADIES:

- Christian Women In The Church Irene Taylor
- Christian Women In The Business World Annette Cates
- Christian Women In The Home Jane McWhorter
- The Christian Woman In Crisis Grace Young

Lectureship book will be published.

For more information, contact:

Roger Jackson, 940 Old Wood Road, Oxford, Alabama 35203

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Notes & Quotes...

Earle Rattai, Kenora, Ontario, Canada: "I have just finished reading your October issue of *Contending for the Faith* on Boston/Crossroadism and found it very informative. I recently have been studying this topic because some areas are beginning to touch my life and the church I go to. Our congregation is small (60), young, and growing. We have a faithful Christian evangelist (**Lee Rottman**) who opposes the errors of the Boston Movement. I find it very tragic that the brotherhood is being split by something like this, and I think education is the only way to fight it.

"I enjoy reading your magazine... If you have any information or material I could hand out on Boston/Crossroadism, it would be appreciated..."

Bill Skoi, Merced, California: "I'm glad to see that there are Christians who stand up and search for the truth in the scriptures."

Dennis Hanes, Poplar Bluff, Missouri: "Your work is so important and the information so valuable."

Elmer Swann, of Gainesboro, Texas, is now deceased.

"NIV PACKETS" STILL AVAILABLE

Probably the most thorough review of the *New International Version* of the Bible is the one by **A. G. Hobbs**, of Fort Worth, Texas. We thought so much of his review, that we published it in five consecutive issues of *Contending for the Faith*, all five of which are included in what we call our "NIV PACKET" which we have been mailing out by the 100s.

Among those ordering this packet, not yet reported, are **Donald E. Miller**, of Springfield, Ohio (three packets); **Ozroe Bush**, of Center,

Texas (one packet); **Mrs. Ida Ruth Whitfield**, of Union City, California (one packet); **I. Rachel Foreman**, West Memphis, Arkansas (one packet); **Morris W. Witten**, Wytheville, Virginia (one packet); **Gerald J. Davis**, of Universal City, Texas, ordered one packet, saying, "I am preparing to teach a class on the versions and am interested in learning what you have found in addition to my discoveries about the 'NIV.' My motto is: 'Try the spirits'"; **James H. Brown**, Walling, Tennessee (one packet); **Guy Weddel**, of Hereford, Texas, order a packet, saying, "There is no end to the Devil's devices"; **Mrs. Dorothy E. Harris**, of Boynton Beach, Florida ordered one packet, saying, "I do appreciate the work you are doing"; **Keith Wolfe**, of Swainsboro, Georgia (one packet); **Bernice Cox**, Corpus Christi, Texas (one packet); **Jesse Condra**, of Rogersville, Tennessee (one packet); **George LeHew**, of Washington Court House, Ohio (one packet); **Rachel Ruffin**, of Ladson, South Carolina (one packet); **John P. Hadley**, of Odessa, Texas, ordered one "NIV Packet" as well as one "Crossroads Packet"; so did **Ben E. Blicht**, of Whitney, Texas; **Floy M. Struck**, of Atoka, Oklahoma (one packet); **William F. Wilson**, of Milan, Tennessee, ordered a packet, saying, "We hope this material of brother Hobbs will convince one of the ladies in our congregation that there is error in the NIV, which she currently questions"; **Rusty Long**, of Florence, Alabama (one packet); **Amy E. Higginbotham**, of Milwaukie, Oregon, sent \$20.00, saying, "I wish only one packet and you may use the rest of the money as it is needed"; **David W. Rout**, of Batesville,

Arkansas (three packets); **Doug Brazzell**, of Franklin, Kentucky (one packet); **J. K. Williams**, of Paducah, Kentucky (one packet); **Dottie M. Greer**, of Johnson City, Tennessee (one packet); **Katherine Joslyn**, of Loveland, Colorado (one packet); **Carrie DePass**, of Lauderdale Lakes, Florida (one packet); **Lester Durham**, of Bakersfield, Missouri, ordered one packet, added \$6.50 to his check, saying, "Use the rest as you see fit"; **C. E. Dugan**, of Portland, Oregon, ordered one packet, added \$5.00 extra to help with our work; **James Reed**, of Boston, Massachusetts (one packet); **David Young Parker**, of Nashville, Tennessee (one packet).

[NOTE: Any desiring one or more of our "NIV Packet" please enclose \$3.50 for each packet with your order and address it to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office, Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226.**]

Robbie Pounders, of Belmont, Mississippi, ordered a bundle of 12 copies of our issue featuring "Jim Massey and the All-Grace-No-Law Heresy" for distribution there.

Ronnie L. Hurst, of Guin, Alabama, renewed, saying, "I have received *Contending for the Faith* for over 12 years and I don't want to miss a single copy."

Billy M. Craig, of Gulfport, Mississippi, renewed for another three years, saying, "Keep on warning the brotherhood of the great dangers ahead, and behind." So did **Alyene Miller**, of Judsonia, Arkansas, saying, "With thanks and my prayers."

Irene Laxton, of Caulfield, Missouri, renewed, saying, "I enjoy the paper, think it is needed to keep people informed of errors being taught."

Velma Liscum, of Salina, Kansas, let us know that her husband **Frank Liscum**, a long-time encourager of our work, passed away April 19, 1987. She also said, "Thank you for

Bellview church of Christ announces:

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AUG. 9-13, 1988



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Mac Deaver
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Roy Deaver
Austin, TX
H. A. "Buster" Dobbs
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CLYDE C. SLOAN, VENERABLE GOSPEL PREACHER, SUCCUMBS, AT 75, TO VIRAL PNEUMONIA



It probably was with more spirit than understanding that many of us, as children, used to join the congregation in singing "We Are Going Down The Valley." However, now, as the time of our own lives may be growing short, what a lonelier place this old world is getting to be as long-time friends and loved ones keep "going down the valley, one by one."

I cannot recall the exact year when **Clyde C. Sloan** and I first met. It could have been 1940 or 1941. I do remember that he and I both had gone to Roaring Springs, Texas, where **Roy E. Stephens** and **L. W. Hayhurst** were debating the Bible class question. Clyde was preaching then at Bowie, Texas; and I was still preaching at Mercedes, Texas.

One day, during the debate, Clyde took me aside to ask me what I thought of a sermon outline he had worked out fitting the seven parables of Matthew 13 to the unfolding history of the kingdom of God. I was simply delighted with it—in fact, have preached it across the brotherhood many, many times. Lots of folks thought it was *mine*; however, I got it from Clyde C. Sloan!

It is not that we were together that much *in person*; I do not recall ever having laid eyes on him since that debate—except maybe once when I spoke at Bowie. However, across the years, he and I never lost touch with

each other—at least by mail! He always was appreciative of our missionary work. And when *Contending for the Faith* came out, he renewed his subscription again and again as well as persuading others to subscribe.

When brother Clyde finally died (from viral pneumonia), April 9, 1988, he had been living at Hollis, Oklahoma for the past several years. His wife, sister **Opal** wrote, "Clyde was so proud to be your friend. I know you will be saddened by his passing. My family know that he is at rest..."

"Three of our sons take your paper and read it faithfully. Our oldest son **Bill** is an elder at Cadiz, Kentucky. He has just retired from the Army after 29½ years. He has lived in Cadiz for seven years and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The other three sons live in Oklahoma City."

Brother Clyde and Opal were married for almost 56 years—during 55 of which years he preached the word. He was in the Baptist Medical Center, in Oklahoma City, at the time of his passing. Funeral services were conducted at Hollis by brethren **Dave Roger**, of Hollis, and **Bill Osborne**, of Altus. Burial was at the McKnight Cemetery, at Hollis, under the direction of Patterson Funeral Home.

In addition to his wife and eldest son, already named, brother Sloan is survived

by the three sons mentioned, in Oklahoma City, **Arvell, Jerry and Jim**; two sisters, **Mrs. Pauline Briscoe** and **Mrs. Lorene Roudebush**, both of Olustee, Oklahoma; 16 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

the information about 'Crossroads' and good articles."

Fred Thomason, Jr., of Henderson, Kentucky, subscribed, saying, "We want to be informed on issues—and men—threatening the Lord's church in these troubled times."

MANY BUNDLES OF CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH BEING DISTRIBUTED

One way that circulation of *Contending for the Faith* continues to grow is by faithful readers ordering bundles for distribution where they attend and then signing up those who become interested by thus being introduced to the paper.

Among those who have helped in this way recently are **James R. & Cheryl L. Choate**, of Glen, Mississippi, who asked for a bundle so they could give them out to the New Hope congregation there. Earlier they had given out some of their own personal copies to other brethren who have since subscribed. Brother Choate plans to attend the Memphis School of Preaching, starting in August. He and sister Choate said, when they wrote, "My family and I are honored to be a small part of this great work."

F. C. Rice, of Washington, West Virginia, said he would be glad to distribute copies of *Contending for the Faith* among members of the congregation where he attends. So did **Dallas Hollenbeck**, of Salem, Missouri, who said, "I am an elder at the Southwest church of Christ and have in the past ordered sets of

Contending for the Faith on Crossroads and given them to the other elders and deacons."

Louise Hassler, of Ringgold, Georgia, said she would help distribute some of the bundles of *Contending for the Faith*, adding, "I helped **Nancy Renfro**. I gave them to a small congregation in Rising Fawn, Georgia. They were most all picked up...I plan to put some in our vestibule at East Ridge congregation...I will do what I can."

Charles Davis, of Dundee, Kentucky, said send him a bundle. So did **Lisa Hunter**, of Rochester, New York. **John Milligan**, of Milan, Tennessee, especially wanted a bundle of the September/1987 issue in which was an article re: Gordon Hogan. **Dude Pendergraft**, of Joplin, Missouri, wrote, "Please send some back copies and we will see if we can distribute some of these for you."

Paul S. Jordon, of Avon Park, Florida, was 80 years old in April; nevertheless he was happy to respond, saying, "Yes, I will hand out what you send me, try and get some to take *Contending for the Faith*." **J. M. Boothe**, of Carthage, Texas, wrote, "Please send a bundle of back issues to West Loop church of Christ and I will do what I can to get our brothers and sisters in Christ to subscribe."

From Harrington, Maine, **R. C. Smart, Sr.** wrote, "I would appreciate a bundle of back issues to distribute...I also am concerned about changes (not for the better) over the past 30 years." **Dallas LaFleur**, of Heber

Springs, Arkansas, said, "I would be most happy to distribute a bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith*."

Mrs. Cuba Wisenbaker, of Valdosta, Georgia, let us know that she would be "glad to get one of the bundles of magazines. We are a very small country group, but solid. Thirty copies will be sufficient for all the families attending. I don't think we could get any better information anywhere on these controversial subjects..." When I wrote **E. V. Wimmer**, of Bluefield, Virginia, if I should send him a bundle for distribution there, he replied, "Yes, please do."

Arley P. Jarrell, of Green Cove Springs, Florida, is now deceased.

Dr. George E. Halteman, of Pottstown, Pennsylvania: "I have all 18 volumes of *Contending for the Faith*. I refer to them and reread them from time to time. I wouldn't want to be without them. I also have all of **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** books. His book *A Review of the New Versions* points out the many errors in the new Bibles...May you always keep contending for the faith."

One of our valued older readers sent in \$5.00 and asked us to renew her subscription for three years. It has been many years since we could send it for that; NOW the rate is \$5.00 for one year or \$13.00 for three. Please take note.

Hartley Patterson, of Proctorville, Ohio, is now deceased.

It is wonderful to us that numbers of our readers are such kindred spirits in Christ that they feel constrained to help us bear our burdens in a financial way. In fact, if it were not for these precious souls, many things that we are able to accomplish simply would have to be left undone. For instance, the **William Simpsons**, of Lemay, Missouri, send \$20.00 every month to our contending-for-the-faith fund; so does **Harold G. Beale**, of APO, Miami, Florida; **Nona Mae Roberts**, of Lansing, Michigan, has sent \$5.00 monthly for many years; **Jack Caraker**, of Hartford, Kentucky, sent \$15.00 monthly until his death this spring; **Bill Fugerer**, of Dunedin, Florida, sent \$20.00, letting us know that he retired from the FAA November 1, 1987, and will be working full time with the Lake Tarpon church in Tarpon Springs, Florida; **Elmer E. Free**, of Owensboro, Kentucky, contributed \$10.00 monthly for a long time; **Catherine Moore**, of Dayton, Ohio, sent \$200.00, saying, "Use for paper as needed"; **Clellave Boor**, of Santa Maria, California, sent \$100.00 and \$25.00; **Church of Christ in Palacios**, Texas, sends \$50.00 monthly; **Wayne H. Lifsey** and **Neille Lee Eddy**, both of Lansing, Michigan, sent \$100.00 and \$20.00, respectively, saying, "Still with you and *Contending for the Faith*"; **Mrs. David H. Adams**, of Texarkana, Texas, enclosed \$20.00, saying, "Please use as you see fit to spread the truth"; **Esther Rose Welborn**, of Freeport, Texas, sent \$25.00 in memory of her husband **Luther E. Welborn**, who passed away with a heart attack, March 16, 1987, saying, "He appreciated the work you do very much... I hope and pray that apostasy can be checked and stopped if it be God's will"; **Jean Martin**, of Eudora, Kansas, sent two subscriptions, adding \$7.00 onto her check, saying, "Use the rest as you see fit"; **Harriet S. Gandy**, of San Pablo, California, added \$10.00 onto her subscription for us to use as we see where it is needed most, saying, "I am so pleased that there are still some holding up for the truth. God's word will not return to him void"; **Church of Christ**, of Bude, Mississippi, contributed \$15.00; **O. L. Treadwell**, of Lubbock, Texas, enclosed \$20.00, saying, "Your father taught me 20 nights in Comanche, Oklahoma, probably about 1910. I am now in a wheel chair in a convalescent home at 85."

Clarence Botts, of Ira, Texas, subscribed for three years, saying, "I have had the privilege to review the March '88 issue of *Contending for the Faith*. It is excellent."

Leonard Martin, of McMinnville, Tennessee, sent in three new subscriptions, saying, "I enjoy *Contending for the Faith* very much, and look forward to receiving it each month."

Randy S. Reese, Jr., of Ashiya Shi, Japan, asked us to be sure that he was on our standing order list to be sent BOUND VOLUMES of *Contending for the Faith* each year as soon as we received each volume back from the bindery.

SIX-YEAR SUBSCRIPTIONS GROWING

When you either subscribe or renew your subscription for six years at a time, you save \$5.00. Instead of sending \$30.00, you send only \$25.00 for six years. Among those thus renewing recently we noted **Larry T. Perry**, of Seymour, Tennessee; **Marvin E. Howell**, of Sacramento, California; **B. B. Harding**, of Elizabethtown, Kentucky; **Millard T. Smith**, of Sanger, Texas; and **R. A. Jacobs**, of Linwood, Kansas, who added an extra ten dollars for our Far East/World Evangelism work, saying, "I wish it were more."

Paul Sain, who formerly preached at Lebanon, Tennessee, now preaches at Pula-ski, Tennessee.

Garland Elkins resigned preaching at Getwell/Memphis, Tennessee at the end of June, where he had been preaching the past 15 years, beginning his new work at South-aven, Mississippi, July 1, 1988.

N. J. "Stan" Stanford, of Columbia, Tennessee, renewed four subscriptions, adding an "extra" \$100.00 for "Rice Travel Fund."

One of our valued sisters of Christ sort of "got unto us" recently for addressing her as "brother", when she is a sister. It would help us avoid such embarrassments if sisters would affix *Miss*, *Ms.* or *Mrs.* onto their names so we'd know. Otherwise, often, we cannot tell who is a brother and who is a sister.

Leo & Hazel Martin, of North Fort Myers, Florida, enclosed \$10.00 for Bibles for China.

Roy H. Cobb, of Crestwood, Missouri, ordered 25 copies of our January/1986 issue, containing the article by **Bronwen (McClish) Gibson**. Also he sent two subscriptions.

Pete Hanks, who preaches at Stinnett, Texas, wrote, "After the Pope was here, I wrote 14 newspapers—then wrote this poem:

THE BIBLE

By Pete Hanks

If a person will empty self of pride,
And take the Bible as his only guide,
He will go through life in a happy way,
Praising God day by day.

It's creed books written by men,
That causes so much strife and sin.
This appeal we strongly make:
The Bible only we should take.

"What think ye? Wouldn't it be great if all the world followed the Bible?"

A. D. & Mary Eva Lewis, of Abilene, Texas: "We enjoy reading *Contending for the Faith* very much and hope you will be able to do this good work for years to come."

One appreciated sister in Christ, in a western state, whose name I shall withhold, wrote, "I just finished reading the February issue, and as always to me your 'watchman on the wall' articles are timely and sounding a loud trumpet.

"I am requesting the 'still available' 'NIV Packet.' Our congregation at the _____ church of Christ will soon be ordering volumes to place several in each pew, so the congregation would read the same words, thoughts, etc., each Sunday morning, evenings, Wednesday night Bible studies, Thursday mornings women's studies, Thursday evenings marriage/young adults studies, one-on-one evangelism, etc.

"These Bibles were requested by our elders/minister who were travelling down the 'Cross Roads', and taking our congregation along *unawares*—until the *Gospel Advocate's* publication on 'pillar churches' and your *much* publication on Crossroadism.

"Anyhow, we (the congregation and elders and ministers) held a vociferous meeting, and all apparently has been resolved—until I just read about A.G. Hobbs' exposing doctrinal error in the NIV. Now I can read the packet and request our elders/minister read and examine also... Thank you so much for sounding the trumpet."

[NOTE: Speaking of brother Hobbs, I rejoiced over the honor paid him recently by preachers of the Fort Worth area. Writing in the *Christian Journal* for May, 1988, brother **Joe Rhoten** reported, in part, as follows:

"In celebration of the... birthday of brother **A. G. Hobbs** (which was April 17) a gathering was held at the Richland Hills Nursing Home where he has been a patient since suffering injury from a fall and also a stroke in January. Co-hosting the event were the preachers who attend the Tuesday luncheon of the church of Christ in Tarrant County, who presented brother Hobbs with a plaque in recognition of his life's work, and the Hobbs family who furnished a beautiful three-tiered birthday cake.

"Another milestone also was celebrated. This year, 1988, marks the 50th anniversary of the **A. G. Hobbs Series of Gospel Tracts**. He is truly a pioneer in this field. The first booklet was written in 1938 when he was preaching in Monahans, Texas.

"Through these years, 51 different titles have been written and published, the last being **THINGS IMPOSSIBLE TO CHOOSE**, in 1986. Approximately 25 million of these little booklets have gone into various areas of the English-speaking world. Also, some of the titles have been translated and distributed by many thousands in the French, Italian, Spanish, Korean, and Portuguese languages, and in Braille for use among the blind.

"The power of the these tracts to teach God's truth continues to be confirmed. Numerous examples could be cited, such as the preacher in the Philippines who read a copy of **IS CONSCIENCE A SAFE GUIDE? Being a sincere truth-seeker, the preacher ordered additional booklets. After thorough study, he not only obeyed the simple gospel of Christ, embracing undenominational Christianity, but led his entire congregation to do so.**

"In addition to his 50 years as a writer, **A. G. Hobbs** has preached for 59 years, beginning in 1929 when he was a 'preacher boy' in college. He has served local congregations in Indiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Florida, Kansas and Texas. He also preached on a Dallas radio station for 16 years, discontinuing this work only recently because of illness. For several years, the Handley congregation sponsored the radio work. In a letter sent to participating congregations and individuals, the Handley elders wrote:

"We believe that the church is much stronger because **A. G. Hobbs** has lived. Indeed, we are of the deep conviction that he and other elderly preachers have been greatly responsible for bringing the church of the 20th century to where it is today."

Much appreciation to brother **Rhoten** for writing this tribute to brother **Hobbs**—and to the *Christian Journal* for publishing it. These are my sentiments exactly. Now that you have read it, perhaps many of you will want to order our "NIV Packet", wherein brother **Hobbs** so devastatingly exposes the *New International Version* for the tragically unreliable translation it really is! **IYRJR.**

Jackie Marshall, North Fort Myers, Florida: "The world, the church needs so much, this day and age, that we have sound gospel preachers who do not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. I am getting concerned about our churches of Christ moving, once again, and turning our buildings over to the cults that are moving in. We did that once before over the instruments of music, with the Christian Churches, back in the early 1900s. Isn't it about time, when they want to move their pianos into our buildings, that we throw them out and burn their pianos and say, NO MORE!! It's ridiculous that we have worked to have our buildings to worship in—and now we let this Crossroads and the Christian Churches once again move the faithful out and take our churches. That's how they got what they have now! Christ was meek and gentle when it came to his personal life. He turned the other cheek. But he was the Lion of Judah when it came to his Father's teaching. I think it's time we stopped being so milky-toast and start fighting for the cause of God the Father and his Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Joe & Johnnie Ruth Rosa, of Mayport, Florida, renewed, saying, "Keep up the good work."

Morris S. Thomas, of Weatherford, Texas, added an extra \$5.00 onto his subscription, saying we could use the rest to help out the cause of Christ.

Donald Z. Underwood, APO, New York: "I have been praying for your work and your effort in contending for the faith. Many brethren may disagree with what you are doing, but God demands of us to contend for the faith. At times it is not very pleasing when we have to mark those whom we love and respect. So, keep on keeping on..."

Gerald R. Reynolds, who was preaching at Springfield, Ohio, now ministers to the church at Manteca, California.

Gale Howell, church secretary, Garden City, Michigan: "We are enjoying our subscription very much. Keep up the good work!"

Goebel Music, gospel preacher, Colleyville, Texas: "Life is tough at times in our fight against the devil and his contribution to humanity, but fight I will until my eyes are in the quietness of sleep (unless the Master returns first).

"I took ill while in Independence, MO—but did, with two prescriptions, and about eight other items, finish the meeting. It was with **Guss Eoff**, etc., and I know he now has 'rebutted' the one who wrote against you in the last issue of CFF. We had a good effort—solved some problems on instrumental music and the unity movement...and had five baptisms and 30 prayer/restorations."

The Lawson Mayos and their son **Michael** and family still are seeking support so they can go as missionaries to Australia. In a recent letter, they wrote, in part, "It would be a tremendous help (a great blessing) if you could help us find those who would appreciate the opportunity of helping us take Christ to the land 'down under.' There are many souls there to be saved—and those who have been saved need to be taught the way of the Lord more perfectly. Michael's aim is to evangelize. Ours is to add strength and stability to as many as possible, starting in Sydney, reaching outward as far as possible. We have most of our support, but Michael has none. Can you help?"

[NOTE: Any who can and will help these two fine families to go preach the gospel in Australia, please address them at 3304 Hanover, Arlington, Texas 76014. IYR Jr.]

Readers Continue To Help Build Our Circulation

If anyone wonders how it is that the readership of *Contending for the Faith* continues to grow, the answer is simple: regular readers continue signing up others and sending them in.

For instance, **Mrs. Avis E. Pirtle**, of Canon City, Colorado, renewed her own subscription, sent five new; **Weldon Langfield**, of Bakersfield, California, sent two new; **Kendall Abner**, of Hydro, Oklahoma, renewed two, sent three new; **Edward Woods**, of Wilburton, Oklahoma, renewed one, sent eight new; **Wendell V. Clipp**, of Nashville, Tennessee, sent three new; **D. H. Setliff**, of Atoka, Oklahoma, sent ten new; **Anonymous**, of Memphis, Tennessee, sent nine new; **Thomas D. Wilson**, of Longview, Texas, renewed three, sent 11 new; **Anonymous**, of Kingston, Tennessee, sent six new; **Mrs. D. M. Culverson**, of Lemon Grove, California, sent one new; **Ken Willis**, minister, Chattanooga, Tennessee, renewed his own, sent six new; **Glenn Atkins**, of Coalgate, Oklahoma, renewed four, sent two new; **Bill W. Griffin**, of Miami, Oklahoma, renewed six; **Arthur L. Poor**, of Obion, Tennessee, sent six new; **Elmer Bowen**, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, sent one new; **James Alan Brown**, of Flomaton, Alabama, sent six new; **Barbara K. Absher**, of North Wilkesboro, North Carolina, renewed one, sent two new; **Louise Lavender**, of Valdosta, Georgia, renewed eight, sent four new; **Darrell Hanson**, Stephenville, Texas, sent 21 mixed new and renewals; **Bob J. Henson**, of Benton, Kentucky, 12 new; **John J. Hosek, Jr.**, of Fort Worth, Texas, three new; **Maco Stewart**, of Corsicana, Texas, five new; and **Myrna Dixon**, of Idalou, Texas, sent 74 new!

SIX MORE RENEW FOR SIX YEARS

We always look upon it as a special vote of confidence when our long-time readers sign up for ANOTHER SIX YEARS, when sending in their renewals. Among such not previously reported we note **Jim Stephens**, of Angleton, Texas; **J. H. McGhee**, of Knoxville, Tennessee; **William O. Hall**, of Moore Haven, Florida;

Doug Brazzell, of Franklin, Kentucky; **Ian McPherson**, of Bellerire, Tasmania, Australia; **G. B. Richey, Jr.**, of Dexter, Missouri; and **Morris McWilliams**, of Clovis, New Mexico.

[NOTE: The single rate is \$5.00 for one year; \$13.00 for three years, or \$25.00 for six years. IYR Jr.]

"CROSSROADS PACKETS" CONTINUE TO BE IN SPECIAL DEMAND

Because the "Crossroads" heresy continues wreaking doctrinal havoc all across the brotherhood, great numbers continue to order what we call our "Crossroads Packet" of approximately 20 separate back issues of *Contending for the Faith* on this special subject.

Among those who have ordered such, not previously reported, are **Mr. & Mrs. Don Fisk**, of Falls Church, Virginia (one packet); **Church of Christ**, of Quanah, Texas (one packet); **Jeff Archey**, of Madison, Tennessee (one packet); **Phillip McCullough**, of Graham, Alabama (one packet); **Clancy Bishop**, Glenrock, Wyoming (one packet); **Richard G. Hitchcox**, of APO New York (one packet); **H. E. Mitchell**, of Seattle, Washington, ordered two packets and contributed \$50.00 to our Far East work; **Seventh & Mueller church of Christ**, of Paragould, Arkansas (one packet); **Ben E. Blitch**, of Whitney, Texas (one packet); **John P. Hadley**, of Odessa, Texas (one packet); **DeWayne Lanham**, of Yequesta, Florida, ordered one packet, saying, "I have all of the issues, but want the collection for quick reference and study"; and **Jo Anna Hefner**, of Rocky Face, Georgia, ordered one packet, saying, "I don't know much about 'Crossroads', but there is something going on in our church that is not right. I'd like to have all the information on it I could get."

[NOTE: Anyone wishing our "CROSSROADS PACKET," please enclose \$9.95 per packet, and address your order to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.]

Cody & Idalice Burgin, of Baytown, Texas, in sending payment for their Bound Volume XVIII, added \$92.15 onto their check for us to use as we see fit. **Jack Caraker**, just prior to his death, wrote, "Please send the bundle... and I will do my best with the help of God to see that some of the people in this area are informed (even if I have to subscribe for them)." **Jesse Condra**, of Rogersville, Tennessee, responded, "Send me the bundle of back issues you mentioned, and I will do what I can to get people to subscribe."

[NOTE: Any others who would like to help build up our readership in this way, please let us know and we'll gladly send you a bundle of back issues FREE OF CHARGE (together with subscription blanks) to help you introduce the paper there. Write your request to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226. IYR Jr.]

E. V. Woolever, of Abilene, Texas, is now deceased.

Edd Brown, of Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, in subscribing, also ordered one of our "Crossroads Packets," saying, "Several of the brethren are interested in the Crossroads/Boston movement and I understand that you have a kit that would be of great help in presenting some lessons to warn brethren of this error that is spreading throughout the brotherhood."

Mabel Lee Fisher, of Gilbert, Arizona: "Cancel."

Charles A. Hess, of Lakeside, California, renewed for another three years, saying, "Thank you for your faithful work. I appreciate it."

Mrs. Olin Rosell, of Austin, Texas, asked for two copies of our issue containing the article by **Bronwen (McClish) Gibson**, saying, "I know her parents and they must have gone through agony. Every church member should read this article."

Bruce Van Klinken, of Kennewick, Washington, enclosed four new subscriptions, saying, "The error that some brethren are supporting is exactly what caused a small group of us to split after two years of pleading with the elders of West Side in Pasco... We are now known as the Central church of Christ. We are few but very strong and we are growing... I read your publication from cover to cover each issue and use it much in some of the classes I teach. I pray for men like you and know Christ is pleased with your work. I just hope I can do the same kind of good in our small congregation. I keep telling the brethren, 'Numbers are good, but quality is better.' Christ always did great things with the few. Please find enclosed \$20.00 for the new subscriptions. If some is left over put it to a good cause, and I know you will."

Judy Renahan, of Stuart, Florida, ordered 12 copies of our May, 1987 issue, saying, "I am very upset because I just found out that our minister and his son-in-law are definitely Crossroads and were sneaking it in on us. I am an old-timer from 'way back in the Lord's true church. I've been through all the 'movements.' When I realized what was happening, I got furious and exposed him to the congregation (quite a scene). I left the congregation. My husband resigned as elder and also left the congregation. We probably will go to Jupiter, where **Steve Ellis** preaches. I immediately got in touch with him and he lent me the *Contending for the Faith* issue on 'The Discipling Ministry—Crossroads/Boston.' Please send me 12 copies of this issue (@ \$6.85). I need to give these out to the members of the congregation we left."

"I've known Ira Rice for many, many years. Thank you..."

David L. Ragsdill, of Hawthorne, California, added \$2.00 "extra" to his renewal payment for us to use as we see fit.

For those who think our freedoms are secure, brother **James A. Miller**, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, enclosed \$10.00 to help out, saying, "On 'religious freedom', the members of the church at El Reno, Oklahoma, a few weeks ago, had to use the 'wheeling' type mop buckets to fill the portable baptistry, as one of those in 'authority' would not let them use a hose, that they have been using for several years. The church member inmates are harassed on every issue."

[NOTE: Brother Miller reported this took place at the federal correctional facility at El Reno. IYR Jr.]

Phillip McCullough, of Graham, Alabama, writes: "I am a member of the Pine Hill church of Christ, which is located about seven miles west of the Georgia and Alabama line in Randolph county Alabama. I enjoy reading your paper very much, but over the past few years I have not been subscribing... Contact with a recent issue has let me know what kind of information I have been missing... Therefore, enter my subscription for the coming year and also send me one of your 'Crossroads Packets.' I know very little about this movement and feel I need to learn something about it so that should the occasion ever arise I will be able to combat it."

"Also, any information, knowledge, teaching or advice on how to deal with the 'anti-Sunday-School' brethren would be greatly appreciated. Here in Randolph county there are seven congregations which are anti-Bible-class and one 'one cup' congregation. There are only three congregations which have Sunday morning Bible classes. So you see that we are greatly outnumbered. However, over the years, things have stalemated and there have been no efforts on either side to resolve this problem."

"I feel it is about time to stir the issue up again and try to teach these people concerning the error of their ways. I have had some discussion with one of their preachers (they also are anti-located-preacher) and already I

have posed some questions he cannot answer or will not answer. I intend to pursue it to the very end of the matter whatever it may be. The church would be so much stronger in this county if we could overcome this problem. Any reading materials, debate books, etc., you might recommend or advice you might give would be greatly appreciated. I am 24 years old, teach the adult Bible class at Pine Hill, and preach occasionally for some of the local congregations. I need all the help I can get. Keep up the good work."

[NOTE: No doubt some of our readers have just the materials, debate books or such like that this young preacher needs to deal with the specific errors he mentions. If so, please send them to him directly. His address is Phillip McCollough, Route 1, Graham, Alabama 36263. IYR Jr.]

Robert L. Hesson, of Chesapeake, Ohio, in

subscribing for three years, said, "I appreciate the publication, and particularly your stand on the Boston/Crossroads philosophy."

Danny Bennett, Madison, Alabama: "We are constantly being subjected to false teaching through the electronic media and print. The recognition factor of such false teaching is relatively high when certain identifying characteristics are seen or perceived. However, the problem arises when the false teaching steps out of traditional bounds and accepts a new identity with unfamiliar characteristics.

"We must not close our minds to the fact that a large amount of false teaching is coming from within the church and just hope that it will disappear. We must be prepared to confront the adversary and defeat him. This may mean confronting the elders and/or preacher of the congregation.

"However, the sad part is that, more often than not, there is very little being done to combat false teaching.

"The brotherhood is very fortunate to have a publication such as *Contending for the Faith*."

Henry L. Quillen, Box 7, St. Joseph, Tennessee 38481: "If you have any knowledge of a preacher who might be interested in moving and working with this congregation, I would appreciate it if you would have him get in touch with us or give me his address and I'll contact him we have a dwelling with six rooms for their home...St. Joseph is located between Florence, Alabama and Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, on the state line. Population: 800 people. Congregation of church: 100. Please advise if you know anyone available. Prefer 30 to 55 years of age."

OUR SERVICES ARE PREDICTABLE

Bill Jackson

One of the features of the Lord's system of things is that all things are done to avoid confusion, and the design of it all is to be decent and orderly (1 Corinthians 14:33,40). We want to labor to avoid surprise and shock. Our services are predictable.

We have the Lord's Supper each and every first day of the week (Acts 20:7), and we have it off the table and not the floor. We sing without the use of mechanical instruments of music (Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16), and at no time will we be bringing in either a guitar or a Jew's harp. We will follow an orderly procedure and work by method and without being slipshod. We are predictable.

Our sign out front says "church of Christ," and we will not change it to "The Fellowship of the Carpenter" or "Communion of Holy Ones." You can count on it.

Our lessons are from the Bible, and the Bible is cited as the authority for all, and we care not what some theologian has had to say, nor are we impressed with what the world wants to hear. We present Bible, and we are predictable in that way.

When I view a ball game, I want something that is not predictable. The very next play might be a pass, an end run or a run up the middle. I can't know in advance, and the lack of predictability is a part of the enjoyment.

When I view some story on television, I do not know the story in advance, and thus, all along the way, I am entertained by what is unpredictable. That's part of the excitement of it all. I expect those things to be unpredictable. After all, this is entertainment, and surprise is one of the necessary features.

Our worship is something else, though. There is a *standard*, the Word of God, and we're told just *what* to do in worship, and in some instances just *how* to do it. In the conduct of services, the object is not entertainment, but worship. The joy that is present is not the excitement of something new and different, but the pleasure in knowing that God has given the instructions, allowed us to engage in worship and blesses us when we do his will in the matter. Dozens of errors and dozens of bad fruits come when men must be catered to, even in worship, to make sure "entertainment value" is there!

Yes, we are *predictable*. We intend to *stay* predictable. I can read a murder mystery or view a ball game if I want something unpredictable.

—The Southwesterner
Southwest church of Christ
8900 Manchaca Road
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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

"He That Being Often Reproved Hardeneth His Neck Shall Suddenly Be Destroyed And That Without Remedy" (Proverbs 29:1)

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

How strange and wonderful it is that, regardless of the situation, the scriptures are so written as to anticipate every possible eventuality!

This truth was brought home to me afresh the night of Thursday, July 21, 1988, when Vada and I were invited to stay the night at the home of **Ernest and Syble West**, of West Monroe, Louisiana, who live just a few blocks from the Whites Ferry Road church of Christ address of that city. We had just spent the afternoon listening to the excellent lessons delivered at the opening sessions of the Ark-La-Miss Bible Lectureship, conducted July 21-23 by the Central church of Christ, some 20 miles or so north, at Bastrop, Louisiana, on the general theme of "The Current Digression Continues."

LECTURESHIP RESPONDS TO DOCTRINAL THREAT

Actually, the entire occasion was a response by sound, faithful brethren and churches of the area to the doctrinal threat of the Whites Ferry Road church not only through their School of Biblical Studies, but more immediately through the deceptively styled "International Christian Ministries" program being sponsored largely by most of the elders of the Whites Ferry Road congregation.

Readers of *Contending for the Faith* will recall our issue of February, 1988, which set forth the background information leading up to this lectureship. Not only had Whites Ferry Road's preacher **Ray Melton** been trying to peddle the Boston type of "discipling" through their preacher **Don W. Tate** to the church at Homer, Louisiana, but documents were cited in that issue establishing beyond cavil that something to be called "International Christian Ministries, Inc." (which can only be described as a missionary society) was being fostered by almost all of the elders of the Whites Ferry Road church, with a deacon (**Darrell Frazier**) doing much of the leg-work to get it set up and going.

To be capitalized, initially, at \$1.5-million, those to be named as charter members of the Board of Directors were

being required to donate \$100,000 each, to begin with, and said Board of Directors would then become a self-perpetuating body, exclusively empowered to name their own fellow Board members and successors later on.

This information comes from the pen of brother Frazier himself, as published in their own *Board Report* of September-October, 1987. According to their mail-outs in circulation, some of which were placed in our hands by **Ernest West** and others, this *International Christian Ministries, Inc.*, is designed to usurp the very functions which the Lord Jesus Christ designed his church to do, including

- 1) Spread the gospel, such as by radio programs, a national Christian magazine
- 2) teaching and counselling services
- 3) international relief and development activities
- 4) Campaigns and crusades.

In other words, ICM thus would become a *man-made* body usurping the position and functions of the church itself!—i.e., a missionary society (or even a denomination)!

WHITES FERRY ROAD ELDERS INVITED—NO SHOW!

On the first day of the lectureship, we had perhaps 150 or more present representing eight states and a large number of cities listening to **Garland Elkins**, **Bill Clayton** and **Joe Nichols** speaking, respectively, on such topics as "Devices of Satan," "When Brethren Refuse to Be Warned," and "ICM—A Trojan Horse." All three of these brethren served as a panel on a discussion forum later in the afternoon, with **H. A. (Buster) Dobbs** as chairman. He also returned that evening to speak on "The Mission of the Church."

To all of these sessions, the Whites Ferry Road elders had been mailed personal invitations to come and make any statement in their defense they might feel necessary. *Not one* of them showed up.

Noting that attendance at the evening service was down a

(Continued on Page 3)

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor
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Editorial...

In My Father's House Are MANY MANSIONS

In John 14:2 we have Jesus saying, "In my Father's house are many mansions...." It is rendered this way both in the *King James Version* as well as the *American Standard Version* (1901). How jarring it is for the *New International Version* to change it from "mansions" to "rooms"!

Well I know that the Greek word here also can be correctly translated "abiding places" or "places of abode." However, when we consider that Jesus' Father is the Lord, and the the Lord is "a great king" (Malachi 1:14), surely the word "mansions" more fitly describes His house than simply "rooms."

EDUCATED IGNORANCE

Some of our self-vaunted "scholars" are as ignorant of *some* things as they seem to think *we* are of *others*. Whoever it was that chose the word "rooms" for "mansions" must never himself have been in the "house" of a king.

The *first* time that I myself came to realize how appropriate the word "mansions" really is was when I visited the ancient city of Bangkok, Thailand. I was escorted to the palace area of the King of Thailand, which I estimated sat on perhaps a whole section of ground inside the city limits. As I gazed at the multitude of buildings therein, I recognized that a king's "house" includes not only the palace where he himself lives but the "many mansions" also to accomodate his and the queen's families!

FORBIDDEN CITY

The *second* time all this was impressed upon me was when Archie W. Luper and I were privileged to visit "The Forbidden City," which was the "house" of ancient Chinese emperors in centuries past. As we inspected all those "mansions" we realized how inexcusable the word "rooms" might be used to describe what we saw.

Where the emperors lived was so vast and so elaborate that his own private quarters were but a small part of his entire "house." The area was approximately one mile long by almost half a mile wide. There were so many mansions and temples of worship enclosed within the emperial walls that, in ancient times, it required some 20,000 servants just to take care of the mansions, temples and grounds.

THE HOLY CITY

God's "house" is going to be quite similar. In Revelation 21:2, evidently referring to it, John said he "saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Those places where the redeemed shall dwell will not be just *rooms*, but MANSIONS!

How I look forward to walking along that street of

gold, to gaze upon those walls of jasper and turning in to my mansion which Jesus has gone to prepare! Let's don't sell ourselves short, brethren. If my Savior has gone to prepare a *mansion* for me, I am not looking for just a *room*. Shame on those faithless translators for thus making our vision small. Where there is no vision the people still perish!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Destroyed Without Remedy"

(Continued from Page 1)

bit from the afternoon, I asked brother West, on our way to their home after the evening service, how to explain it. He said quite a number who came to the daytime sessions were quite elderly and felt they could not be out at night—also that some had driven such distances that they had returned home following the day sessions, but would be back next day. He also said that, as far as Whites Ferry Road was concerned, the general consensus was that *no matter who* invited them, they appeared determined NOT to attend, but just to ignore it entirely.

I asked how many churches in the immediate area were responsive to such an intimidating attitude on the part of the Whites Ferry Road elders. He said quite a number—including *most* of those (not all) in and near West Monroe—that they felt they were just *too big and wealthy* to have to pay any attention to the objections of what they considered *lesser* congregations, however numerous such churches and however scriptural their objections might be—that their general tendency was just to ride rough-shod over these objections and churches and ignore them and their warnings entirely.

HOW WHITES FERRY ROAD ELDERS GOT THAT WAY

As to how brother West thought these brethren got this way, he felt that they were self-deceived. And this could well be. After all, what saith the scriptures? Please consider the

following passages which seem to sum up the whole situation:

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." (Matthew 13:22).

"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Corinthians 3:18).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive..." (Ephesians 4:14).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Timothy 6:9).

COULDN'T THEY ATTEND EVEN ONCE?

It would have been both enlightening and perhaps edifying to the Whites Ferry Road elders if at least *some* of them might have turned up on Friday, the second day of the lectureship, to hear **Ernest West** speak on "Restoration is 'On-Going'"; **Randy Kea**, on "Bales/Hicks Doctrine"; **William S. Cline** on "Respect for Divine Authority"; **Neil Kucera** on "Church Discipline"; **Eddie Whitten**, on "Latest Developments in Boston/Crossroads"; and **Goebel Music**, on "The Current Digression Continues."

Dobbs and Music closed out the lectureship on Saturday morning, speaking, respectively, on "Grace and Law" and "Dangers Facing The Church." To *none* of these sessions, however, did the Whites Ferry Road elders deign put in even one appearance, though the lectureship itself was designed to answer some of the many false positions being featured and fostered by them.

Two final passages which appear to fit their general attitude come to mind:

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:12-13).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Proverbs 29:1).

TWENTY-ONE YEARS ON THE SIDE OF TRUTH

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

If I were looking for a preacher-training school, where would I search? I asked this question in 1973 and came to Memphis School of Preaching. I had discovered that this school offered at least 400 more hours textual study than comparable efforts. Too, the emphasis was on pulpit preaching and Biblical exegesis with concentration on what it meant to be a located preacher. The school held firm on the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Word of God. Not only was I sold on the school, I later became part of its faculty, both part-time, when brother **Roy J. Hearn** was the director, and full-time under the current, excellent director, brother **Curtis A. Cates**.

From the perspective of an alumnus and faculty member, a question has occurred to me: Has the school changed any over the years? Other than the obvious changes in students every two years and the change in the directorship, my answer to the question is: No, the school has not changed in direction or purpose.

Of course, there have been magnificent additions to the methodology of the school. Now available to our teaching efforts are copiers, video equipment, an expanded library, and computer equipment. In the near future there will be more room to study, teach, hold classes for elders and deacons, print a paper, and do many other things for the kingdom. Too, the school has reached out to the mission field with an extension in Klang, Malaysia, and one planned in Gabarone, Botswana. (This work will be sponsored by the Southaven church of Christ where I am now preaching.) In these areas there have been "changes" to keep abreast of new methods of teaching, but the message has not nor will it change.

If possible, a firmer stand is taken on verbal inspiration. I am personally aware of efforts to undermine verbal inspiration by our own brethren. I know that some teach that the Bible "became" the Word of God when men "recognized" that the "hand of God" was working in their

history! This blatant disregard for clear Bible statements is forcibly opposed by Memphis School of Preaching and its faculty (Proverbs 30:6).

The school still stands firm on the version issue. No version since 1945 is thought to be a standard in any sense here at Memphis School of Preaching. The King James and the American Standard Versions are the only ones tolerated in class. Students still are required to memorize Holy Writ, answer roll call with a memory verse, and write memory work on their tests.

The faculty, the elders at Knight Arnold, and our director all are opposed to "noise, nickels, and numbers" as a means to gain the lost. The Memphis School of Preaching's faculty still believes and teaches that only the Word of God can save a soul (Luke 8:11). There is no toleration for any "spirit-filled" action operating separate and apart from God's Word.

There was and still is a strong emphasis on the one body, and unity in doctrine, not diversity. Memphis School of Preaching may be thought of as "old path" by many, but there is no better place to stand. (Jeremiah 6:16)

If I were to choose a school again that could train me to use my few abilities to preach, which would I select today? I believe I have given my answer in this article. If I wanted a concerned faculty, a sound approach, and four years of work gained in just two years, I would go again to Memphis School of Preaching!

[EDITORIAL NOTE: To the foregoing article by brother Keith A. Mosher, Sr., which originally appeared in the March 24, 1987 issue of Yokefellow, I can unequivocally say "Amen!" I live approximately one mile from this wonderful Memphis School of Preaching, founded and ably directed by Roy J. Hearn and now commendably being directed by Curtis A. Cates. I endorsed it when brother Hearn was the director; I endorse it just the same now under brother Cates. If there was a hair's breadth difference as to positions taken and doctrine, I think that I would know it. It grieves me that certain misguided brethren have sought to undermine this great school, when it is exactly the same in these matters now as it always was across the years. Why try to make a distinction when there is no difference! It was scripturally and doctrinally sound before—and it still is!—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

ACCUSATIONS!

Eldon W. Rogers

In our brotherhood there is an attitude that I believe needs some serious attention. For the lack of a better approach, let us say that is best expressed by the statement, "Accusation proves guilt."

So many times a party is accused of some "false position" or sin, and others just jump on the bandwagon and bring the person's name just as low as it is possible to go. I honestly believe that some enjoy such a practice.

In this article I wish to examine this idea. I am sure that there are many people that have been accused of many things of which they are just not guilty. It hurts to no end to be the victim of such behavior.

When such a thing takes place the response in defense of

such often is offered, "Well all the evidence was against such a person." I have a lawyer friend whom I have known for more than 30 years, who told me, "If all the evidence in a given case is against a man, this is exactly the kind of a case I want. For no man is all that guilty, and no man is all that innocent."

What does the Bible say about such a situation? There are three examples that I wish to call attention to:

All the evidence was against Joseph when Potiphar's wife accused him in the presence of her husband, and the results were it landed him in prison in Egypt for two years. In the end he rose to next-to-the-highest position in the land of Egypt.

All the "evidence" was against our Lord—and the results were it hung him on a Roman cross to die the most shameful death in the history of the world. Yet, in the end, he was given a name that was, and is *above every name*. All men will bow to that name.

The third case that claims our attention is that of the apostle Paul. All the evidence was against Paul—and the results were that he was executed in the streets of Rome. Yet, at the close of his life he said, "**I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge will give me in that day, and not to me only, but to all those that love his appearing.**" (II Timothy 4:7-8)

There are elements that all three of the cases that we have named have in common. The nature of the accuser; the examination of the evidence; and the motive behind the charges was never brought to light. Potiphar's wife was attempting to clear herself of her own unfaithfulness to her husband. The Jews wanted Jesus of Nazareth to establish an earthly kingdom—and the Romans were afraid he would. Paul was a member of the "sect everywhere spoken against."

In logical and legal matters the accuser must present the evidence against the accused. Simply to *accuse* is *not enough!* The *burden of proof* is on the *accuser*; NOT the accused. (It is my conviction that a person should not make a statement that he cannot prove.)

Now what can be the results of such situations that we have outlined above? I have known case where people have been driven from the church due to such practices. The possibilities of ever reclaiming them and restoring them to their first love is doubtful. I have known of some that have been driven away by such self-righteous brethren, and now have passed on, having died out of the church.

When the grand accounting is given at the last day, I would rather be in the position of the *accused* rather than the *accuser*. It is my conviction that the false accuser who acts in the manner that we have described will be in serious trouble at the judgment bar of God. That person needs to read Matthew 18:6.

When an accusation is made, it is not bona fide evidence until it is thoroughly examined. If an accuser can get people in general to believe a scandalous report, and get the public to act thereon, they don't have to prove anything. If the accuser is not willing to allow his statements to be examined, then why should he expect them to be believed? Brethren, be careful what you believe before it is examined.

—Post Office Box 3
Ivanhoe, Texas 75447

Is There Really A Preacher Shortage?

B. C. Carr

For quite some time we have said that there is a preacher shortage. At times we have had some to question this statement. Usually someone will comment that he knows of a congregation that "tried out" 50 or more preachers for "pulpit minister." This would seem to indicate that there is a *surplus* of preachers. Maybe we need to look at the other side of the coin. How many times have we noticed a number of congregations that have run an ad in our papers for months, but still can not secure a preacher?

The truth is, our need is to find preachers who are willing to go where the need is most urgent or where sound preaching is desired. For instance, when it comes to missionaries, I'm told that there are 17,588 churches of Christ worldwide, but 13,250 are in the U.S.A. Where are the men who will go to the far corners of the earth or even to some remote place in America? Where are the churches that will support preachers outside their own comfortable congregation? I like what **Bill Goldman** wrote in his bulletin recently: "If you saw ten men carrying a log—nine on one end and one on the other, and you wanted to help—to which end would you go?" We can indeed find men who will fill pulpits that are well supported and offer a degree of high esteem, but who will take the other places?

THE CRY FOR SOUND, STABLE PREACHERS

The need is real for sound preachers who will not compromise truth. The first week in August, I personally had requests to help find a good, sound preacher for ten different congregations. These requests came from a widespread area. Let me tell you briefly why they were calling for help:

From out west we had a request for a preacher who is not polluted with liberal ideas. Why? The last preacher they had came from Gainesville, Florida. He split the church, leading away some 21 families leaving the church in a state of turmoil. Now they want a preacher in whom they can have confidence that he will preach the truth and oppose such digressive movements.

From the north we received a request to help find a total of five preachers for congregations that are sick and tired of "liberal" preachers. Some of these churches have been divided over false doctrines. *What* doctrines, you ask? Here is what I was told that such preachers were teaching:

- 1) Women have the right to do anything in the church that men can do.
- 2) Everything a Christian does is worship.
- 3) Matthew 19:1-9 has no application at all today in reference to marriage-divorce-and-remarriage.
- 4) One preacher just out of school is preaching the "new unity doctrine." He had invited a Presbyterian preacher to fill his pulpit.
- 5) Use of instrumental music in worship was being condoned.
- 6) No opposition to one becoming a member of the congregation without baptism.

These are just a few of the problems listed. Can you understand why these brethren are begging for someone to send them a "sound" preacher? Brethren, I do not think these good people are "nit-pickers." I am glad that they had the confidence in us to ask our help in finding a good man.

From a southern state comes a request for us to help locate good men to work in two congregations in relatively

new areas. One place has been trying for three months to find a good man. We are willing to help out if we could only find someone to recommend.

We know of places in Florida and other states that need good preachers now. Good brethren have asked for our help in finding solid preachers of the gospel. We don't know of men to send to all these places. Don't tell me there's not a shortage of **good, sound gospel preachers!**

"OUR CRYING NEED IS FOR MORE MEN..."

We have a great opportunity to train and send out faithful gospel preachers. We have the right men to instruct and train such men (II Timothy 2:2). We have the facilities in which to teach (see our catalog). Brethren have been generous in their support of our work. New ones are joining in each month. Our crying need is for more men who will commit themselves to the work of the Lord.

It cannot be a compliment to any congregation of any age and size that cannot find one man in its membership who wants to preach. What about a whole city or county that is not encouraging any member of the church to become a gospel preacher? Brethren, it may be later than we think. Why not make a deliberate effort to change this situation where *you* worship?

We feel humbly grateful for the opportunity granted us here in the Florida School of Preaching in training men. It grieves us that we cannot meet all the needs we are called upon to supply. Will you help us? Please?

—The Harvesters
Florida School of Preaching
1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, Florida 33803

"I'll Sue!"

Mark K. Lewis

Twice in the last two weeks I have received information concerning some brethren threatening to sue other brethren over some matter. I am appalled. Such crude selfishness and blatant disregard for the spirit and letter of New Testament Christianity, *among (supposedly) sound brethren* (as both the instances were), is truly distressing. When God's faithful resort to copying the unscrupulous methods (*i.e.*, "I'll sue!") of a mercenary, unprincipled society, we have become hypocrites, concerned only with outward forms of religion, and not the beautiful spirit of love and forbearance of religion. This is crass Phariseism gone to seed.

One of the incidents I refer to is found in the July/1987 number of *Contending for the Faith*, which just crossed my desk. I do not know all of what happened at Bellview in Pensacola, but I, for one, always have had confidence in brother Rice. I also have had occasion to witness the vindictiveness of the brethren at times. We were not told, neither am I particularly interested, why the brother threatened the lawsuit, but "**is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers!**" (I Corinthians

6:5-6). The vindictiveness, the bitterness in the heart is what concerns me even more, however. Why do brethren not guard their hearts; why do they let themselves become so bitter towards one another, that revenge through the secular, worldly courts, dragging the beautiful bride of Christ through the shame before the world, is deemed necessary? Love **"seeketh not her own"** (I Corinthians 13:5), and I really have a hard time in seeing what is loving about suing brethren in Christ. **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."** (Ephesians 4:31-32). Beloved, if you are contemplating suing another brother, ask yourself first if your heart is *tender* towards him. I should suspect that these brethren will probably never speak to one another again—a fine example of Christian love to the world (John 13:35).

The other incident of a threatened lawsuit I heard about concerned a grossly unqualified elder warning the congregation. This man was installed as an elder several years ago; I had good knowledge of the situation, and advised the brethren that none of the three men they wanted to appoint was qualified according to Scripture. In the five or six years since these men were appointed, the church has gone from 80 to about 20—and this one man has literally become a tyrant, a megalomaniac. I never have seen anyone like him. The brethren of the congregation, who really were very forbearing through the years as they watched the church be destroyed, finally had enough. Yet this "head elder" would give them no meeting to discuss the problems, and when he heard that they were writing a letter asking (and giving undeniable Scriptural reasons) for the elders' resignation, he told them that if he received the

letter, he would "sue everyone who signed it." That is utterly childish; the man is an immature, spoiled brat, and yet he is an "elder" in the Lord's church! Beloved, what depths of depravity have we reached when we mimic the rabble of society by shouting "I'll sue!" whenever we are offended or think we can gain an advantage. Loving, brotherly concern one for another, tender, affectionate, heart-breaking adoration—where are they? How often do we see Christians today with the passion of Paul—"my very life depends upon your faithfulness" (I Thessalonians 3:8)? "Standing for the faith" is just not good enough; the virtues of Christianity are every bit as important as sound doctrine. Some of us need to work as hard at love over the next few years as we have at "soundness" over the last few.

Selfishness one day is going to destroy this country; and it will destroy the church as well, if we keep imitating the world. Our welfare society produces parasites who live off others with no other thought but their own bellies; with a preponderance of "ministries" and "ministers" who are paid to serve various segments of our churches, we are training the same kind of people in the body of Christ. And now, another example of brotherly selfishness and self-aggrandizement—"I'll sue!" Who cares what others think? Who cares what is best for the church? Just give me my due, don't tread on me, watch your step when dealing with me and mine, or brother, I'll teach you a lesson—does anyone but the self-seeking see any Christianity in that? Where did this "boy, I'll get them if they mess with me" attitude come from? It didn't come from heaven, and there's only one place left. Beloved, please let's quit letting the world dictate our standards to us, and let's get back to LIVING the Book.

—Route 5, Box 1007
Conroe, Texas 77304

CONGREGATIONAL WITHDRAWAL?

Bill Jackson

This question certainly is appropriate today, for this comes up in discussions on discipline, and question-and-answer sessions over the brotherhood. While it is encouraging that men are interested in the discipline the Lord teaches, it is discouraging to note that many men very quickly answer the question, "No, one congregation cannot withdraw from another." Let's look at this for a brief time.

Really, the question is not basically centered on "congregational action" as revealed in the New Testament, but on "discipline" and "fellowship." The rule of God is that we are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11); other information is given by John in telling us that we cannot fellowship, bid God speed, to any who bring not the doctrine of Christ (II John 9-11). The works of darkness in Ephesians 5:11 are not specified as works done by one man, by several, or by a host of men. The number involved in the darkness doesn't matter; we are not to fellowship such. Do we really think that we are forbidden fellowship when one man teaches error, or six men, but somehow if they form a congregation of 150 men, the rules do not apply?

Brethren surely don't think before they speak, oftentimes. Imagine the case in I Corinthians 5, and the fornicator at Corinth. Fellowship was to be withdrawn from this man.

Suppose he persisted in his sins, found 15 other couples also living in adultery, and they founded a congregation. In that congregation's work the people lived in adultery, gloried in their adultery, taught adultery as an acceptable life-style, and the like; but a neighboring congregation in the same community could not withdraw fellowship from these adulterers. The supposition is that fellowship may be continued with them. Amazing! You cannot then maintain fellowship with an individual fornicator, but you can keep fellowship with 200 of them! Who can believe it?

Once more we see where Satan is going with this. A rebellious and disobedient child of God can flee from one congregation, escape the applied discipline there, and find refuge in some other congregation. In that last congregation, he and others can be as sinful and ungodly as they wish, and escape all discipline in this life; for a faithful congregation in that same community—say two blocks away—cannot withdraw from them because of their sinfulness! We do not believe the LORD authored such a system. He tells us that our fellowship is restricted, and it is so whether we are speaking of one man, six men, 60 men or 600 men! We would ask, and await an answer: "Why will not the Lord's will apply broadly, and, yea, even worldwide?"

—8900 Manchaca Road
Austin, Texas 78748

How To Shorten The Preacher's Sermon

Roger Jackson

I got your attention did I not? After all, who is not interested in shortening the preacher's sermon—except the preacher! Most preachers see red when the suggestion is made to them that they need to “boil it down.”

My sermons are 25 to 40 minutes long with an average of 30. Meeting work is an exception in which I try to keep it on 45 minutes. I subscribe to the view that a sermon does not have to be eternal to be immortal. Neither do I preach “sermonettes.” I have heard 15 minutes worth of good material stretched over 45—and *vice versa*.

If you have never heard brother **Guy N. Woods** speak, you do not really know how much material can be disseminated comfortably in 25 minutes. It is not how much time you take, but what you do with the time you have. Preachers can shorten their sermons without the loss of a single minute over what they now are taking by just adding content.

A THREE-POINT PLAN

But enough about preachers. I promised you that I would tell you how to shorten that windy preacher's sermon.

1. Listen intently. That is not easy, but if you really work at it properly you will find yourself remembering nearly every major point he made and feeling tired (not bored) when he is done. Hang on every word. Follow his reasoning. Stay right with him.
2. Do not make any plans that must be begun before the

preacher finishes. Block these things out of your mind, such as lunch, afternoon recreation or tomorrow's work. There is no one in the auditorium but you and the preacher.

3. Do not look at your watch or the clock on the wall. Take your watch off and put it in your pocket if you are tempted too strongly to look at it. Try it one time and you will wonder why the preacher quit so soon. You must concentrate on the preacher.

IT JUST SEEMED LIKE 30 MINUTES!

“Raccoon” **John Smith** came to hear **Alexander Campbell** preach once and did so with great expectations. Campbell had a reputation for speaking two and one-half hours at home and three in meetings.

After the lesson, Smith complained that it was a shame for him to ride 30 miles to hear a 30-minute sermon. When admonished to check his pocket watch, he found it had been two and a half hours!

The first time I heard **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** speak, I was a little disappointed because I had heard he always spoke over one and a half hours. He spoke only 45 minutes, while I was ready for much more.

The same was true with the great **Gus Nichols**. I still regret I never heard him speak more than an hour.

Try my suggestions Sunday and see how much shorter the lesson will be and how much greater your appreciation will be. Do like **Ray Peters** says: “Bring a bucket.”

—940 Old Wood Road
Oxford, Alabama 36203

Consistency or Hypocrisy?

Jimmie B. Hill

In 1984, representatives (elders and preachers) from several of Central Florida's churches of Christ gathered together at the Concord Street Church of Christ in Orlando, Florida to meet with brother **Jack Exum**. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss several doctrinal issues with brother Exum and to determine, based on his answers, whether or not he should be allowed to be a speaker at the 1984 Spiritual Growth Workshop.

After much deliberation and many questions asked by the area brethren concerning brother Exum's position on “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,” his stand on “Crossroads” and his fellowship with them, and his position on the “Unity in Diversity” movement, it was determined that brother Exum should *not* be used at the Workshop.

Many brethren in the Central Florida area thought that was, indeed, a step in the right direction in the defeat of certain liberalistic tendencies that have entered into the church of our Lord. The Concord Street brethren, along with those others present at the 1984 meeting, were commended for their vigilance concerning this action.

However, in 1986, it seems there was a backset. The Highlands Church of Christ in Lakeland, Florida had been marked and disfellowshipped by sound, faithful brethren because of their fellowship with the “Crossroads” Church in Gainesville, Florida, their fellowship with the Boston Church in Boston, Massachusetts, their endorsements of brothers **Rubel Shelly** and **Joe Beam** and their views on

fellowship and many more questionable practices to which there has been no repudiation nor denial. In spite of all this, the Highlands church was given the second largest responsibility in the entire 1986 Spiritual Growth Workshop and, of all things, the Youth Program. Where is the consistency?

HIGHLAND REFUSED TO MEET

The Highlands elders had refused to meet interested elderships in a conglomerate meeting such as the one with brother Exum in 1984. There was more evidence against the Highlands church concerning their fellowshiping Crossroads, their position on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage, and the “Unity in Diversity” movement than there was even against brother Exum. Brother Exum was dismissed as a speaker at the 1984 Workshop and yet, the Highlands church was being encouraged to take the Youth Program, the second largest program in the Workshop. Again, where is the consistency?

Brethren, I ask you: Had the law of Christ changed in those last two years or had some veered from it? What kind of precedence was being set here in Central Florida by the supporters and contributors of the 1986 Spiritual Growth Workshop? If this was not gross hypocrisy, then the church for which our Lord and Saviour died does not exist today and we are in dire trouble.

—21 West Lancaster Road
Orlando, Florida 32809

MAJOR SOURCE OF DIGRESSION

James W. Boyd

It is considered a most unholy thing among certain elements in the church to raise any kind of criticism against schools—any school—for whatever reason and however justified. Many who have attended “our” schools, as have I, are so wedded in loyalty to their school that they are willing to overlook and ignore even the most obvious evidences that digression and apostasy is being fostered and promoted through them. How many times have we encountered these school zealots who brazenly deny what is repeatedly proven and who are defiantly hostile toward anyone who would dare put the church’s welfare before that of some school!

It does absolutely no good whatever to write the administration of these schools, even in the kindest and most inquiring tones, because they simply refuse to give you a decent response to that about which you ask. The classic response from a college official goes something like this. “Thank you for your letter. We are doing a great work. We would like to have you visit our campus. Pray for us.” That is about as close to a response regarding an inquiry on doctrinal matters being taught at the school as one can expect. This has been true of every school of which I have made inquiries about false doctrines reportedly taught, including various presidents of David Lipscomb College, Harding University, Abilene Christian University, Freed-Hardeman College, and such like. Especially was it true some years ago of Harding Graduate School. Having attended a number of classes, being taught that there were contradictions between the “Pauline gospel” and the “Petrine gospel,” that homosexuality might not be sinful for some, that there was some credibility in the Documentary Hypothesis, and other such blatantly false doctrine, I wrote more than once asking how such could be tolerated. I even attempted an office visit to little avail. I provided documented evidence that such was taught. Not only that, I was in the classes and argued against it. But all I ever got was the kind of response noted above.

SHOULD IT TAKE 50 YEARS TO DETECT ERROR?

I have written HGSOR to remove my name from their mailing list. I am sure that will be of no concern to them nor will it retard the historical propagation of error that has flowed from that place. But there is really nothing I can do about what they teach. I have no fellowship with those who teach such error or allow it to be taught with “Godspeed.” But the continued flow from them of their material where they persist in promoting false teachers and defending false ways is upsetting and I have become weary of seeing it. All future material from them will be returned, their expense.

The latest arrived this morning that advertised **Rubel Shelly, Lynn Anderson, Philip Slate, Harold Hazelip, Jack Lewis, et. al.** for a forthcoming “Preacher’s Workshop.” The expressed motives for such a workshop seem noble enough, but to those who know the history of the school, the men involved, the vast accumulation of error of which they are promoters, how could anyone have confidence in the soundness of what will be presented? It may take some people 50 years to detect error, but not everybody. It is obviously possible that many who detect error are not faithful enough to oppose it, have too many friends

involved in it, and see that it is not popular nor politically expedient to object, even to cease supporting those who promote it. But not everybody is that way, thankfully.

You get a letter signed by **Evertt Huffard** regarding his intentions to sharpen skills in ministry and have him endorse **Rubel Shelly** on the same page. What a glaring inconsistency! Faithful brethren recognize it for what it is. Others, who would rather have what the world calls “scholarship” than truth, will flock to the Memphis Mecca, bow at the shrine of human wisdom stained with doctrinal corruption, and leave only to parrot what they have been served.

Elderships will applaud the effort because if their preacher attends it will give him “stature.” Some who say they are gospel preachers will glory in it because it will enhance their opportunities among the liberal clergy now being produced by the schools. The professors will smugly enjoy the entire affair because they have another chance to instill the sour doctrinal diversities they have absorbed as they pursued their arbitrarily determined academic degrees. And all can go their way, confident that they are the superior element among brethren, they are the ones who are the experts and all else are the mere peons of preaching. Anyone is most naive to consider my comments “sour grapes” and gullible to dismiss them as if they were not so.

FRIEND OR FOE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

If you think me harsh regarding my evaluation of such schools, events and those involved in them, let me tell you what nearly four decades of experience with such people has convinced me. The schools, once established to provide an environment for education where the Scriptures were held aloft, have become more of a foe to soundness than a friend. While one may get a good secular education at such places, he better beware of the leaven of the liberals when he studies anything remotely connected with Scripture. Such a place as HGSOR where religious studies are predominant is a good place to get a degree that might get you a position on the staff of some liberal church, or even a position in some other school. But one who wishes to preach the gospel to save the lost with the pure and undefiled truth of God will do well to pursue learning elsewhere. If he attends HGSOR and remains sound it will be *in spite* of it, rather than *because* of it!

Thank God one does not have to pass through Nashville, Abilene, Memphis, Searcy, Malibu or Henderson, nor any such school, to learn the truth and become an effective, sound, compassionate, informed and reliable gospel preacher. In fact, history, experience and present conditions cry loudly to me that one will do far better to recognize the schools for what they have become and give no credibility to them as helping the Lord’s church. They have become hindrances. How sad it is to me to be forced to recognize this seeing I have a heritage and personal association with the schools! But the church and God’s truth mean more to me than schools, especially since they have gone the way of digression, liberalism, apostasy, false doctrines, compromise, smugness and conceit.

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO II JOHN 9-11?

Let me save the school zealots some time and trouble. They need not write and make the impossible defense. I do

not claim to be infallible, but I know you do not have to know *everything* to know *something*. What I know about the Bible departments of these schools, (and Biblical studies is my concern regarding the schools), I know through first hand, personal experience, and learned it with regret, shock, unbelief and amazement. Such personal and Biblical betrayal was such as I could never have ever imagined possible. No need to wail about the sacrifices of those who are connected with them, or attend them. Many others have sacrificed as much and more. Sacrifice does not prove sound doctrine is taught. Even sincerity of motives proves nothing more than sincerity of motives. "By their fruits" we have seen what has happened in the schools. That now and then someone can point to something commendable does not expel the abundance of misguidance taught. School people evidently have removed II John 9-11 from their versions. Maybe they will produce the college version where monetary expedience is lord. So save yourself and don't write. I cannot think of anything anyone can say that could disprove what I have seen and know for a fact. There have been few to even try, and they failed miserably. And there is hardly an insulting word you could send my way that the likes of such have not already sent.

Will the direction of the schools be returned to reliability where faithful brethren can be supportive? Not likely! Do you know of one case in all the history of schools except the school has continued to go further and further away? I am confident, reading the material of those who founded the schools, that the founders would "turn over in their graves with dismay" if they knew what was the present state of schools that bear their names respecting so much of the religious teaching being done, condoned, tolerated and encouraged.

If you send your child to such a school, warn him, teach him, try to immunize him from false doctrines he will most certainly be taught as if they were true. Let him, and you, be careful in securing an education. But if your child seeks to become a preacher, why subject him to bombardments of error he must fight? There is more to be lost than one should risk to be lost in these schools.

—Route 11, Box 90
McMinnville, Tennessee 37110

IDOLATRY TODAY

Shan Jackson

One of the most interesting stories of the New Testament has to be the story recorded in Acts 17. In this account we find the apostle Paul visiting the ancient city of Athens where he becomes greatly alarmed when he finds that the city is given "**wholly to idolatry**" (Acts 17:16). Their idol worship was so complete that it is said that they had an idol erected to everything under the sun and more. These idol gods were made of brass, gold, wood, and stone and evidently the people of Athens were quite satisfied with this condition since it must have been the only condition they had ever known.

When the apostle preached to them of the one, true and living God, "**in whom we live and move and have our very being**" (verse 28) their curiosity became much aroused for they sought to know more about this strange and new teaching. They even remarked, "**we will hear thee again on this matter**" (verse 32).

Many of us today think that these Athenians must have been quite strange in their approach to religion. We wonder how they could have become so confused concerning God and His worship. But, brethren, the same religious confusion of the 1st Century is among us today. True, we believe in the one true God and His Son, Jesus Christ; and if a stranger should come into our midst he would never see idols of wood or stone; but I still feel he would see a people given over totally to idolatry.

IDOLATRY TAKES MANY FORMS

Idolatry is seen in many forms today. Seldom is it seen in the form of carved images but still seen nonetheless. Idol worship is the placing of anything ahead of our service to God; and such is the case many times with our families, jobs, friends, pleasures, and the like. However, idol worship also can be seen as cults, sects, and denominations. Any group with creeds, practices, and teachings designed by man and for man is seen as an idol.

Much like the Athenians of old we often find ourselves caught up in groups or sects that have assumed authority that God has not given; and just as often people become quite satisfied with this arrangement. If one comes, as did Paul to Athens, even when his teaching is truth from the New Testament, they would think his teaching strange and full of new concepts and ideas.

However, the similarities between Athens of the 1st Century and religion of the 20th Century ends right here. Whereas the Athenians had a desire to hear more of the truth, the modern religious men seek to remain comfortable with this error they have lived with for all these many years. As Solomon said, "**Lo, this one thing I have learned, that God made man upright, but they (the world) have sought out many inventions**" (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

TRUTH (TO SOME) SOUNDS STRANGE

The things that many seem to feel sound too strange to be true today (*i.e.*, the creation as created by God, the virgin birth, the universal flood, the second coming, baptism for the remission of sins) and are being rejected more and more by those who seemingly are teaching the truth. The false doctrines of men have so blinded the minds of the world that many could never be won for Christ even if they desired such.

Israel was seen by the world as strange because all of their laws were designed by God rather than by themselves. God designed their law to protect them and keep them apart from the vice and sins of the world.

Today the church is seen much in the same light as was the nation of Israel. People think us quite strange because God still desires to protect us and keep us apart from sin and corruption. If we do we will continue to be a beacon of purity and light to the sinners of the world but if not then we, too, are the world.

—Post Office Box 904
Palacios, Texas 77465

Echoes From The Past

an Harless

It is axiomatic that the burnt child learns by experience. To have been burned once is sufficient; he recognizes the danger of fire from that moment and ever afterward. Not so, apparently, with many in the church whose actions today appear to be wholly unaffected by yesterday's scorching.

Comes now a 70-year-old case in point: In a bound

volume of the *Gospel Advocate* for 1910, p. 755, is an article by John T. Hinds titled, "The Junior Church." The writer scores an unscriptural practice by the Methodists of that day in establishing a church for children. Brother Hinds writes, "Such a new and wholly unwarranted organization is but the natural outcome of accepting the principle of human wisdom as a guide instead of the word of God. What will please the people and make a success is now the standard by which up-to-date religious efforts are being tried. What the Lord says is no longer accepted as an infallible rule by which to govern our lives in religious service . . . The question is not 'Will there be more organizations?' but simply, 'What next?'"

Brother Hinds is no longer around to see some of the strange things that have come to pass. If he could view the present scene we are confident he would have considerably more to say about that aberration which was first fostered by the Methodist Church — inasmuch as churches of Christ, in some areas, are now engaged in the same unscriptural practice, while others have succumbed to the charismatic movement.

Disingenuous supporters of heresies are asking, "What's the harm in them?" The harm, of course, stems from departures from the word. We are specifically instructed "not to go beyond the things which are written" (I Corinthians 4:6) for "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, let him not God." (II John 9). Besides, as with all departures from the authority of the scriptures, division, not unity, is the inevitable result.

Long ago people were asked what harm could possibly come from the use of instrumental music in the worship. Now, with the passage of years, the group known as Disciples, with their societies, women preachers, and other departures from the faith, have the answer in full.

It is said that those who refuse to profit by experience must ever rediscover the wheel. In matters of religion, errors of the past can be remedied only by acceptance of the word of God. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (I Corinthians 10:12).

—Hillsboro Herald
Hillsboro church of Christ
5800 Hillsboro Road
Nashville, Tennessee 37215
(May 10, 1981)

The Lion of Judah

Donald R. Jones

Certainly the expression "sweet Jesus" is a good one. But when a person thinks of someone who is "sweet" he thinks of a child who has an easy disposition that prevents him from causing conflict with people; in other words, the word "sweet" to most people does not imply strength. In that context, does the word "sweet" really fit Jesus?

Ironically, Jesus was both sweet and strong. He was sweet in that he wouldn't have harmed a soul. He was innocence personified—not the innocence that implies naivete, but the one which means freedom of guilt. He was tempted and tried and certainly was not "innocent" of the knowledge of the realities of the world.

But the aspect of Jesus' character I like to remind myself

of is his strength. Jesus was no namby-pamby; he was every inch a man in the best sense of the word. Palestine in Jesus' time, though a part of the Roman Empire, was ruled largely by the Sadducees and Pharisees, the two chief sects of the Jewish religion. These sects had a lot of civil authority. They could arrest a man and put him in prison. They could do many things short of levying taxes and executing someone. Through their power in the synagogues, they could receive tithes. According to the Mosaic law, they could stone an adulterer to death. Their authority was much feared by the common Israelite.

JESUS CONFRONTED RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES

Was Jesus too timid to confront them? No, he was not. On more than one occasion he called them hypocrites to their faces. An example of their hypocrisy occurred when they condemned Jesus for healing on the Sabbath and thus breaking the tradition of the elders. Jesus countered by saying they would claim to dedicate their money to God and thereby avoid taking care of their parents. They would thus, by their traditions, break the ordinance of God. Jesus wasn't timid. He confronted them openly.

He also confronted them with their small-mindedness in that they would stretch a point to pay the exact tenth of their income in tithing. They would pay no more and no less. In their pettiness and uncharitableness, they condemned Jesus for performing a miracle on the Sabbath day! Jesus told them that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

Jesus had a way with words. There was such wisdom and authority in the answers he gave that soldiers sent to arrest him returned empty-handed, telling the religious leaders that "never yet spake man like this man." Jesus was "sweet" but he certainly was no weakling!

Jesus was like a spiritual Rhett Butler as portrayed by Clark Gable in *Gone with the Wind*. He would not hesitate to confront people with their hypocrisy. As I remember, Butler repeatedly challenged Scarlett on her lies and half-truths. So did Jesus with people. Though, of course, Jesus did not practice the carnal acts Butler did, he had the same acidity in his makeup which led him to expose hypocrisy.

THE LION AND THE LAMB

Jesus also was cool under fire. A woman taken in adultery was brought to him by religious leaders who wanted to put him in a bind between Mosaic law, which required stoning, and the Roman authority, which denied the Jews the right to execute someone. Jesus was, at the time, writing with his finger on the ground. They asked him more than once what should be done to the adulterous woman, but he kept writing and said nothing. When they persisted, he arose and said, "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." One by one they left without casting any stones.

Jesus indeed was the lion of Judah. He, in answer to a prophecy one day, took a scourge of small cords and physically drove the money-lenders and livestock peddlers from the temple. He had neither wealth nor position to back him up. Yet, they were helpless before him. That episode certainly showed Jesus as a lion in power. Yet he was a lamb in innocence. The lion and the lamb.

Jesus says that his followers would have victory because "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." I would like to think, now and then, that a lion is within me.

—Route 2, Box 16
Carrollton, Mississippi 38917

OBEDIENCE AND THE ISSUE OF SILENCE

B. C. Goodpasture

The Lord gave Noah specific instructions concerning the material of which he was to build the ark. **"Make thee an ark of gopher wood,"** the Almighty enjoined. In specifying "gopher wood," the Lord automatically excluded every other kind of wood. If there were varieties of gopher, as there are of oak, for example, he could have used any or all of these that were suitable for his purpose. But Noah could not use, without bringing the condemnation of God upon himself, any wood other than gopher. A modern "intellectual" among us has ridiculed the idea of God's condemning Noah if he had used a "little cedar" in the ark. Such ridicule betrays a woeful lack of knowledge of the Bible, or respect for the Bible, or both.

Nadab and Abihu, when they came to burn incense before Jehovah, used "strange fire" which he had not commanded; that is, they did not use fire "from off the altar." (Numbers 16:46) We do not know where they obtained the fire they used. We know at least one place where they did not get it—"from off the altar." They may well have rationalized: "Really, what difference does it make where we get the fire; fire is fire; it will burn regardless of where we get it. Why be tradition-bound and narrow? Why not be broad and scholarly? The main object is to burn the incense: and fire from any place will do that." Yes, they tried "strange fire"; and "fire from Jehovah devoured them." (Leviticus 10:2) This example does not suggest that God would have done nothing to Noah by way of punishment if he had used some other kind of wood than gopher in building the ark. It is

recorded of Noah that "according to all that God commanded him, so did he." Evidently, Noah had a better idea of what is obedience to God than some moderns. The same principle in Noah's obedience to God's command is involved in our relation to God's will now.

For example, we are commanded to "sing" in the worship of God. (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; Romans 15:9; I Corinthians 14:15). God did not say, "Make music." If he had, then instrumental music would have been acceptable. He specified "singing." He did not say, "Make vocal music." If he had, then there might have been some ground for "whistling" or "humming" in the worship of the Lord. But since Inspiration has specified "singing," whistling and humming have no more place in the worship than cedar wood in the ark, or "strange fire" in the burning of incense. We should be satisfied with what God has commanded. It is true that the "nations around us" whistle and hum; but that is no reason why we should. Israel wanted a king to be like her neighbors; but that desire brought disaster.

"Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition." (I Corinthians 10:11) "For whatsoever things were written afore time were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4).

[NOTE: Will Christians today profit by what was written aforetime? The above article appeared in the Gospel Advocate, in 1973. IYR Jr.]

Bellview church of Christ endorses—

EASTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

2141 Kingston, Muskogee, OK 74403

"SPEAKING AS THE ORACLES OF GOD" LECTURES

NOVEMBER 4,5,6, 1988

"I Have Put My Words In Thy Mouth"

FRIDAY NIGHT

7:30 p.m. "I Have Put My Words In Thy Mouth" Noel Merideth
8:30 p.m. "Remember Now Thy Creator..." Robert Taylor

SATURDAY

9:00 a.m. "Choose You This Day Whom Ye Will Serve" Noel Merideth
10:00 a.m. Do The Work of An Evangelist" Robert Taylor
11:00 a.m. OPEN FORUM - Current Issues Facing the Church
Noel Merideth, Robert Taylor, Tom Bright, David Brown
12:00 p.m. LUNCH PROVIDED
1:30 p.m. "Wine Is A Mocker, Strong Drink Is Raging" Tom Bright
2:30 p.m. My People Are Bent On Backsliding From Me" Don Deffenbaugh
3:30 p.m. "Every Plant, Which My Heavenly Father hath Not Planted, Shall Be Rooted Up" Tom Bright
4:30 p.m. "Beware Lest Any Man Spoil You Through Philosophy and Vain Deceit" Steve Gibson

5:30 p.m. "In the Beginning..." Steve Gunter

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. "Being Now Justified By His Blood" Ron Cosby
10:30 a.m. "...Withdraw Yourselves From Every Brother That Walketh Disorderly" David Brown
2:30 p.m. "For Her Price Is Far Above Rubies" David Brown
3:30 p.m. "God...Commandeth All Men Everywhere to Repent" Steve Gibson
4:30 p.m. "Rejoice, Because Your Names are Written In Heaven" Dale Parker
5:30 p.m. "...I Will Build My Church" Leon Brashear

Electrical hook-ups for RV units will be provided on the Church property. A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions. For more information on housing call Charlotte Morgan (918) 682-6382. Cliff Lyons, Director. Cassette tapes and outline books will be available.

A Letter From The Church At Corinth To Paul

G. K. Wallace

Paul wrote a letter to the church at Corinth. Here is a letter from the church to Paul.

Dear Paul:

Greeting! We received your letter wherein you told us to assemble for the Lord's Supper. We wish to advise you that at present we have no assembly for the Lord's Supper. On the Lord's Day we have many assemblies. There is an early assembly for those who wish to play golf or go fishing. Too, we have the following groups who have their own assembly for the Lord's Supper:

1. The children have their own church;
2. The senior citizens have their own church;
3. The singles have their own church;
4. The widows have their own church, or private worship service;
5. We have a private church of young folks.

In your letter to us you said, "If the whole church be come together." Please don't worry about that, as we never have the whole church together for the Lord's Supper. Too, you suggested that women "keep silent." You will be pleased to learn that the women do not worship with us any more. They have their own church. Too, you will be pleased to know that our good women are using the Women's Liberated Bible. Sister I. B. Free, their preacher, says the Woman's Lib Bible is much better than the old-style stuff you write. This women's church is a great "outreach program." You should hear this women's church sing, "My God SHE Is Alive."

Sincerely,

(Signed)

The Family at Corinth

"Don't Be Too Religious"

Dan Jenkins

A recent survey showed that over 65% of Americans would not vote for a person who denied the existence of a Supreme Being. This is so encouraging in our age of apparent unbelief. However, the same poll showed that they would vote against a candidate whose religious convictions dominated his decisions. What a paradox! We want a religious leader, but not one who is "too religious."

Is this not a commentary on our time? Many men rejoice that their wives are Christians, yet are disturbed when their wives will not join them in doing wrong. They want wives who can be trusted to be faithful because of their Christian convictions, but resent the time their wives spend in worshipping God.

Many employers want those who work for them to have the work ethics taught in the Bible. They are glad that their Christian employees do not simply give eyeservice, but diligently do their assigned task. However, they are upset when these same Christians will not lie for them, or lay aside their convictions to follow company policies.

True Christians cannot be partially devoted. If one follows the Master, he does so with all of his soul, body and strength. One cannot take a part of Christianity and lay aside the rest and be a faithful follower of the Master. Americans cannot understand this, but heaven does and that is all that matters.

—Palm Beach Lakes church of Christ
1111 36th Street
West Palm Beach, Florida 33407-3999

Commands or Advice?

J. G. Brown

One's salvation depends on whether he takes Bible commands as imperative or merely as advice. Philippians 2:12 warns us to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." There is fear of our not "handling aright the word" (II Timothy 2:15); fear of taking it lightly (Psalms 119:4; Hebrews 2:1-3). To do so is to become guilty of the whole law (James 2:10). This fact concerns attitude rather than ability. If we take commandments of the Bible as good advice *only*—to be obeyed if convenient, ignoring any that we do not like—picking and choosing, we then are condemned by our attitude, regardless of how many others we keep, or the good works that we do (Matthew 7:21-23). Proverbs 28:9 states that God despises even the *worship* of anyone who "turns his ear from hearing the word." Refusal of one word condemns (John 12:48).

Here are some examples that seem to be taken lightly by some in the brotherhood: How many disobey II Corinthians 15:5 or I Timothy 5:20? How many congregations disobey I Corinthians 5:7? How often is John 7:24 defeated by quoting Matthew 7:1 or the importance of Matthew 5:48 lessened by quoting I John 1:8? When II Corinthians 6:14 is studied in classes of mature Christians, its positive command often is nullified by stories of Christians who married out of the church and later converted their partners.

I have had the experience of teaching the adult class in two congregations where a sister angrily interrupted the class to tell me that I had sinned by calling on women for their opinion, loudly quoting I Corinthians 14:34 to prove her point. Women who criticize the male teacher in class to discourage and hinder his teaching seem to ignore I Timothy 2:12.

In spite of I Corinthians 11, many adults have reversed the teachings as to hair. Many men wear long hair while the women wear short. The simple command of I Corinthians 10:31 covers this example and any other questionable act among Christians: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Does one glorify God when he uses tobacco or drugs, has a social drink, goes to certain movies, over-eats, spends enough on recreation to feed hundreds of starving people, and such like? One of the most incredible examples of "turning from the Word" is to hear a mature Christian justify his willful failure to attend all assemblies by saying that Hebrews 10:25 is not a command, or, that it refers only to the assembly for the Lord's Supper.

—Drawer I
Ganado, Texas 77962

Why are brethren so often sympathetic with those who openly and boldly advocate error? We frequently apologize for those whom we consider to have made a simple slip of the tongue. It is always accidentally, and never intentionally, that error is propagated from the pulpit. Honest motives, never evil intentions, are attributed to those who promote heresy by point of pen and word of mouth. Brethren, we must recognize that the majority of false teachers (those recorded in the Bible) were DELIBERATE DECEIVERS. —Gary Smith

Notes & Quotes...

Having heard that brother **Chester Estes**, of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, was dead, I decided before announcing it that I should at least "check it out". Under date of February 27, 1980, he replied, in part, saying, "I have your letter of the 22nd, saying, that someone told you that I had passed from this life, and you added (asked), 'Is there any truth to it?'"

"Well, I pinched myself, took my pulse, breathed deeply, and am highly delighted after a thorough self-examination, that I am able to say, 'Nope, that's me.' We thank God He has sustained us all these years. I was born in 1903, married in 1921 (soon will be 60 years), and began preaching in 1922 (58 years ago).

"Inasmuch as I hated to hear the news of my demise, I am glad that you informed me, which shows that you do have an interest in my well being, whether alive or gone hence. Had I already passed the way of all the earth, I am just now puzzled as to where exactly I would have mailed you an answer to your question, and how soon it would have reached you, the postal service being what it is.

"I have been thinking of you of late. You did a good job in your write-up of brother Wallace. He is the one who recommended me to Texas and brother Akin in 1941. I never held that against him. I am very much with you in spirit in the work you are doing. When I can find time (and the rumor of my departure does not become more than a rumor), I now plan to write you more fully about what I am doing, and furnish you with more evidence of the fact that what you heard is **only a rumor. I must defend myself!**

"As you perhaps already know, we are in our

3rd edition of *The Better Version* New Testament. Brother Wallace, while living, never said anything against TBV, as far as I know . . .

"P.S. Much has been said in the papers recently about the death of brother **Chester Honeycutt**, which might account for the rumor of my departure. C.E."

(NOTE: "Anyone who can pinch himself and feel it, take his pulse, breathe at all (much less deeply), type and sign his own name must indeed still be in the land of the living." I replied in part, **March 3, 1980**. "After all this evidence, I conclude that you are still with us. Congratulations!")

"Thank you for what you said of my write-up of brother Wallace. He was one of a kind. The fact that he never said anything *against* TBV in itself is sort of a recommendation. If there had been much wrong with it, I feel sure he'd have said something about it . . .

"You might be right about how that rumor got started of your demise. Since brother **Chester Honeycutt** had passed, and your front name is **Chester** — well, folks that don't listen very carefully easily could have confused the two . . . In any case, you are still with us; so let us rejoice and be glad in this day that the Lord has made!" (YR Jr.)

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL

The use of video technology, as a world-wide teaching tool, more and more appears to be coming to the fore.

For example, brother **Joe McDonald**, of Oklahoma City, has been video-taping major brotherhood lectureships for the past several years, thus making possible the extending of

these lectureships into many states and countries around the world.

Brother **James N. Harris**, of Murray, Kentucky, works right along with brother McDonald in such efforts; in fact, between the two of them, they have practically blanketed the globe with their work.

When the government of Malaysia would no longer extend brother **Jim Dearman's** visa to remain there teaching in that country, before returning to the U.S., he made arrangements for video-taped teaching material to be sent back to be used in classwork at Malaysia School of Preaching, at Klang, Malaysia—so that he being **actually** at Memphis School of Preaching, in Memphis, Tennessee, yet teacheth at Klang, Malaysia, via video!

Now comes what seems to be a natural outgrowth of all such undertakings in the form of **World Video Bible School**, of Buda, Texas. For instance, we heard that they were producing classroom instruction by **Roy Deaver** and **Bert Thompson** on special subjects. Being particularly interested in material on the existence of God, creation versus evolution, the age of the earth, the universal flood, dinosaurs, questions and answers on Genesis and science, and such, we had some eight tapes sent directly by them to Four Seas College, in Singapore, thus enhancing our teaching program in the college there.

Any others who might be interested, you might write for free information to **World Video Bible School, Box 18AA, FM 2770, Buda, Texas 78610**. Or you could telephone to them at (512) 268-1703. **One thing for sure: any effective method available we have for getting the faithful message out we all need to be taking advantage of it.**

G. K. Wallace, who lived so long at Brandon, Florida, now may be addressed as follows:

Bellview Church of Christ announces:

1988 Firm Foundation Lectures

Theme: The Gospel According To Luke — "That You May Understand The Saviour"

Place: *Bellwood Church of Christ, Murfreesboro, Tennessee*

Dates: *September 21-25, 1988, Wednesday - Sunday*

Schedule of Events:

WEDNESDAY, September 21

7:00 P.M. Singing
7:15 P.M. That Ye May Know The Truth Curtiss Cates
8:00 P.M. The Virgin Birth Ray Peters

THURSDAY, September 22

9:30 A.M. The Baptism Of John—From Heaven Or From Men? Tom Bright
10:15 A.M. What Went Ye Out To See? Bobby Liddell
11:00 A.M. Beware Of Covetousness Jimmy Clark
1:30 P.M. The Mission Of The Saviour J. T. Marlin
2:15 P.M. Withstanding Temptation And Rejection Al Brown
7:00 P.M. Singing
7:15 P.M. Is A Man Worth More Than A Lamb? William S. Cline
8:00 P.M. Repentance: One Of The Most Difficult Commands In The Bible George DeHoff

FRIDAY, September 23

9:30 A.M. Launch Out Into The Deep Jerry Martin
10:15 A.M. The Olivet Discourse Roy Deaver
11:00 A.M. How Can You Say That? Joe Gilmore
1:30 P.M. Unprofitable Servants Noel Merideth
2:15 P.M. Jesus Is Lord Of All Wayne Coats
7:00 P.M. Singing
7:15 P.M. His Face Was Set Toward Jerusalem Harrell Davidson
8:00 P.M. How Readest Thou? Noah Hackworth

SATURDAY, September 24

9:30 A.M. A Greater Blessing Daniel Denham
10:15 A.M. Where Is Your Faith? Weldon Langfield
11:00 A.M. The Ruler Who Refused A Crown Ron Harper
1:30 P.M. The Last Supper Eaten: The Lord's Supper Instituted Gary Colley
2:15 P.M. Accountable Stewardship Ken Willis
7:00 P.M. Singing
7:15 P.M. The Lost Christ Foy Smith
8:00 P.M. Can You Recommend Your Religion? Winfred Clark

SUNDAY, September 25

9:00 A.M. Excuses Are Only Lies Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
10:00 A.M. We Must Count The Cost Guss Eoff
7:00 P.M. Singing
7:15 P.M. The Crucifixion Of Christ Jim Laws
8:00 P.M. The Bodily Resurrection Of Jesus H. A. Dobbs

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Hayden Estes, of Ash Flat, Arkansas, in renewing his own subscription, subscribed for one more; **George M. Black**, of Miami, Florida, subscribed for himself and two more; **Robert J. Finley**, of Fort Worth, Texas, subscribed for himself and three more.

Mrs. J. C. Freeman, of Lamesa, Texas, ordered a dozen tracts *Crossroads from the Inside* by **Bronwen McClish Gibson**, saying, "This false teaching is splitting the little congregation in Hamburg, New York. This is just outside Buffalo. They want to do whatever the Boston church does..."

OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE GEARS UP FOR NEW YEAR

Carl G. Hecker

September 10, 1988, Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m., will mark the beginning of the Fall session and the first service of our gospel meeting. **Ron Cosby**, who was a member of the first graduating class of the school when it was located in Elk City, Oklahoma, will be the guest speaker. He will speak at the opening session, which we hope will include not only the whole congregation, but visitors interested in supporting the school and, of course, all prospective students. Come and see!

Enrollment will begin at 8:30 a.m. on the 10th and actual classes will start on the 17th and meet for 12 weeks. Each course will have a full 60-minute class period. Our faculty will have a combined experience of preaching the gospel for more than 150 years! Four courses of study will be offered: two in the Old Testament and two in the New Testament. The Authorized Version of 1611, sometimes called the King James Version, will be the text in each study.

—The *McLoud Messenger*
301 South Eighth
McLoud, Oklahoma 74851

GOOD NEWS FROM TROY, TENNESSEE

In recent weeks word comes that brother **Jack Phillips** and family have moved from Arkansas to work with the church at Troy, Tennessee.

In commenting on this wonderful news, brother **Harrell Davidson**, minister to the nearby Obion, Tennessee congregation, writes,

"I have known brother **Jack Phillips** for some time. We have preached in meetings where he labored in Strawberry, Arkansas, and I am scheduled to return in 1989. Jack is a sound, definitive, distinctive, and uncompromising gospel preacher. He would lay down his life rather than compromise the truth. He quotes and studies from the King James Version and has always been very effective in doing local work. He is sound in every way that I know. His family is also an ideal family. Their reputation is flawless. Therefore, I commend **Jack Phillips** to the brotherhood as being a faithful gospel preacher."

Mac Bartee, preacher, Englewood, Colorado: "Keep on keeping on. We here at Englewood are stressing the objections to the pillar church concept, and especially the 'Denver Church of Christ' (out of Boston). They are VERY quiet here, nearly underground. Other preachers in area churches have heard not a whisper from them."

(NOTE: To which I replied, in part, "Thanks for letting me know about how quiet things are there at this point re: the so-called 'Denver Church of Christ' out of Boston. When they get quiet, I cannot help wondering what's happening. In any case, keep your guard up.")

Margaret E. Spear, of Canon City, Colorado, sends \$50.00, \$65.00 sometimes \$100.00 each month—also she sent \$50.00 on *Klang Building Fund* and \$5.00 on *Firm Foundation's* "Special Issue."

B. C. CARR IS HONORED WITH APPRECIATION DINNER

A tribute to **B. C. Carr**, long overdue, came to pass the Tuesday night of January 19, 1988, when an appreciation dinner was held in his honor at the Florida School of Preaching, in Lakeland, Florida.

"Were it not for **B. C. Carr**," **Glenn M. Lee**, minister at Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, wrote, "likely there would be no Florida School of Preaching. The 1987-1988 catalog states: 'The Florida School of Preaching began in September, 1969, as a work of the South Florida Avenue church in Lakeland (FL) with support from other churches and individuals. The school continues to use spacious facilities provided by this church.'"

"In June, 1982, the school was issued a charter from the state. It is to be governed by a Board of Directors. Those presently serving are **B. C. Carr**, Chairman; **Paul Thornhill**, Vice-Chairman; **J. H. Blackman, Jr.**, Secretary; and **E. R. McAnally**, Treasurer. Others serving on the board are **Gordon Methvin**, **Kenneth French**, **Kenneth Franklin**, **Wallace Maxwell**, **Glenn Lee**, and **Dale Spung**. In addition to these, four new members have just been named to the board: **Gene Stilwell**, **Fred Baker**, **James Medlin** and **Maurice Davis**.

"Near the end of the regular quarterly meeting of the board, December 8, 1987, the board requested that **B. C. Carr** leave the meeting while a 'very important matter' was discussed. After brother **Carr** left the meeting, the board unanimously agreed to have a 'B. C. Carr Appreciation Dinner' on Tuesday night, January 19, 1988, during the 13th Annual Lectureship. Local board members agreed to make necessary arrangements for the dinner and **Glenn Lee** was requested to arrange the program and to serve as Master of Ceremonies.

"The dinner was a great success! More ticket requests were received than could be met and ticket sales had to be stopped Monday morning of the lectureship. Dinner program speakers were **Gene Burgett**, **Flavil Nichols**, **V. P. Black** and **Wayne Coats**. **George DeHoff** was scheduled to speak, but due to his flight delay in Memphis necessitated by tornado warnings, he did not arrive until Wednesday morning following the dinner. At the beginning of the Wednesday afternoon lecture, brother **DeHoff** took several minutes to speak words of praise for brother and sister **Carr** and their life and work."

You cannot rush the sunrise, but the sun always rises. You cannot rush God, but God always answers.

Ronnie Hayes, of the Barn Creek church of Christ, of Bear Creek, Alabama, sent us 30 new subscriptions.

Dennis B. Hanes, of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, ordered our BOUND VOLUME for 1987, saying, "Thank you, as always, for your efforts." He enclosed \$15.00, asking us to "please keep an extra." We can always use such "extra" to pay these heavy postal charges.

Howard Winters, longtime Editor of the gospel magazine *Carolina Christian*, died May 11, 1988. Funeral services were conducted at the building where he preached in West Jefferson, North Carolina, on May 13. He was buried at Ashelaw Memorial Gardens, at Jefferson, North Carolina.

Jerry Wright, Memphis, Tennessee: "Thank you so much for your stand for the truth. May God bless you to continue *Contending for the Faith*."

Mrs. L. C. (Billie) Perry, Nashville, Tennessee: "Enclosed is a check for ten dollars (\$10.00) to be used where you think it is most needed at this time. God bless you in your work."

Wilbert W. Wooldridge, of Anchorage, Alaska, in ordering Bound Volumes of *Contending for the Faith* and renewing for another three years, said, "I got a lot out of the issue of 'Peter's Use of a Powerful Preposition.' A great article!"

Garland Elkins, concluded 15 years as minister of the Getwell church of Christ, in Memphis, Tennessee, in June, beginning his new work as minister to the church at Southaven, Mississippi, in July.

SEVENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES PREVIEW Dub McClish

The Pearl Street church in Denton, Texas, will host its seventh annual lectureship November 13-17, 1988. The first six programs have been on I Corinthians, Hebrews, Revelation, Acts, Galatians and I, II and III John, respectively, and have attracted brethren from coast to coast, from border to border, and from abroad.

The first ADL book—*Studies in I Corinthians*—has been so popular that it is almost ready for a fourth edition. Books, audio tapes and video tapes of all of these lecture programs are in continual demand and have been circulated all over the world.

This year's lectures will be on I and II Thessalonians and Philemon. A wide variety of material will be covered by 34 speakers. The Pearl Street elders aim for these lectures to provide fundamental and sound Biblical teaching to help all who hear, see or read them to grow spiritually and to combat the profusion of doctrinal error both within and without the church.

ANOTHER CLASSIC ANTICIPATED

As in the past, a book (approximately 500 pages) of these lectures will be published (orders already are coming in) and it will be another classic in Restoration literature the minute it comes from the press. All of the lectures also will be available on audio and video cassette tapes.

A special feature of the Annual Denton Lectures is the daily (Monday-Thursday) two-hour "Discussion Forum" in which four subjects of controversy are discussed. This year's subjects are: "The Spirit of Antinomianism," "Worship and New Testament Authority," "The Wrath of God" and "The Instrumental Music in Worship Controversy."

Besides lectures on these topics of assigned speakers, there will be questions allowed from the audience on each of these subjects.

This year's speakers will be **David Brown**, **Curtis Cates**, **Darrell Conley**, **Andrew Connally**, **Roy C. Deaver**, **Garland Elkins**, **Foy Forehand**, **Steve Gibson**, **Perry Hall**, **William M. Hatcher**, **Alan Highers**, **W. N. (Bill) Jackson**, **Wayne Jackson**, **Dub McClish**, **Mike McElroy**, **James Meadows**, **Richard Melson**, **J. Noel Merideth**, **Dave Miller**, **Jerry Moffitt**, **Goebel Music**, **Bubba Phillips**, **Johnny Ramsey**, **Oran Rhodes**, **Ira Rice, Jr.**, **Jack Scott, Jr.**, **Robert R. Taylor, Jr.**, **Bert Thompson**, **Mike Vestal**, **Tom Wacaster**, **Don Walker**, **Thomas B. Warren**, **Marvin Weir**, and **Gary Workman**.

SPECIAL AMENITIES PROVIDED

Exhibit space is available subject to invitation and/or approval. Housing in the homes of local Christians will be provided as long as it lasts. Water and electrical hook-ups and holding tank dump for RV units will be available on our property by advance reservation (we had 33 units last year). A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions. Signing for the deaf will be available for many sessions.

Please plan to come and please help us publicize this SEVENTH ADL, which will be one of the finest and strongest Bible lectureships anywhere. Further inquiries may be addressed to: **Church of Christ, 312 Pearl Street, Denton, Texas 76201**. Phone numbers: 817/387-3531; 387-1427.

Lamar Thornton, of Montgomery, Alabama, sent three new subscriptions, saying, "Keep up the good work"; **James D. Clark**, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, renewed his own for three years and sent in a new subscription, saying, "We are so thankful for the work you do... Please use the extra check (\$25.00) wherever you feel it is needed"; **Martin W. Gulnn**, of San Antonio, Texas, sent six new ones; **Roy H. Cobb**, of Crestwood, Missouri, ordered 25 copies of our February issue, enclosing \$12.09, including postage; **Bob J. Henson**, of Benton, Kentucky, sent two new; **Mrs. Roger Northern**, of Jacksonville, Texas, renewed for three years, saying, "Enjoy your paper. Keep it up"; **T. E. Webb**, of Grand Saline, Texas, subscribed, saying, "Please send me any information you might have as to what Boston church is teaching. I have been trying to study with a person and he denies that they teach what has come out of Crossroads"; **Doyle & Lois Schmidt**, in sending us their new address in Irvine, California, wrote, "We're very thankful for your constant vigil in *Contending for the Faith*, but sorry never to have told you before"; **Charles W. Creech**, of Merrillville, Indiana, sent three renewals, saying, "We appreciate your good works. Please use the little extra for what is needed"; the church in Palacios, Texas, contributes \$50.00 monthly to our contending-for-the-faith efforts; **William Smart**, of Smithville, Ontario, renewed his own, sent five new; **Roy & Myrteal Townsend**, of Livingstone, Texas, contribute \$150.00 each month to help us contend for the faith; **Mrs. Chet Y. Norton**, of Duncan, Oklahoma, renewed for another year, saying, "Yes, I would like to have the bundle of back issues, especially those about Crossroadism"; **Joseph H. Terry**, of Jupiter, Florida, sent one new; **The Elders**, Church of Christ, 825 West 2nd Street, Bloomington, Indiana, ordered 60 copies of our issue re: Crossroads/Boston for May/1987; **Gene Cusick**, of Dayton, Ohio, in renewing for another year, added \$5.00, saying, "Use as you see fit"; **John Henson**, minister to the Gnat Hill church of Christ, of Manchester, Tennessee, said that getting *Contending for the Faith* is important to him "since it has become an integral part of the communication in the brotherhood. There is NO substitute!"; **F. R. Bogle**, of Orlando, Florida, renewed three, sent seven new; **Mrs. Leo B. Switzer, Sr.**, renewed for herself and her son, saying, "I appreciate the good work brother Rice is doing and hope he will have many years in the Lord's service"; **B. L. Bedwell**, of Fresno, California, sent two more new subscriptions, saying, "I don't get around very much any more, but I do preach yet on occasion, like yesterday for example I spoke at one small congregation at the A.M. service and again at another small group congregation at the P.M. service. It was almost too much for me. Once or twice a month is about enough for me. I'll be 90 the 22 March next"; **Edgar P. Taylor**, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, renewed his own, sent one new; **Bessie L. Dawson**, of Centerville, Tennessee, contributed \$10.00; **Dale M. Durost**, of Palmdale, California, renewed his own, sent one new; **Gerry Whitten**, of Rossville, Georgia, sent two new; **Dude Pendergraft**, of Joplin, Missouri, renewed two; **Bill Farley**, of Duncan, Oklahoma, renewed his own, sent one new, both for three years; **Della Yocum**, formerly church secretary at Sapulpa, Oklahoma, now living at Fort Smith, Arkansas, renewed for one year, added \$15.00 "to be put toward your publication cost"; **Gertrude W. Broy**, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, contributed \$10.00 to our contending for the faith fund; **W. R. Craig**, preacher, Lucedale, Mississippi, sent eight new; **George H. Bundrick**, of Canton, Texas, renewed his own, sent five new; **Junell Nettles**, of Manhattan, Kansas, enclosed \$25.00 as a memorial to **Elsie Conrow**, "a dear Christian friend who entered eternal rest on March 14," saying, "Elsie enjoyed *Contending for the Faith* and said

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many times she didn't know what would happen when men and women of your conviction pass on. She studied her Bible and prayed every day but constantly strived to do God's will in a better way. The Crossroads issue was a great worry to her and she felt frustrated that she couldn't do more. Please use the money where it is needed the most. Elsie suffered earthly pain but God blessed her in many ways. She left earthly care very quickly and I know she's free and happy now"; Mrs. A. W. Snell, Jr., of Southside, Tennessee, subscribed for a year and ordered all back issues on the Crossroads Movement; J. M. Boothe, of Carthage, Texas, subscribed for one year, ordered our February/1988 issue in particular, saying, "Thank you for the work the Lord's church is doing there"; A. G. (Red) Herring, of Gainesboro, Tennessee, subscribed for their preacher, brother Charles G. Lemons, saying, "We love *Contending for the Faith*. May God always bless you and all the writers. The check (\$25.00) is for the paper whatever it costs. I just want to help spread the news of this paper. I pass it on so people can see the error of Crossroads and Boston"; G. R. Freeman, of Corpus Christi, Texas, in paying for his Bound Volume XVIII, renewed for another three years; F. C. Rice, of Washington, West Virginia, in renewing for another three years, said, "I am old (past 84 years) and living alone, having lost my good wife of 63 years on March 19, 1987...I do desire to continue getting *Contending for the Faith*. I trust in it to keep me informed of many of the problems of the church in this present troubled world. I just pray that faithful brethren will not hesitate to speak out and contend for the faith once delivered. I see much about me which troubles me. May God richly bless you and all faithful, who continue to contend for the faith"; James W. Huggins, who preaches at Alachua, Florida, renewed for another year, saying, "You are doing a much needed work. Keep it up!"; Hugo Blackstone, of Canton, Texas, renewed four, sent 16 new, saying, "I am very much in accord with the work you are doing and am paying for these names who are mostly members of the church at 805 Big Rock Street, Canton, Texas"; Lee D. Jones, of Hobe Sound, Florida, renewed for another year, added \$10.00 to use in our work, saying, "We appreciate your stand for the truth";

Mierley Shelton, Pasadena, California: "I met you at the Hollywood church of Christ when you visited there—before your marriage. I have read *Contending for the Faith* through the years and concur mostly with its content.

"The editorial in the February issue of *Contending for the Faith* rather disturbs me. I agree hobby-riding is not the best, but I do think we should be very careful to follow God's teaching...Unfortunately, some of the 'baddies', namely divorce and remarriage,

etc., are epidemic even in the 'conservative' churches today.

"The last sentence in paragraph seven particularly disturbs me. Do you consider chapter 11:2-16 in Paul's letter to the Corinthians 'mere mention'? I find no place in scripture that so indicates. I know 'the brethren' say it is cultural, BUT, who decides such matters?

"Two and three generations ago women did not have 'bobbed' hair and all wore hats to worship services. As styles changed and women's lib was in the making, hair styles changed also and ruled out hats and long hair. (Even the pope couldn't win this one.) I firmly believe men went along with the change because they didn't have the 'let's call it the courage' to do otherwise...

"I only know of one preacher who teaches I Corinthians 11:2-16 as it is written but he doesn't make a 'hobby' of it. He has written only one tract on the subject; however, Crossroadism-surfaces very often in your magazine. I heartily agree that much of the Crossroad 'doctrine' is cultish; but some of its encouragement for commitment and dedication could well be used by some of our apathetic churches.

"I appreciate your efforts in the Orient and I know you have a busy schedule and don't have much time to think a great deal about 'laughing-stock' matters; however, should your time permit, an article justifying continuing to honor the command of the silence of women in the assembly—I Corinthians 14:34—while at the same time excusing the command re: the head covering—I Corinthians 11:4-5—hopefully will dispel my frustration regarding the apparent inconsistency of Biblical interpretation and application which I observe in the church today..."

(NOTE: "...It was good to hear from someone who knew me 'way back when,'" I replied, in part. "The object of my editorial cautioning against hobby-riding was not just to frustrate folks. I travel constantly among the churches and felt that such an editorial was increasingly needful at this time.

"The passage you inquired about seems to be one of those of Paul that Peter said were 'hard to be understood.' Having traveled to and through Corinth, the Near East, the Middle East and all across Southern Asia, I have noted that where the covering is the custom, it is not just a hat, but a veil that covers both the head and the whole body all the way to the ground, with only a slit at the eyes so a woman can see where she is going. This may be the custom in some areas—and where applicable, I would have no objection. But to make it a custom among the churches of God, well, Paul said, 'we have no such custom.'" IYR Jr.)

Louise Everette Rushmore, evangelist, Media, Pennsylvania: "My family and I are

sincerely grateful for your moral and financial support as we endeavor to labor with the Media church of Christ. There is indeed great potential here if only sufficient manpower can be obtained to teach the lost. Over 1,200 people (600 of whom are close enough to effectively reach) have given their names and addresses to the church. Presently, I am hindered by meager finances from fully devoting myself to this task.

"By the time you read this letter we will have conducted one more mail exhibit during which several additional names and addresses of local people will be received. Other efforts underway include neighborhood Bible studies. These classes are held in various members' homes Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings; non-Christians are attending these, Sunday worship, and Sunday and Wednesday Bible classes. Still others are being taught in cottage meetings. We are convinced, given time, many can be won to Christ. The whole congregation, from youth through the elderly, is excited about any participating in these evangelistic efforts.

"Thank you once more for your support..." (NOTE: Why is it, brethren, that faithful, zealous Christian preachers, such as brother Rushmore, cannot be supported regularly in such a way that they can concentrate on the work of evangelism without having to squander much of their time to raise support! Many of us have known Louis Rushmore for a long time. He is willing, ready and able to get the job done if only he has enough support to survive and be effective in this needed work at Media, Pennsylvania. Congregations and/or individuals who would like to help him on a regular basis, please address him as follows: Post Office Box 1570, Media, Pennsylvania 19063. Or you may telephone him: (215) 544-5065. IYR Jr.)

Don Wilson, Ellettsville, Indiana: "Yes, please send me a bundle of back issues. I'll see that they are given to others."

Leslie L. Spear, Nashville, Tennessee, in renewing his subscription, wrote, "Please keep the paper coming my way for another year. That article in the March paper...by brother Wayne Price hits the spot with me."

BE NOT A MODERN JEHU.

James W. Boyd

There is a statement made about Jehu in II Kings 9:20 as he was rushing to make an attack on both the King of Judah and also the King of Northern Israel. Watchmen saw a chariot coming but did not at first identify its occupant. But there was something about the way the chariot went along that told who was coming.

"The driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously." The same thing might be said of many today as they rush hither, and yon. Does this sound like you?—A Burning Fire

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FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

A Review Of THE BOSTON/CROSSROADS MOVEMENT

Dan Jenkins

One fact that every Christian must remember is that more than 100 churches of Christ have been divided over a movement that began at the Crossroads congregation in Gainesville, and is now headquartered in Boston. On the surface it seems innocent enough, especially when one looks only at the tremendous number of baptisms that have resulted. However, when one looks at the tactics used to convert others, the control exercised over new converts, the attitude toward the Bible teaching on the organization of the local church, and the discord it has spread among the church, it is obvious how dangerous it is to the spread of the truth.

THE CONTROL OF MEMBERS

The movement exercises control over individuals by getting them to reveal intimate details about their lives to others. This sometimes occurs in home Bible studies where one seeks to cleanse his soul by telling of his spiritual struggle. When one is hesitant to "confess his faults," subtle pressure is put upon him. Those in the class often learn things about others' lives, and can never again view that person in the same way. Those within the group are bound to one another because they have made themselves vulnerable, and the clique thus formed looks upon others as being spiritually immature. We need to lay our souls bare—but it is to the one mediator between God and man. (I Timothy 2:5)

Control also is exercised by assigning an older brother to be over the new converts. Daily contact is made and the older Christian seeks to regulate the life of his younger

brother. Questions are asked about how much time is being spent in daily Bible study, prayer, and meditation. The problem is not that Christians should not be *concerned* about each other; it is that one Christian has no right to *control* another.

Further control is forced on the convert by withholding love whenever he fails to conform to the norm set by the leaders. Many of the converts made by the movement are young adults, singles, and young professionals who are on college campuses or have recently moved into a new area. Their loneliness, desire for friendship, and devotion to using their time wisely make them especially vulnerable. They are attracted by the warmth of older Christians, and are soon captured by their teachings.

There is a great parallel between the control of members of the Crossroads/Boston movement and cults like the Moonies, the Hari Krishna, and the Jim Jones fiasco.

DISREGARD FOR ELDERS' AUTHORITY

Another sinful practice of the Boston/Crossroads movement is the way its members ignore or deny the authority that God has given to elders.

Many churches have been split because some have demanded that the local congregation's work be organized exactly like Boston's. They believe that things like "senior prayer partners" and "soul talks" are so essential to the progress of the church that they disregard any desires of the eldership. If they cannot have their way, they will seek to remove the elders.

Consider the following question carefully. If elders do not

(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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Volume XIX, No. 9 September/1988

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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Editorial...

If Only Crossroads/ Gainesville Could But 'See' The Things That Belong To Her Peace! Are They Still Hid?

Never ever have we taken pleasure in someone else's misery. We just do not think that way. And even though we know full well the divisions and offences that the Crossroads Church of Christ, of Gainesville, Florida, has foisted upon the brotherhood in general for lo these many years, now that she herself is being ravaged within and without through the destructive incursions of "Bostonism," we cannot help being, in some sense at least, sympathetic. Or do we mean *empathetic*?

After enduring the countless hours of transcribing the tape recordings of an especially called meeting that occurred the last Lord's Day night in June, 1988, at Crossroads (the results of which make up the main body of this issue of *Contending for the Faith*), our hearts ached for brethren **John Whitehead** and **Dennie Shepherd**—indeed for the whole Crossroads church—as we realized that what Crossroads has made *us* suffer through false teachings and splitting our churches across the years is what *they themselves* are being made to suffer even now.

JESUS WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM

As we continued to listen to—and write down—what was being said on those tapes, our mind kept going back to Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem, as recorded in Luke 19:41-44; and the comparison between Jerusalem *then* and Crossroads *now*. But read it for yourself—

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

THINGS WHICH BELONG UNTO THEIR PEACE

As we listened to the Crossroads tapes, we had the distinct feeling that at least *some* things were becoming clear to them; yet the *principal* things basic to their having peace with the main body of the brotherhood still seemed to be "hid from their eyes."

For one thing, we could not help noting that all their quotations of scripture were from the heavily corrupted *New International Version*. How is it even possible to

have *peace* in this brotherhood, when such a zealous segment is determined to follow such a false version, regardless?

For example, one of the very first quotations they used—that of Hebrews 13:17—evidently unbeknownst to them, undermines their entire position—when read from the *NIV*, that is! Instead of saying, “Obey them that have the **RULE** over you” (meaning the **ELDERS**, reading from the *King James Version*), the *NIV* says, “Obey your **LEADERS** and submit to **THEIR** authority.” But who *are* the “leaders” of the Crossroads Movement? Not the *elders*, surely! Both at Crossroads earlier, and now at Boston, the elders have been relegated to role something like tonsils, adenoids and appendices. You can remove them or leave them, without, on the whole, making any difference. The *real* leaders (both at Crossroads as well as at Boston) are the *evangelists*, NOT the elders. Therefore, by sticking with the *NIV*, Hebrews 13:17 clearly undermines eldership authority in favor of the evangelists. But this seems to be “hid” from their eyes.

CONTINUED USE OF FALSE NOMENCLATURE

Here Crossroads is writhing in the throes of being undermined both from within as well as from without (or, as Shepherd put it, “fighting for our lives to hold the fabric of this church together”)—yet they are still using the same weasel words which helped to estrange them from so much of the brotherhood to begin with.

For example, as you read the transcription (as we hope you will in its entirety), watch for such words as “share” (when they mean teach, preach or say), as “Bible Study Leaders” (formerly “Soul Talk Leaders” who teach a structured, false doctrine), as “bad attitudes” (instead of calling such attitudes by their Bible names), as “reconstruction” (when they mean meddling in another congregation’s business), and as “ministries” (which they habitually use loosely in unbiblical senses).

This characteristic refusal to call Bible things by Bible names and to do Bible things in Bible ways may seem “nit-picky” to them; but, believe it, brethren, these are things that “belong unto [their] peace.” Neither they nor we can have any genuine restoration of the original church of our Lord on any other basis!

AFTER LUCAS, LEADERSHIP SHIFTED TO BOSTON

It should have been obvious when (for whatever reason) Crossroads saw fit to “terminate Chuck Lucas as evangelist of the Crossroads Church of Christ” three years ago this August, that this would leave a power vacuum in the leadership structure of the entire Crossroads Movement. It most surely did.

However, a vacuum—even a spiritual one—cannot remain empty long. It was reminiscent of Matthew 12:43-45:

... When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the

last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

It was like this in the Crossroads Movement’s spiritual house. Leadership of the *entire movement* had been in the person of **Chuck Lucas**. Once he was nullified, though Lucas himself evidently could not move back in, nevertheless his *Chief Disciple Kip McKean* was able to usurp his place of leadership of the movement; and when he thus entered into it and took over, he influenced at least “seven other spirits” to move into the vacuum with him. They took over with a vengeance.

NEW DOCTRINES; NEW THRUSTS

It was not just *Crossroads/Gainesville* that was being torn apart, once Lucas’ leadership role shifted to Kip McKean in Boston; it was the fabric of practically the entire movement. Instead of limiting himself to teaching the strange doctrines formerly taught by his mentor Chuck Lucas, McKean soon became emboldened to invent and foster a few of his own.

Whereas the “seeds” of *evangelistic authority* indeed were sown in *Lucas’* time, it remained for McKean to bring this doctrine into full flower and give it new meaning. In Lucas’ case, he felt no qualms about invading one of what he called the “mainline” churches, sowing his doctrine, and splitting it in two. However, McKean did not stop there; he proclaimed evangelistic authority to the extent that he could move even into a “Crossroads” church, taking it over if possible, or, if not, dividing it, taking what he called the “remnant” under his own personal evangelistic authority.

How weird it was to listen to brother Whitehead (on the tape) trying to persuade his own flock there at Crossroads to “go by the Bible” (*i.e.*, follow *eldership* rule), when this is exactly what we had been trying to persuade *him* to do for all these many years—and he would not!

TALK ABOUT RIP VAN WINKLE!

All those years that some of us tried to get Whitehead and others to see that it is the **ELDERS** who are to oversee and provide direction—not green novices—and now he’s trying to get the members of **HIS OWN CONGREGATION** to see this! In the fable, it took **Rip Van Winkle 20 YEARS** to wake up—and it has taken this elder almost exactly that long to wake up to the fact that “congregational autonomy is a valid Bible concept!”

On the tapes, Whitehead confesses that he had been guilty of what he terms the “agreement syndrome,” whereby he and his fellow elders abdicated their responsibilities as elders to *direct* and *oversee* the flock. Acquiescing in the direction that the *evangelist* was taking the congregation (and in the issues and articles that were published in their bulletins then) those who were supposedly under their oversight were being led farther and farther into error.

Whitehead goes on to say that there were abuses **AND** differences in practice, even from what was being said and published in their bulletins, including “control

by edict", meaning, "don't question your 'discipler' back when it was 'prayer partner'."

CROSSROADS IS NOT CORRECTING IT ALL

However, anyone who thinks, after reading the transcription, that Whitehead, Shepherd and the Crossroads Church are now ready to give up their basic heresy and go back to the Bible whence they departed some 20 years ago, don't hold your breath. If you will study carefully what is on those tapes, they still are not ready to give it all up; they are but protesting that part of Bostonism having to do with *extra-congregational* control being usurped by Kip McKean and his disciples.

IF brother Whitehead intended more than we are saying, let him (and them) speak up NOW, that there be no misunderstanding about it later on. It was just *wrong* for Crossroads to invade the peace and harmony of the Denver churches of Christ, when they planted a "Crossroads" church in Denver, Colorado, as recently as May, 1986. Though Kip McKean and Boston manifestly have messed that all up for them, the tape makes clear that they STILL would be behind their said so-called "church planting" in Denver but for the intrusion of Boston *et al.*

SHEPHERD IS NOT GIVING IT UP EITHER

Whereas, on the tapes, Dennie Shepherd seems to have some good things to say—and he is correct on many of the positions he takes—yet it is clear that he is NOT abandoning Crossroadism entirely. For one thing, he mentions something called "reconstruction" of a church; if he is against it, he does not make it evident. He admits that the *rebaptism* of members from other congregations was practiced earlier by Crossroads (and may still be), yet he seems to take exceptions with those following Boston rebaptizing even *Crossroaders!* And his loose use of the word "ministries" in senses different from the Bible still is an offence.

"We haven't been able to do the work we needed to do," Shepherd explained to the Crossroads members that night, "because our membership is being tossed to and fro...." As far as God's word is concerned, they are going to *continue* to be "tossed to and fro" until he, the Crossroads elders, and their local members are willing to give up Crossroads' peculiar doctrines and practices entirely and go back to a "thus saith the Lord."

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

A Review Of BOSTON/CROSSROADS

(Continued from Page 1)

have the right to decide how to nurture those sheep given to them, then what authority do they have? The Boston method is one way some seek to do this (this is not to say that, as commonly practiced, it is a scriptural method), and elders do have a right to refuse to use it! If elders decide not to use the Boston method, does this give anyone the right to overthrow elderships and divide churches?

THE "MOTHER CHURCH" AND "PILLAR CHURCHES"

Like many church problems, the Boston/Crossroads philosophy began at a local congregation and has spread from there. For years these divisive teachings were centered around the Crossroads congregation in Gainesville. Through their workshops, seminars, and lectureships, these doctrines were soon found in many places. Now the major thrust comes from the Boston area. Boston has become the "mother church" of the movement.

The philosophy of the Boston church is to establish what they call "pillar churches" as strong churches in various areas to be used in their pyramid-type structure of church government. These churches are to reach into large surrounding cities, which would then reach smaller cities, and these would enter rural areas.

An illustration of this is seen in what has happened in Atlanta. Atlanta was selected by the Boston church as the center to spread this teaching throughout the southeast. They entered a congregation there and began sowing seeds of discord which, just last year, resulted in the splintering of that congregation. The Boston preacher said, "My vision for the Atlanta congregation is to become the pillar church for the entire Southeastern United States." Their view of the church is that there was no faithful congregation in Atlanta, and they worked to establish one. They have the same attitude toward congregations in each of the 24 cities they have targeted for "pillar churches."

If the Boston church were successful it would become the "mother church" for all congregations. This is why its influence must be opposed.

RECOGNIZING THE BOSTON/CROSSROADS MOVEMENT

For false teaching to exist it must develop words to describe its new doctrine. The words can be either those from the Bible (which are redefined to describe the false teaching) or other words that are introduced into the church. False teaching can be recognized by identifying these words.

It is difficult to write about the Boston/Crossroads movement without using a large paintbrush and hurting other brethren who are not a part of that philosophy. Some, who are not sympathetic to the movement, are using extremely bad judgment by using the same words that Crossroads and Boston use. We regret their decision to use them, but faithful brethren must oppose false teaching and the words used to advance it.

What words have been popularized in the church by this movement? The following is not an exhaustive list, but it will certainly help alert brethren when the movement is attempting to enter a congregation. The list includes: prayer partners, soul talks, evangelistic Bible studies, pillar churches, counsellors, interns, total commitment, lordship baptism, discipling, multiplying ministries, and house churches.

There is nothing inherently wrong with some of these words, but they have been "tainted" by the movement and as used by them represent false teaching. For example, Christians must be totally committed—but not in the sense which the movement requires. When you hear these words, be aware that they are words which have their origin in a movement which divides the Lord's body.

LOOKING AT ITS FRUITS

Whenever one begins to write about the problems that are coming out of the Boston church the response often made is, "But look at how many they are baptizing in their work." If

the only basis of judgment of the matter were how many are being baptized, there is no doubt about the movement. On the other hand, the words of Paul seem so appropriate, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." (I Corinthians 1:17). This should cause us to have another look at the fruit of the movement.

Look at what the Bible says about those who sow discord on this earth. "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look...and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19). "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Corinthians 3:17). "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17, 18).

There is more to the movement than the numbers they are baptizing. We must not overlook the way this teaching has splintered congregations all over this land. It is true that we can know a tree by its *fruits*, but let us be sure that we look at the *whole tree!*

BOSTON IS NOT THAT FAR AWAY

It is easy for brethren to think that the divisive movement, now centered in Boston, is so far away and that there is no threat where *they* are. Such simply is not the case. Many are unaware of the divisive element within the local church until it is almost too late. Lectureships, books, cassette tapes, and those placing membership are avenues used to spread the movement.

Every faithful Christian should be aware of what is happening. We must not be blinded by the apparent sincerity of the followers of Boston, nor by the great numbers of baptisms they are having. Look beyond these matters and see the *control* they exercise over their converts. Soberly consider the fact that *churches are being splintered* by their teachings. The attitude of Boston toward congregations which do not follow their pattern is that we are not faithful churches!

There are many congregations which have stood for the truth for many years. Members should emulate the faith of their faithful elderships. We must remain devoted to following the pattern for the church found in the New Testament. This will cause us to stand against all error, especially that from Boston.

—1111 36th Street
West Palm Beach, Florida 33407



"For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind..." (Hosea 8:7)

Crossroads Reaping What It Sowed

"Be Not Deceived; God Is Not Mocked: For Whatsoever a Man Soweth, That Shall He Also Reap. For He That Soweth to His Flesh Shall Of the Flesh Reap Corruption; But He That Soweth to the Spirit Shall Of the Spirit Reap Life Everlasting." (Galatians 6:7-8)

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

None of God's people, certainly, should have any wish or disposition to say "I told you so." However, the troubles that the Crossroads church of Christ, of Gainesville, Florida, now is having are but the harvest appropriate to the kind of seed that they have been sowing across this brotherhood for lo these many years! It has been a long time coming, but the prophecies contained in Hosea 8:7 and Galatians 6:7-8 most surely are coming to pass!

No date appears on two tapes that *Contending for the Faith* received of an emergency congregational meeting conducted by Crossroads' preacher and its elders recently; however, from what was said inside the tapes, it must have been one night in late June, 1988. At the beginning of the first tape, the local preacher **Dennie Shepherd** announced that one of the elders would come forward "introducing what we are doing tonight." He further said, "I'll have some comments after that, brother Whitehead (another of the

elders—IYR Jr.) will follow and I'll follow him... Well, we'll just see how it works as we go along."

The first elder [*evidently William G. Hogle, though not identified*] thanked the congregation for considering the meeting important enough to attend so that all could open up enough to understand "all that's going on." Calling attention to a passage (Acts 20:28), this first elder commented that "it's a short verse of scripture. It has a lot of accountability to it. This is where Paul called for the Ephesian elders, and he gives these instructions." He then read the passage, Crossroads-like from the *New International Version*, as follows:

Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Continuing his statement, this elder said, "In the past several weeks, this congregation has been ravaged with rhetoric such as, 'You cannot grow here; you need to leave.' 'This church is no longer a discipling church; you need to

leave.' 'These elders are not up front with all that's happening.' This rhetoric has come by telephone and personal contact from outside and inside this congregation. Bulletin and taped messages, which include remarks directed at this body of God's people. These elders have specifically asked that this not be done, and any who participated in such activities would be considered divisive. These kinds of actions cause much confusion, hurt this church, and influence people to leave Crossroads and do nothing to promote brotherhood.

"These elders have decided that in order to protect this flock, it has become necessary for us to inform you with the information which will be presented tonight. Therefore the purpose of this meeting tonight will be to remove the confusion by 1) imparting the needed information which will give YOU a basis for becoming fully convinced in your own mind, and 2) to keep you from losing confidence in this body and enable you to be able to protect it from being maligned or abused.

"I want to read you this scripture—you needn't turn to it; it will be familiar to your ears. [He then read I Peter 2:9-10 from the *New International Version*, as follows]:

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

"This is a people of God. We are his chosen people."

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd:

"I want you to know that staff and the elders have prayed and fasted over this matter. We've spent hours this week trying to be sure that our hearts are right in everything that we say and do. We recognize that perhaps you, the hearers, haven't had the same opportunity to prepare yourselves. But we approach tonight with mixed emotions. There will be a lot of emotional response that will well up inside of you. Some of the things that we are going to share with you will cause you to have a strong emotional response. Some of you will have an emotional response because we've shared them with you. We're somewhat in a no-win situation. It is our greatest desire as a congregation to get back to the kind of work that needs to be done in this city [*several 'amens' in background*]. It is unfair, however, to criticize the leadership here that has not been going to the degree it should, because, brothers and sisters, in some sense we have been fighting for our lives to hold the fabric of this church together.

"We recognize—and part of our mixed emotion—that some among you will tonight perhaps question our motivations for even having this meeting. Some of you have before you even knew the content. We're running that risk—and, before God, we know our motivations and our hearts—and we trust that you will trust us. You may wonder how did we come to where we are tonight and why we decided to do this..."

"Two weeks ago we traveled to Tampa and met with the staff and elders of the Tampa Bay congregation. If you know their situation, you know that they've been through some struggles themselves, not at all unlike the ones that we've had. And yet they, as a congregation have what you might say 'landed on their feet' and have worked through their difficulties. They are a united congregation. They're going forward again. They are re-developing a staff. They have put new Bible Study Leaders into place, and they are going forward, and they've been able to put their hurts behind them—and they've done it very quickly. And it was our

desire to find out from them what did they do and what advice and counsel would they give us that we might at this juncture of our congregation's history be able to have a positive construction of where we are and go forward. We're acting tonight on *their* advice. We believe it to be prudent.

"I need to share with you that I haven't always *personally* believed in the kind of openness that we're going to be sharing tonight. And yet, the reason I didn't believe that was because I was afraid it could cause bad attitudes. Brothers, sisters, it may. I hope it will *help* attitudes. I hope it will help you to understand that we are not responding out of attitudes; but we are trying to share facts and that the truth has nothing to hide; it can only heal.

"But sometimes the truth cuts and hurts. And I want to ask you to not, brothers and sisters, I want to ask you to not sin in your attitude tonight, even if you're hurt. Okay?... Is that biblical? Amen!

"We have decided that if we err tonight we are going to err on the side of openness. Now that's kind of hard, because some feel like you ought to do these things, and other people say, 'The elders aren't open.' I really don't know how to win that one, brothers and sisters. We're just going to try to be open. We plan to do this: we plan to treat you as an adult population, to present you with facts and allow you to make whatever decisions you feel like you've got to make.

"Brothers and sisters, I'm calling upon you, as your preacher of 12 weeks—12 *hard* weeks, I might add (I might put a parenthetical in here: I moved here for peace [*background laughter*])—I'm calling on you to come to some decision and quit being tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine. That's difficult.

"One of the reasons why we haven't been able to do the work we needed to do is because our membership is being tossed to and fro. And maybe facts will help you set your course, and, whatever your decision, do it with all your heart like I talked about this morning. But do it without getting involved in sin.

"It is not our desire tonight to be mean or vengeful or reactionary. In fact, if we were *going* to be reactionary, we would probably have presented the material a long time ago. That opportunity worked through our emotions about it [*being*] presented as facts. That's our desire—to present facts. Please, please pray to God if your attitude begins to be sinful tonight: and please be adult and examine facts. Okay? Amen? [*Voices in background said, 'Amen.'*]

"Brother Whitehead..."

Elder Richard Whitehead:

"More than anything else, tonight we want to try with all our heart to remain focused on the word of God. How we say what we say tonight is going to be so very important.

"This was important to Jesus in the things he shared and said. In John the 12th chapter, beginning in verse 47:

As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say. (John 12:47-50, *New International Version—IYR Jr.*)

"And, brothers and sisters, what I say tonight, I pray with all my heart that it will reflect what JESUS would say, and HOW to say the things that we are going to be sharing tonight!

"In Colossians, the 4th chapter, verse 6, Paul said,

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:6, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“We do not want this time tonight to be inflammatory or antagonistic. Rather what we want is to be just what we read: ‘full of grace, seasoned with salt.’

“The focus of what I’LL be sharing tonight will especially be centered in on the kinds of responsibilities that elders have in a congregation. The scriptures make it the responsibility of the elders of a congregation to direct the affairs of the congregation. So what we do tonight we want to be consistent with the word of God.

“Brothers and sisters, we don’t ENJOY these kinds of meetings. We’ve had enough of them to last me for a lifetime. And, brothers and sisters, I hope that what happens tonight will bring it to a conclusion that would be pleasing in God’s eyes, that we can go on with the responsibilities that each of us has as a member of the body of Christ. I’ve shared up WHAT are our responsibilities—the elders, the evangelists, the staff of the congregation—we’re striving with all of our heart to do God’s will. It’s important to us to speak in such way that it will come across to you ‘full of grace and seasoned with salt.’

“But, brothers and sisters, you ALSO have a responsibility to HEAR it! And (if I can say it again, in the same kind of context, in a loving, accepting way), being open to what is being said. So strive to let YOUR OWN reaction be one that is based on what the WORD is saying to YOU. And we pray that that will be the kind of response that this time tonight will receive from all of you.

“Bill shared, in *his* opening remarks, a passage from Acts 20, which gives the elders the specific responsibility to watch over the flock, to oversee the flock. There are several other scriptures that I want to share with you so that you will be able to see from the Bible where we are coming from, what our responsibilities really are—and the first of these is in Hebrews, the 13th chapter, and verse 17, beginning... [*long pause*]... I’m kind of waiting till the rustle dies down so I’ll know that you’re there. Okay?

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“In First Timothy, chapter 5, and verse 17, it’s very specific that the elders do have the responsibility for directing the affairs of the church. It says:

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. (I Timothy 5:17, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“Earlier on, as he was giving the qualifications for elders in chapter 3 and verse 5, he says:

(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) (I Timothy 3:5, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“God is looking for us, the elders, to provide the direction for THIS body, for THIS church, for those of us who are members here at Crossroads.

“And in First Peter, chapter 5, beginning at verse 1:

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s suffering and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed... (I Peter 5:1, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“Now notice particularly verse 2:

Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being

examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. (I Peter 5:2-5, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

“The things that we’ll be addressing now have affected what is happening in this congregation; and that’s why we want to address these matters up front tonight. ‘Congregational autonomy’ has been labeled a false teaching. You may not be able to read that high-lighted section—and just let me share with you here that all of this material is available. The tape tonight will be available—and we WANT you to have access to all of the information. The tapes that will be played tonight, all will be available to you so you can listen to the WHOLE tape, get the WHOLE context. What we are trying to do is be open. The particular point that I was making from this that you see on the screen is (the underscored part, the highlighted part) says, ‘those with the heritage in the Restoration Movement have wrongly used the false teaching of congregational autonomy and non-cooperation with other brothers.’”

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [*interrupting*]:

“The source is the Boston bulletin of November 1, 1987—an article by Tom Bogle... [*Pause*]... We are adjusting lights trying to make it possible for you to perhaps see a little easier...

Unidentified voice:

“I can see better now.”

Elder Whitehead [*continuing*]:

“The point is made that autonomy is not even mentioned in the Bible—and that’s the next line. You can read the whole statement later, but the highlighted part ~~there~~ says just what I said, ‘Autonomy is not even mentioned in the Bible.’

“Now there is a tape that we want you to listen to that is a part of a message that Tom Brown gave at the seminar—I’m not sure what they call that—conference—in San Diego on January 7th, 1988.

[The tape was played and recorded, but the re-recording was of such poor quality that we could not make it out for the first few sentences. However, toward the end of his statement, Tom Brown clearly said, “...autonomy—that every church of Christ is its own little isolated kingdom, separated from everybody else and getting along with nobody else and cooperating with nobody else. That word is not in the Bible and the CONCEPT is not even there. A BROTHERHOOD is in the Bible...” We could not make out the rest of his statement from the tape, but the above portion evidently was the principal message that Elder Whitehead wanted to emphasize. IYR Jr.]

Elder Whitehead [*continuing*]:

“Though the word ‘autonomy’ is not found in the Bible, the *principle* of congregational autonomy is a valid Bible concept. We shared these scriptures from Acts 20—the shepherds have the responsibility to guard their flock—Acts 20:28. The passage in I Timothy 3:5, where the elders are given the responsibility to manage the church that they are responsible for. The passage in I Timothy 5:17 that indicated that it was the responsibility of the elders to direct the affairs of the church. And so the elders are to *direct* the affairs of the church, to guard and oversee and shepherd the flock—the church that is under YOUR care. (I Peter 5:2).

“This is Biblical autonomy. It does not REQUIRE isolation. Local elders CAN cooperate with other churches—and we DO! Nothing in this precludes a brotherhood of believers. We believe in that. Brotherhood relationships—

we believe in that. Congregations having concern for other congregations—we believe in that. Just look at Second Corinthians, the 8th chapter—and you all may be in the dark; you're just going to have to, I guess, do the best you can. I'll share with you what verses 1 through 4 say, in Second Corinthians 8:

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.” (II Corinthians 8:1-4, *New International Version—IYR Jr.*)

“They wanted to be involved in helping a congregation outside of their own number. That's biblical. That kind of cooperation, that kind of concern is scriptural.

“In verses 16 through 24 of the same chapter,

I thank God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you. For Titus not only welcomed their appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.

In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you. As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you so that the churches can see it.” (II Corinthians 8:16-24, *New International Version—IYR Jr.*)

“Brotherhood of believers, brotherhood relationships, concern for congregations—these things are biblical; they're scriptural; and we need to be aware and to participate in everything that God calls us to be a part of. [*Someone said, 'Amen.'*]

“Churches also serve as models for other congregations. In First Thessalonians, the first chapter, I want to read you verses 2 through 7:

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Brothers loved by God, we know that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering. You welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. (I Thessalonians 1:2-7, *New International Version—IYR Jr.*)

“Congregations can serve as models for other congregations. Congregations can also serve as EXAMPLES to other congregations. In Second Corinthians, back to the 9th chapter, and in verse 2:

For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and our enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action. (II Corinthians 9:2, *New International Version—IYR Jr.*)

“It's right to have congregational relationships. There IS a brotherhood of believers, and we're a part of it, and we want

to be sure that the definition of the brotherhood of believers is that that God has indicated in HIS word.

“Brothers and sisters, whenever a person obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ (and I don't care where he hears it, who shared it with him, whether he read it for himself directly out of the scriptures, whether it was some group that doesn't even have a name that we would recognize), if he heard the GOSPEL, and if he obeyed the GOSPEL, he becomes a child of God, and wherever God has a child, we have a brother or a sister. And those brothers and those sisters (and I don't care WHERE they are), they are the brotherhood of believers... [*Many 'amens'*]... Brothers and sisters, that's the brotherhood that we must love... [*Amens!*]

“Why has congregational autonomy become such an issue? The concept of the 'pillar church'—now I'm not going to read it. I had a note here to read I Timothy 3:15. That's the only place where 'pillar church' is mentioned in the Bible—and that involved ALL churches because it IS the church that is the 'pillar and the support of the truth.' 'Pillar,' used in THAT sense, is biblical; it's right. But there's a concept of the 'pillar church' that has *in* it the element of control of *one* congregation by *another* congregation. Control of one congregation by another congregation or control of a congregation by an evangelist that's sent in by another congregation—this, I submit to you, is inconsistent with congregational autonomy. [*Let me have the Boston bulletin.*] The statement is made in the highlighted area, 'The St. Louis church of Christ, now under the direction of the elders of the Chicago church has had 25 baptisms since their first service on August 18th.' We rejoice in the baptisms [*someone said, 'Amen'*]; but the idea of the elders of *one* church directing the affairs of *another* church is foreign to the scriptures.

“I want us to listen to a tape that Kip recently... was recorded by Kip when he was speaking in Denver, on May the 14th, at their reconstruction.

[*Taped voice (poor quality recording) of Kip McKean:* “Secondly, I've asked for Preston to come here to Denver and lead the work at the Denver gates. And he knows just who'd rebuild the walls of Denver and the Rocky Mountain area. And he can ask some of the brothers to go to Utah, some of the brothers to go to Montana, some of the brothers to go here and there. And, see, we've got to recognize this: in the church, as in the old testament, God's kingdom has always been a kingdom and not a democracy. In a democracy, you vote; in a kingdom, you obey. You know, if there had been a democracy at the Red Sea, it would have been a disaster... [*background laughter*]... It is God's wisdom to have a kingdom—AMEN?... [*'Amens in background'*]... And the man that will lead this work, though not perfect, but he is of God, is Preston; and you need to obey in the Lord. The only time you don't obey him is if he violates scripture or violates your conscience. But, other than that, in all opinion areas, YOU... O... BEY... Amen? [*thunderous emotional response: 'AMEN!'*]

Elder Whitehead [*continuing*]:

“I think John would want me to share with you, at this point, that that tape was not produced by the Crossroads Tape Ministry. It's difficult to understand. So let me just read to you just to make sure that you picked up the part that I'm trying to deal with here in terms of *control* that's being a part of the 'pillar church' concept as it's being practiced. He said: 'And the man that will lead this work, though not perfect, but he is of God, is Preston; and you need to obey in the Lord. The only times you don't obey him is if he violates scripture or violates your conscience. But, other than that, in all opinion areas, you obey.' And he called for the 'amens.'

“Now, let's go back and look at another part of the Boston bulletin, on December the 20th, 1987. Now, the highlighted

part *this* time (the other time was 'autonomy is not even mentioned in the Bible'), I want to be perfectly *fair*, and so I want you to see what was shared in *this* bulletin about the things that we are talking about, and the highlighted part reads:

... Therefore the Boston church will NOT be over the San Diego church; but Tom Brown will continue to disciple (give input and direction) to his 'Timothy' Bruce Williams. Bruce will disciple and further train the elders (Titus 2:2) to direct the affairs of the church (I Timothy 5:17).

"Now, if that would *really* be, the way it always comes down, we would not have one church over another church. That's biblical—one church *shouldn't* be over another church. If it would always be possible just to give 'input and direction'—that's a whole lot different than *total obedience*; and we need to see that distinction. When we're talking about a disciple in the context of a 'pillar church,' from the documents that you are looking... I want you to really understand that there is no attempt to not really say what they really believe, and that is that this person has the right to call you to obedience in EVERY AREA—all OPINION AREAS. The only time that you are not to respond to that is if there is a difference in your conscience. And so we want to be sure that we understand that, if it violates scripture or violates your conscience, nobody's calling you to do that. But in every *other* area—all *opinion* areas—you obey.

"The passage that was referenced, Titus 2:2, I want to share with you... I grant, I feel sure that Titus was probably not AS OLD AS those that are being addressed in this scripture, because he is telling TITUS, verse 2, to '**teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.**' Now my understanding of that context is that's all older men. He's using that in reference to the elders.

"Even so, let me just share another passage with you. This balance, no matter which way it would go, certainly needs to be there. In First Peter 5, verse 5: '**Young men, in the same way, be SUBMISSIVE to those who are older.**' You have to have a full biblical understanding of these concepts in order to be able to appreciate what God is saying in his word. And that's what, hopefully, I am being able to get across as we share these kinds of things with you.

"Look at the Boston bulletin that he'll put on the screen, from May the 8th, 1988. I'll read the highlighted section so you can understand what's there:

Late last Fall, Kip and the elders were looking for a man—a man who could lead the reconstruction of the San Diego church of Christ, a man who could win the respect of their elders, a man whose life and family could inspire and disciple this dynamic, 700-member congregation. God led them to select Bruce Williams as that man. Today he is appointed as an evangelist in the kingdom of God.

"Now, I'm sure that the San Diego elders AGREED to this, but what we are talking about, I want you to [see], is there a difference in AGREEING and DIRECTING? Who 'directed' Bruce's appointment as an evangelist in the kingdom of God?

"In *some* sense, I want to share a couple of scriptures, the MEMBERS of the body are given input when people are being selected to serve those congregations. The two illustrations—one is in Acts, the 6th chapter, and the verses I want to share with you are verse 2 through verse 6:

So the Twelve gathered ALL the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among YOU who are known to be full of the Spirit and

wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to the prayer and ministry of the word." This proposal pleased the WHOLE group. They chose Stephen, and so on... (Acts 6:2-6, *New International Version*—IYR Jr.)

"Well, let me finish reading it; I'll take the time...

...a man full of faith, of the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas... [I hope I got this pronunciation of those right]...from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles...

"They were already now, I hope you are picking this up; they were already selected—all of the disciples had been involved in the selection process, what they were doing pleased the whole group, there was involvement in the membership in this process...

...They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them...

"After they were SELECTED, the leadership appointed those that had been SELECTED for their service areas that they were to work in.

"Another passage—on over in the 15th chapter of Acts...beginning in verse 22—what we're trying to share here is congregational involvement in their own affairs. The elders had the responsibility to DIRECT the affairs of the congregation; but in First Peter 5, the elders, with that responsibility, cannot 'lord it over' their congregation, over their flock:

Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers.

"The point here that I'm sharing with you is that it is...is there a biblical example or teaching that gives *one* congregation the right to direct the affairs of *another* congregation, or an evangelist to assume this responsibility in a congregation which has elders? Congregational autonomy is a valid Bible concept; and direction of the affairs of the congregation belongs to the elders. Therefore we cannot involve ourselves in practices which place this control in the evangelist or in another congregation.

"Now let me come back to an earlier question that I raised: is agreement 'directing'? Obviously, it's not—but I have been guilty of the agreement syndrome.

"I was an elder here in this congregation when some seeds were sown that are now bearing their fruit. I AGREED with the evangelist on the direction he was taking and the issues, articles published in our bulletin. But, in retrospect, it's painfully clear that there were abuses *and* differences in our practice from what was said and published. The elders received more direction *from* the evangelist than they gave *to* the evangelist. Some of the seeds planted then were 'control by edict'—don't question your 'discipler' (back then it was 'prayer partners'), leaders' opinions being lost. Leaders who did not go along were considered disloyal and were no longer used or permitted to lead.

"I confessed to the whole congregation last June, the 28th, just about a year to the day ago, my failures in these areas of the congregation; but apparently at that time I must not have been sufficiently specific. I hope that what I've just shared with you makes it clear. What I said then was, so you'll have something to compare:

I'm sincerely grateful to all of you who didn't give up on me and who have loved me enough to confront me and bring me to see my sins and bring me to repentance. I'm sorry it took so long. Please pray for me. I've been prideful and arrogant and guilty of lording it over some of you. Please forgive me. I don't want a hint of this in my life. My failure to listen impartially caused me to be a respecter of persons. I want to listen to every person and

be sensitive and objective and approachable. I've been guilty of not dealing with sin in others, of letting the end justify the means, when their means was sinful. I repent. My example in bearing fruit must improve. I must discipline my time and be punctual. Help me to be the best I can be. Please forgive me of these sins and pray that I will have godly sorrow. Pray with me that I will take the way out of sin which God provides.

"I hope the specifics that I've just shared with you help you to understand maybe even more clearly what I was trying to say and share with you a year ago. We need, brothers and sisters, your help as we try to correct our past mistakes. We need your help in calling sinners (those in THIS congregation) to repent and put into practice the 'one another' passages in a biblical way. We DO believe in calling a congregation to repent. We DO believe in calling a congregation back to its first love; and I hope this is clear.

"Now, I'm not going to take the time, but it has been shared that we don't BELIEVE that. Brothers and sisters, BELIEVE me, we BELIEVE it...[Background 'amens']... Maybe we are not as good at it as we need to be; so you help us to get better to be able to do the kind of job that God really wants done in this church.

"Again, the element of 'control' in 'pillar churches' is clearly seen in what has come about in our own church planting in Denver. I use that because I just feel like if we would be very specific you would understand it, you would recognize what we're talking about. The Crossroads congregation's 'planting' in Denver was RECOGNIZED and given PRAISE through February, the 26th at least, 1988. We have a letter there, and I'll read the bottom line of it from Marty in Denver, where he says, 'We will always recognize the Denver church could not have been established as effectively as it has been. To God be the glory.'

"Now let's listen to a tape that Marty... a message that he gave at the Denver 'reconstruction' on May the 13th, 1988... [NOTE: The tape reproduced evidently was poorly recorded and hard to understand. The first part we could not make out at all. The first that we COULD make out, Marty (whoever Marty is) was saying as follows. IYR Jr.]:

...the Crossroads church of Christ, of Gainesville, Florida, who... us the first year, sent us out here... their church out of which we came with their... Then along behind... Boston said they... were teaching false doctrine. They were calling Jesus something that's not biblical. Have I not given you Bible verses tonight? This is in the Bible... It's from the mouth of Jesus himself. He says you'd better repent and he called the whole congregation to repent...

"Let me share some of this again over this microphone and I think you can understand it maybe more clearly: 'And I just want to be open here about the Crossroads church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, who really supported us our first year, sent us out here. It was really their church out of which we came. We're their church planting, so to speak. But they are no longer behind us; they made that clear, and so on...'

"You'll have to judge how much we are behind the church planting in Denver. I hope you can make the distinction—and that's what we're striving hard to do tonight. We're not against places; we're not against people. What we are striving to do is to let you understand some scriptural things that we're having struggles with right here and trying to make that very clear to you.

"Now, finally, in the Boston bulletin, May 22nd, 1988—the first highlight on that; I'll get to the other one in just a minute—it says (first of all, the whole thing is labeled 'THE DENVER CHURCH OF CHRIST, The Pillar Church of the Rocky Mountain States'):

Two years ago the Denver Church of Christ was planted by Marty and Cathy Wooten...

"The Denver church became self-supporting on March the 1st, 1988, and assumed their right to become a self-governing, autonomous congregation, which, as you are aware now, we hold is biblical. This view was also held by Cecil who was one of our elders, when he was at the Oak Park Church in Chicago. The highlighted section there says,

The full time evangelists Marty Fuqua. Since we are a self-governing, autonomous congregation, until such time as qualified men can be identified as elders, the affairs of the congregation will be under the direction of a leadership committee comprised by the undersigned, Martin Fuqua, Bent Holt, James Kraus and Cecil Wooten.

"Now Preston Shepherd, as we saw earlier, has been sent by the Boston Church. Denver has been designated as a 'pillar church' for the Rocky Mountain States.

"The other part of that highlight (I've put mine aside; I'll find it again) says,

By February it was decided that they would stay and continue to be disciplined... [that's reference to... I should have started a sentence earlier]...

Therefore, Marty and Kathy moved to Boston to train in January. By February it was decided that they would stay and continue to be disciplined and the Denver church would be 'reconstructed'. The reconstruction began this past weekend, as the Gempels and I flew to Denver to call the church to repentance... and to appoint Preston Shepherd as the lead evangelist.

"Several things I want... just so you'll understand the facts—that's all I'm trying to do. First of all, the church was not, at the time that the quote here is made—the decision was made in February. At that time this was a church planting of this [Crossroads] congregation. They had not, at that time, become autonomous, which autonomy they accepted when they became self-supporting.

"Also note here that it is the Boston church that's appointing Preston Shepherd as the 'lead evangelist' in Denver. What I think you can surely understand is that this really is no longer, *de facto*, a planting which THIS church is primary in its outreach to, its influence with, its relationships, and so on. Frankly, I don't know Preston Shepherd. That's not to say anything against him. I'm sure he's a wonderful evangelist, but I'm not making... the point I'm making is that the control has passed from that congregation, as a planting of THIS church, into the Denver church, and specifically, through Preston Shepherd, who they must obey in all matters, even of opinion, unless it's unbiblical or unless their conscience is offended. And, brothers and sisters, we cannot agree that this type control is biblical.

"Now, I've got one last thing to address, and then I'll be through with the things that I'm sharing. We've had a class on authority here in the congregation. I'm not going to re-teach what we shared that night. But I do want to re-emphasize a teaching that's causing problems in this congregation by the things that are coming to it and to its members from outside. And let's look at the bulletin of August the 17th, 1986. This is the article that Ed Townsend wrote, entitled, 'Because You Say So.' He begins the article by quoting from Luke, from Luke the 5th chapter, verses I through 5:

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." (Luke 5:4-5, New International Version—IYR Jr.)

"Please understand that the 'you' in that passage is Jesus Christ. The next reference later on down the bottom third of the article, Proverbs 3:5 is addressed and this quote from the passage,

**"...lean not on your own understanding..." (NIV—IYR Jr.)
Often we rely on our own ideas and perceptions instead of listening to those who are discipling us...**

"Now the first part of Proverbs 3:5 says this: Put ALL your TRUST in THE LORD. It's CHRIST! It's the LORD that is worthy of trust, in these passages. Our human 'discipler' is NOT Christ... Our human 'discipler' is NOT the Lord... Are we obligated to trust a discipler in the same way we are to trust Christ? This passage, I am sure, has become very familiar to those here and I am simply addressing it in this way: if we can filter PAUL (Acts 17, verse 11)—and that's where the church in Thessalonica, a *model* church, was compared to the church in Berea, and the passage indicates that the Bereans were more excellent than those in Thessalonica. Why? Because they examined the scriptures daily to see if the things that PAUL, an APOSTLE, was sharing with them were so. And if you can filter PAUL, brothers and sisters, you can filter anybody else biblically... [Several 'amens.]... And the Bereans were commended for that.

"Must we fully obey when given direction and instruction from our discipler? Should our faith and trust be in our discipler? Romans 10, verse 17... I'm just going to quote some of these things in the interest of time—that's the passage that says that 'faith comes from hearing the message' of Christ. Your faith should be grounded in what CHRIST says. I Corinthians 11:1, Paul, when he admonished people to follow *him*—follow *his* example—had a caveat: 'AS I FOLLOW CHRIST.'

"It's okay to follow anybody that's following CHRIST! Are we responsible for our own faith? I guess I'm going to have to assign this as homework because I know I'm using too much of the time. Romans 14—STUDY it. See what it SAYS. That's the passage that will help you to understand that we're involved in MUTUAL edification. That's a chapter that will help you to appreciate that each one of us must become fully convinced in our OWN mind.

"Then he finishes in verse 23 by saying, 'If it's not from faith, it is SIN.' Now where did the faith come from? The message of Christ—and I'm not trying to be ugly at all. But I want you to see that you can't follow your discipler in the same way that you are called to follow Christ. Amen! If it's not from faith, it's sin.

"Should we be TOLD what's best? Or should we develop our own insight so that we can DISCERN what is best? Look at Philippians, the first chapter. I want to read to you verses 9 through 11:

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in KNOWLEDGE and DEPTH OF INSIGHT, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. (NIV)

"One other passage that I want to share that gives the same thought and idea a different way is that in First Thessalonians 5, verse 21. Let me read, beginning in verse 19, so you'll get a little better insight—

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold onto the good. Avoid every kind of evil. (NIV)

"We're not taught in the scriptures to rely on any one person. We're taught in the scriptures that it's wise to seek

advice from a multitude, from many counselors. (Proverbs 15, and verse 22)

"In Kip's message at Denver, of 5-14-88, he said, 'In a democracy, you vote; in a kingdom, you obey. The man that will lead this work, though not perfect, but he is of God, is Preston; and you need to obey in the Lord. The only time you don't obey him is if he violates scripture or violates conscience; but, other than that, in all opinion areas, you obey. Amen.'

"Brothers and sisters, we cannot support teaching wherein disciples are expected to fully obey their disciplers. The Bible teaches that ONLY CHRIST has such authority; and Christians are to be taught to obey everything CHRIST has commanded—Matthew 28:18 through 20. The 'one another' passages teach mutual submission. Ephesians 5:21 is one of those passages, where it says, 'Submit to ONE ANOTHER out of reverence for Christ.' And the thing that I mentioned a moment ago, when I was assigning Romans 14 as your homework, in verse 19, 'Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.'

"Brothers and sisters, in Ephesians 4 the source for peace is indicated—the unity which the Spirit gives. When we get back into the word of God and allow our faith to be developed from what God has SAID, and to focus in on that WORD for our direction in our lives together, we CAN have PEACE, if we can ALL be brought back to JESUS, and listen to JESUS. If we will be led by God's SPIRIT, then we can have unity: then we can have peace.

"So I plead with you, I beg of you, open your heart up to what the Bible SAYS; focus on the word of GOD; and let everything that we do be something that we could describe as walking in the steps of Jesus Christ, because he left us an example that we should walk in HIS steps. And I pray that I've been kind and loving and understanding; but I'm striving to really highlight what GOD has said and what he's calling each of us, as individual Christians, to BE and to BECOME. And I hope anything that's been shared tonight from God's word will be accepted and received and as Paul said (this is not in my notes... let me just turn and read this to finish my part of this), in Philippians the 4th chapter (we need a lot more of this kind of emphasis in these trying, troublesome times), verse 8:

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you've learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (NIV)

"May PEACE return to this congregation." [From all over the auditorium, many said, 'Amen!']

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd:

"A very wise man said one time that 'the mind can absorb only what the seat can endure.' [Titters in background]... Perhaps it would be good to just take a 30-second, stand-up-stretch-and-sit-back-down time... [Noise of those doing so]...

"I have been instructed and given the responsibility to deliver the couple of other areas that are causing consternation to the congregation. We *have* said that we are going to be ringing the bell at 8 o'clock. I don't want to give the people there in the back a heart attack that may be hearing me right now. I hope I can get through my presentation in 30 minutes. I'm going to ask them to hold off and hang onto the children until I'm through here before... and that will consist of all the presentation. I hope I can do that.

"I want to say that I *do* believe that brother Whitehead

has been loving tonight...[*Many 'amens' in background*]... And I appreciate him so much... I want to be like him in the way that he loves the brotherhood...[*Prolonged general applause*]...I hope that you're doing okay right now... Maybe some of the things that have been presented to you you're having a hard time with. I want to just kinda give you a little attitude check for yourself and ask you if you're having trouble to just stop and pray. If the things which you're seeing on the screen are causing you to be emotionally upset, ask God to help you through that. If you're becoming resentful that they're being shown on the screen, please understand that our purpose is, once again, is to try to state FACTS, and then to help YOU, KNOWING those facts, to be able to make your OWN decisions. That's our purpose.

"Much of what we're going to share now fits into the category of 'the remnant.' This is a term that has been used during the last year by Boston-related ministries. And all of us first became aware of this terminology following the split at the Atlanta Highlands church, just about this time last year...

"Gregg, if you'll show the first slide... This is the Boston bulletin. (I think we've already seen this perhaps) for July 26, 1987. In the highlighted area, it says,

The Christian remnant from four Atlanta Area churches, as well as from other churches in North Carolina, Florida and Georgia, attended the workshops...

"And then, a little bit further, it says,

...Truly a remnant of Almighty God is beginning to gather...

"At the bottom of the page, it says,

...Let us be praying for Almighty God to use this congregation in Atlanta to evangelize the entire Southeastern United States...

"Brothers and sisters, we are certainly in favor of the evangelization of the entire Southeastern United States. And we want God to raise up Christians everywhere to do that.

"In the Old Testament, the terminology of 'remnant' referred to God's only faithful people. And we were initially concerned as we received these bulletins and some of these teachings that such references to a 'remnant' were implying that the only Christians were those who were being associated with what also was then being talked about as being the 'Movement of GOD,' the Boston-related churches. We were assured when we questioned last year that it was not the intention of those using the term to imply that they *were* the only Christians.

"In the most recent editorial in *Discipleship Magazine*, is an editorial by Marty Wooten. I'm going to read the last paragraph. It says,

The commitment to fulfill God's purpose is why the true remnant will never completely bond with those who are still in captivity among the dead churches of Babylon and Assyria. Now they might find themselves in captivity for short periods of time, but they must make their way back to the Zion churches, the places where they can best fulfill God's purposes. Jesus said, I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be the members of his own household. (Matthew 10:35-36) You cannot pour new wine into old wineskins. God has gathered and will always gather His remnant in order to fulfill His plan. A serious mistake is being made in confusing this gathering with the church splits, when in actuality it is God's remnant making their way back to the promised land with God's promise to Abraham once again on their hearts.

"I think it's important for you all to understand that when we share things within which there are things we disagree that that doesn't mean we disagree with everything that

we're seeing. Okay?... We BELIEVE you can't pour new wine in old wineskins, and other things that are true that we recognize.

"But in this last paragraph of this article... let me help you understand what the whole article really indicates and then encourage you to read the whole article in its context, though time does not permit it tonight. Marty is using a metaphor to describe the church today as being made up of two basic groups—churches in captivity, which he also calls Babylonian and Assyrian churches, and the 'remnant' or the 'Zion' churches, those assumedly which are part of the... 'Movement of God.'

"The 'mainline' or the 'captivity' churches are referred to as being 'dead.' The attempt of the article is to make a distinction between 'splitting a church' (which has occurred in several places, brothers and sisters), and simply having God's faithful 'remnant' come out of the 'captivity' or 'dead' church and uniting together in another location. Personally, I feel like it begs the question with splitting churches.

"As we have said in previous meetings, we believe that God hates division and that churches must... not... be... split. There is no New Testament precedent for those who consider themselves to be more committed, or more evangelistic, or more anything, to pull out of one congregation and to cluster or swarm to churches that happen to be doing well at a given time. If this were part of God's plan, it would seem that those in the Corinthian church who were striving to live exemplary Christian lives would have been encouraged by Paul and others to move to Thessalonica, which was a church in their region that was doing great.

"Associated with this thinking and teaching has come a practice which we felt we saw coming a year ago and is now becoming quite widespread. And we've stated so many times, we believe, once again, as brother Whitehead said earlier, that wherever God has a child, we have a brother; and God's children are all of those who have obeyed a very simple gospel message. More and more statements are being made to indicate an attitude or 'spiritual elitism' to the exclusion of others as being part of the body of Christ. It is this that cause us great concern.

"I want you to listen now to a tape made in January at the San Diego Conference. Tom Brown is the speaker on this tape.

[*Tape very noisy and parts hard to make out*]:... my professors. I was impressed for a while with the teaching... learning Greek and all that stuff, and I...[*unintelligible*]...I didn't understand... of all the teachers I came in contact with there was only one teacher that I knew who was out there knocking doors and getting Bible studies and trying to lead the lost near to Jesus. I didn't understand that. It *confused* me. You understand? That was confusing...I'm not confused any more. It all makes sense... They were not disciples...[*Chorus of agreement from audience*]...They were not Christians...[*Amens*]... They were not saved...[*more agreement*]...according to the Bible...[*Amens*]...Look, I don't really look *down* on these people. I don't believe they were even instructed right!

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [*resuming*]:

"Okay, just to recap, this was Tom Brown in San Diego, where he makes the statement that with the possible exception of one of his teachers at Abilene Christian University, that the others were not Christians, and were not disciples, not saved.

"Once again, we have another tape that indicates other kinds of things that *also* concern us. This is Joe Garmon. He is a Zone Leader in Boston; and this is the occasion of the reconstruction of a 'house church' of the Boston church.

This is the Brockton House Church, the meeting that was taped of that reconstruction meeting:

[Extremely poor, noisy recording]:...the churches of Christ, in general, do not teach, do not preach, do not believe in, and as a matter of fact oppose the doctrine of making disciples before baptism. And because of that the vast majority of the churches of Christ are not saved. Now that's the cost. That's the cost involved in being disciples. That's what we're talking about.

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd *[resuming]:*

"That's not a very easy tape to understand. I'll read it as it was transcribed: 'We believe that those who have left HERE [meaning the Boston church] have left the church. They've left the Lord. And we believe that the Churches of Christ in general do not teach, do not preach, do not believe in, as a matter of fact oppose the doctrine of making disciples before baptism. And because of that the majority of people in the Church of Christ are not saved. Now that's the cost. That's the cost involved in being a disciple. And that's what we are talking about.'

"Please understand that it appears to be, at least in the context, that in the first seconds that he says 'those who have left HERE,' meaning the Boston church, have left 'the church.' He'll have to probably have indication, not only people who have totally abandoned the church in any form, but also those who have left and gone to other congregations. That's why there is the reference to the other congregations in this statement.

"Please understand this: We have absolutely no desire to defend lack of commitment in brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen?...*[Several 'amens']*... We don't have any desire to defend sinful behavior on anyone's part. Make no mistake about that, brothers and sisters. And because perhaps we have raised objections to some of these things there are those who have tried to make a case of the fact that we want to be 'soft on sin.'

"But dealing with sin is not so much what we're focusing on here, at this point, as the doctrine about who is a Christian that concerns us. We're nodding. We don't support luke-warmness. We're not for it. We want to help you get out of it if you're in it. We want to call you to repentance if that's the way your life is, brothers and sisters. I do that every time I preach. I do it in my Bible study. I have done it several times this week with individuals. That is not what is the question at this point. Such sweeping accusations concerning the salvation of brothers in Christ is something we cannot support. It is also inappropriate in THIS congregation, brothers and sisters, to make such decisions regarding brothers and sisters who choose to attend other congregations in this city.

"Do some go in order to find less commitment and expectations in their lives? Undoubtedly. Do some go in order to find less expectations? Do ALL go for such reasons? I cannot say. I cannot paint them all with the same brush. I think sometimes we've had that attitude right here; and it's wrong, sinful.

"It would be a good education for all of us to spend some time in what we have come to call 'mainline churches.' I spent a good deal of time out there. I don't agree with everything they do. I'd like to heat up the intensity of some that are there. I'd like to heat up the intensity of some of YOU that are HERE!...*[Several 'amens' from audience]*... I shared this morning about some people who are vastly more committed than a lot of us in here. And they were in a very 'mainline' church, doing what they knew and expressing their love for Jesus and the lost in a VERY effective way. We

need to be more careful about making those decisions about 'another man's servant.'

"This next tape is perhaps a little difficult to understand; it's a little lengthy. If I'm not mistaken, it's Gordon Ferguson speaking in San Diego once again. Most of these things came out of San Diego initially, at that conference. (Go ahead.)...

[Once again the recorded tape was of poor quality. The nearest we could make out, Gordon Ferguson was saying]: "It is not a real big issue...[unintelligible]...in other words, the rebaptism issue. There are a lot of leaders in the discipling ministries that were baptized again because they do not feel their baptism was right. I know there are a lot of reasons to question a baptism—they were too young, they did it to please someone else, they didn't repent, didn't change, etcetera. But you know there is a real interesting parallel here that I think you'll like here or at least find it interesting or something or other. Maybe you won't like it. Maybe it won't be interesting. But, anyway, here it is...[laughter from audience]...Unless a person has done it with the intention of being sold out to the lordship of Christ, then they have got a pretty incomplete, at best, understanding of baptism. You see that?...[Amen]...That explains a lot... there are a lot of people that got baptized in the Church of Christ that didn't become Christians. Do you see that?"

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd:

"I'm not sure that was the tape that I wanted... I wanted the one that has reference to the Church of Christ as a 'Big Denomination... I'm sorry... We have a technical difficulty here... Do you have that, Gregg?... We do have a tape in which Gordon refers to the church as a 'Big Denomination' no 'Sick Denomination'... Is that it, Gregg? Can you just read that if we're miscued? I'll give you the reference; you can check the tape..."

[Unidentified voice evidently was reading a transcription of the correct tape, on which Gordon Ferguson was saying]: I think we need to be really plain here about true religion. Years ago I heard a man say that the Church of Christ was a Big Sick Denomination. I was highly offended. No, we are not a denomination. No, we are the true church. We're restoring the original church. We've done it. I've decided in the years since then that I still don't agree with the guy, but on kind of different points. I don't think the Church of Christ is big; but now on the other two parts of that, I believe, they're spiritually sick and I believe they're a denomination. Now that much I really do believe; and I think we've got to come to grips with that for a good reason: [and then he goes on about his brother-in-law and all]...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd *[continuing]:*

"Okay. I'm sorry we don't have this as professionally done as we should have on this particular one. Let me just give you a recap; and then refer to the tape and you can get it for yourself. Gordon accuses the church of being a 'sick denomination.' Then he later talks about leaders who have been rebaptized and says, in essence, that they need to be rebaptized as anybody out of any denomination would have to be. Some members, leaders in the Churches of Christ. Okay, that is what I was looking for, John; do you have that? Okay... Is it playing, John?..."

About three days later, when my hard heart got taken care of, Jeff Brown baptized me into Jesus... [numerous 'amens']... You mean all these years you've preached and haven't been a Christian? Sounds weird, doesn't it?... [nervous laughter]... But it does explain some things in my character though doesn't it... some of these guys I taught in preacher school, explains some of that. If you don't have the Spirit, it's pretty hard to do it... What does the Bible say? It's not a question of, 'Wow! that's kind of weird! I mean, you're one of the preacher guys... What's that got to do with truth? What does that have to do with truth? 'Church of Christ baptism'—I'm not saying that there aren't

some people in the church of Christ who were baptized right; but, in my experience, I frankly don't think many were. God's going to judge that... I know I've just seen, 'Well, you've got to get baptized for the forgiveness of sins'...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [continuing]:

"Okay. That's the reference. I hope that you were able to understand it without seeing it up there. If the church is indeed a denomination, and people indeed were not properly, scripturally baptized; then they would need to be reimmersed. Once again, despite the fact, that there may be many who fit Gordon's description, such sweeping generalities and indictments are very inappropriate in our judgment.

"The next tape, John... The tape of Fort Lauderdale...

Now let me get... make a few things clear. I don't think that the only Christians... disciples are in discipling ministries. I think there are disciples in the 'mainline' churches. I don't think there are many...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [continuing]:

"If a Christian is a disciple, a disciple is a Christian. Kip is saying here, yes, there are a few Christians in the 'mainline' church. And further adjunct to that was that during that time we were with him he shared his belief that the *true* Christians would *come out* of the 'mainline' churches and join the 'remnant' churches, and that would be, I guess, proof of their true Christian standing.

"Coupled with the 'remnant' issue is the subject of rebaptism, which we have already touched upon, and have discussed in previous meetings. We have always had a small percentage of our baptisms here in this church as the result of reimmersions over the past few years and are not unfamiliar with those who have felt that decisions that were made at a very early age might not have been representative of a true commitment made to Christ.

"We recently learned some statistics—and the tape we just listened to by Gordon, where he indicates that he is encouraging people everywhere to reexamine their baptisms—we recently learned that in the Atlanta church, which was created after the division of the Atlanta Highlands church last year, the new group was reporting 108 baptisms from their inception in July until the end of 1987. We recently learned that 95 of those 108 were rebaptized. That's a little more than a small percentage. That indicates to us the possibility that there is some strong teaching directed to actively doubt their baptism and be rebaptized.

"Further we learned that, in Chicago, where they reported 600 baptisms (and we praise God for every decision for Christ, brothers and sisters)... [Amen]... that 150—one in four—were rebaptized, 56 of those being Bible Study Leaders, interns, staff members of other sorts, and one elder, who remained as an elder.

"I don't want to impugn the motives of anybody that feels that they need to be reimmersed. But I do not believe that it is our place to actively *cause* people who have obeyed the gospel to doubt their salvation... [Amen in background]... I believe this is a curse... That such a large number of people are doing this, a large percentage of them having been initially reached in ministries such as our own, where there was extensive teaching, where there was extensive cost-counting, causes us concern as to what is now being deemed essential as part of the decision to become a disciple that might be in addition to what we have taught here in the past.

"The definitions now being used to determine who is a disciple seem to go beyond examples that could have been possible in New Testament conversion, so many of which took place in the *same day*, even the *same hour* in which people heard the gospel for the first time. Current teaching

on pre-baptism acts, decisions, requirements, understanding, make it virtually impossible for one to respond in that same New Testament manner, in the same day, in the same hour, at first hearing the gospel. I believe we ought to teach everything we can. I believe we ought to count every cost that we can. But I do not believe that some of the things that are presently being practiced, if they were practiced in the New Testament, could have resulted in decisions being made on the same day. And we have abundant evidence that that was the case in New Testament times.

"We still believe that we should count the cost with those who desire to be baptized. We still believe that we need to make sure that they understand the nature of their decision and teach them as to the type of commitment involved. And I'm not saying that everyone who becomes a Christian ought to do that on the first encounter; but I'm saying that it ought to be possible that that *could* happen.

"We are currently experiencing the effects of another practice that is causing problems in other ministries—or *has* caused problems in other ministries—that evangelists have the right to call their disciples out of a congregation. Our elders first became aware of this attitude when mediating the discussions between the staff and elders of the Tampa Bay congregation and the staff and elders of the Boston church in February of this year. After having established that the Boston staff did indeed become involved in convincing Tampa Bay members to leave the congregation in Tampa Bay, the Tampa Bay staff and elders called upon the Boston brothers to repent of that. The Boston brothers asserted their belief that this is not only not sinful but that it is within the right of an evangelist to call members out of a congregation and encourage them to go elsewhere. If it is all right for them to do that at Tampa Bay, it's all right for them to do that here...

[... Do you have a Gordon Ferguson tape at this point? ...]

Gordon Ferguson [tape]:

... I was talking to one of my friends recently back in my home town. And this person was... I was encouraging them to move out of a dead church and get involved in a discipling ministry, I mean, this is the bottom line—that was it. That is what I advised everybody to do... [Amen in background]... And several of us were talking about that, and they said, 'Oh, yeah,'—we'd been through it now for some hours up to this point; I wasn't this brusque to start with—... [laughter from audience]... but this person said, 'Well, you know, we can do some good here. We'll just stay here. We choose to stay. We like it here, and we can do some good here.' I said, 'Well, if you can do *some* good here and *much more* good somewhere else, and you stay here, you are sinning... [agreement from audience]... therefore to him who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it sins; that's clear scripture—James, chapter 4 and verse 17...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [continuing]:

"I believe that that *is* a misapplication of that scripture; and if we were to all apply that every time that there was another place that we could move to that we might be able to do better we'd be in a constant state of movement from one place to the next. That's not sound reasoning. And it also would imply that all of us would probably have to be in a very few churches in the world... [Question from audience]... Could you hold your questions until a little bit later? It conflicts with several things... Such an attitude of feeling that some churches are dead and best moved away from did not originate in the Boston movement. Our students from this congregation, in the '70s, often were guilty of this attitude toward their home congregations and the members within them. It is fair and accurate to say that they picked up on the attitudes of *some* of their present leaders at that time.

Many of the problems that we encountered with the brotherhood in those times came as a result of such statements and attitudes. But, brothers and sisters, when we discovered that this was happening back then, we began to have devotionals to teach young Christians how to conduct themselves in these situations and to work more effectively within those congregations, and with good success, and many of you have said to me, 'If I have to go to another 'going home' devotional, I think I'll gag.'...['*Amens*' in *background*]...So you know the truth of what I said.

"Our efforts were not always successful. Many in this congregation have received calls and letters from brothers and sisters in other congregations encouraging them to leave Gainesville for places that offer better opportunities to grow. One sister that I'm aware of has received five such calls from five different ministries. Considering what is being said publicly about *our* ministry here, it is not surprising that some feel it's their duty to place these calls to you.

"I'm going now to instruct John to share some tapes (and these tapes are not pleasant) I need to tell you that I really struggled with my heart when I heard them the first time; and I think you will, too...It may hurt you to hear these... We thought long and prayed long and hard before deciding to share them for fear that our motives would be misunderstood—and, as I said earlier, we have decided to err on the side of openness... I want you to remember that we are not here to focus on *people*. We are to focus on the *word of God* and what is *right*... The Joe Garmon tape, please...

Joe Garmon [*tape from Boston*]:

...I started out 14 years ago, down in Florida with a group that, man... there was this zeal, I felt strongly, a heart-felt sincerity from the Lord, and there was a strong-line commitment, and it did not take long for that to be watered down and to become nothing... A church that had the whole NATION roaring against them because of the radical commitment (they called the 'total commitment movement'; that's what it was called) had the whole NATION upset with them... [*several phrases unintelligible*]... and when that happened, had it not been for Boston, the kingdom would have stopped just like it's done generation after generation...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd [*resuming*]:

"I know that Joe Garmon does not speak for every person in Boston. He can only speak for himself. He says, 'I started out 14 years ago, down in Florida (meaning Crossroads) with a group that, man, there was a zeal. I felt strongly a heart-felt concern in serving the Lord. There was a strong-line commitment and it didn't take long for that to be watered down and become nothing. A church that had the whole nation roaring against it because of its radical commitment—see, it was called the 'total commitment movement' and that's what it was called—had the whole nation upset with them, had now become a *regular* church. And when that happened, had it not been for Boston, the kingdom would have stopped, just like it's done generation after generation..."

[Your Kip tape from Fort Lauderdale...]

Kip McKean [*tape from Fort Lauderdale*]:

...even if we look at the Crossroads churches... and we always need to be thankful to them for the things in the past. Amen?... [*chorus of 'amens'*]... Always thankful... But even now that's become... [*several phrases unintelligible*]... They now oppose the work in Boston...

Evangelist Dennie Shepherd:

I doubt you could hear that very well: "It is sad to say, that even as we look at the Crossroads church at this hour—and

we always need to be thankful for men of faith of the past. Amen?... Always thankful... But even now that's become rubble, its gates burned with fire. It is sad they now oppose the work in Boston..." [I misquoted that as being from Fort Lauderdale; I really wanted the Fort Lauderdale tape; but go ahead and put the Fort Lauderdale tape now. This one took place at the Denver reconstruction... Do you have the transparency on that, Gregg?... Sorry, we probably needed a dry run on this. I don't think I could stand a dry run on this, brothers and sisters. It says, "But you know something? Now I'm going to speak family..." Do you have that? Okay... At the Fort Lauderdale reconstruction—I'll refer you to the tape; John may find it here in a minute]; "But you know something? Now I'm going to speak family. I believe the church is family. Sure I'm from Boston. You're down here in River Grove; but we're one church. We're one... I just... you know it is... It hurts so much. I know Sam... Sam Laing... feels the same way. It hurts so much that some of the brothers and sisters from Crossroads have deserted the standard of discipleship that Jesus laid out in his word as they've grown older..."

"Brothers and sisters, with these and other statements that have been circulated and have come to our attention, it is a small wonder that there are those who have felt it their Christian duty to try to assist you, our members, to leave. In addition to these outside influences, we've had a great deal of gossip and slander take place right here in this church. I have repented of not dealing with this in a more scriptural manner and have of late, instead of allowing it to simply be a source of discouragement to me and to others, have begun to locate the source of the talk and call them to repentance; and I am committed to continue to do that. This is the right and responsibility... It is the right and scriptural thing for me to do as a Christian. It is also the responsibility of every one of you as members of the body of Christ.

"There are two ways to stop this unwholesome talk—for the talkers to stop; and I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to stop; and for the listeners to quit providing an audience... This sin will not be tolerated. Undermining the ministry here through direct attack or innuendo is sinful and will be dealt with. Such conversations are destructive... and divisive... and the Bible is clear in which way in the manner in which divisive brothers and sisters are to be treated... If you will turn in your Bibles to Romans 16... and verse 17:

I urge you... [16:17—you probably can't see this]... I urge you brothers to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teachings that you have learned... (NIV)

"Brothers, he not only says to watch out for them, but he gives the prescription. He says,

...keep away from them...

"I want to charge you, as your minister, to keep away from those who undermine the ministry of this church. Keep away from them.

"Brothers and sisters, if you eat garbage, you will get sick. And I believe that this kind of divisiveness is garbage that is causing us to become sick. Keep away from it. I charge you to stay away from this, and stay away from those who talk, whether it be innuendo or direct attack on this ministry, undermine the ministry and the work that is to be done in this city.

"I want to share with you, finally... (I don't know whether it is finally or not... if you're an optimist you just put your shoes on)... I'm frustrated, brothers and sisters, I will share my heart. I did not seek the job that I do, though some of you will argue with that. I've heard that I've been accused of

trying to set up my position as I presently hold it. As God is my witness, I didn't come here to do that. We are operating with one-third the staff we had 12 weeks ago; and we're all working hard. We're spending lots of our time that ought to be spent in productive pursuits straightening out messes that have come from some of the things that we've heard and seen and talked about tonight. We are trying to pull together a Seminar. Three days after I was appointed to this position I was taken to a meeting where I had to conduct this meeting with all other ministries in the church... that have previously supported our Seminar and pull together a Seminar; and I've been inundated by those responsibilities; and this has not been an easy year to get together a Seminar.

"One congregation, in response to what we've been trying to do in this congregation—one congregation of the so-called 'Movement of God'—is boycotting our Seminar and publishing in their bulletin that their members not to come in view of what's happening in Gainesville. Another has scheduled a conflicting workshop in the same city at the same time as our Seminar. I'm frustrated. I'm frustrated that some in this congregation are beginning to operate on a 1930s-Depression-run-on-the-bank mentality—because one has lost confidence, you'd better pull out, too.

"Where is this going to end? Brothers and sisters, I'm begging you, please settle down and give us a break. Will you please do that? I'm begging you from the heart. This guy can only take so much of this... I'm trying to have a family life... I'm trying to share my faith... I'm trying to lead my Bible study... I'm trying to just do the work of the ministry, and I'm having to do things that really ought not to be the work of the ministry—and so are these elders.

"You may be critical of the fact that we've called this meeting. We're trying to use the best use of our time. Otherwise, within the next six months, half of you would be making appointments with us about these very matters. We know that because we know it's been going on the last six months. Please don't be critical of our elders for what they haven't done. They have worked night and day and with tears—and it's all been because of this. And then they've been criticized for not doing the work of the ministry. Would you be frustrated? I'm frustrated. You need to be angry that your leaders have had to take themselves away

from leading you in positive directions as well as we would like to be able to do that—a new staff. Settle down. Give us a break.

"We have planned to provide training and leadership that we're accused of not providing. I noticed when I visited here a year and a half ago that you didn't have the kind of training and leadership that you needed. And now some are trying to blame that on me. *I wasn't here* a year and a half ago! I'm doing what I know to do. I'm not real smart; but I'm just doing what I know to do. And I'm doing some things that I don't even know how to do, with God's help. Could I ask you to do the same? I'm not going to ask you to do anything that I'm not willing to do myself.

"Satan's disturbances have sought to keep us from getting further down the road to our recovery. You may be frustrated tonight that we had to spend tonight. Brothers and sisters, if we could clear it out in three hours of everybody's time, I guarantee that it will be to the benefit of your staff and elders and a lot of other people.

"I don't regret—and these elders don't regret—one minute of the time we have studying with those of you who have come to us upset, your faith shaken, confused. I don't wonder you felt that way. And we don't regret for one minute any time that we've given to you for that purpose. Okay? We regret what has caused you to feel that way. We resent what has caused you to feel that way. And if this meeting does its intended purpose, we can go back to work...

[EDITORIAL NOTE: There was more of Crossroads' congregational meeting with their elders and preacher that night; however, from this point onward, it was almost entirely Evangelist Dennie Shepherd setting forth some things that he and the elders were planning to try to return their ravaged situation to some degree of normalcy. Having already devoted this extraordinary amount of space to as nearly as possible a word-for-word transcription of the aspects of the meeting down to this point, we really feel this is all the space we can give to it at this time. Anyone desiring a copy of the two tapes from which this transcription was made, please address your request to Crossroads Church of Christ, 2720 S.W. Second Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32607—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

5,000 Extra Copies Printed This Issue For Those Who Wish To Order

It has been quite some time now since we got out a Boston/Crossroads issue so "special" that we saw fit to enlarge our regular print order. However, owing to the special revelations transcribed from the tapes of that specially called meeting at Crossroads, published herein, anticipating that many will want to order BUNDLES of it for general distribution where you are, we printed 5,000 copies "extra" this time. Please look to the BUNDLE RATES as listed in the middle of the masthead on Page 2. It will help if

you might enclose your check for the correct amount and address your order to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226**. Also, should you need sets of our "Crossroads Packet", which is made up of approximately 20 back issues on Crossroads published since 1979, please enclose \$9.95 per packet. Please do not confuse bundles of THIS special issue, however, with our *Crossroads Packets*; they are not the same.

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FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

"You Can't Know Until You Go"

WE WENT TO BOSTON

Ray Joyner and Charles White

When we learned that the "discipling ministries" intended to plant churches in Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica, areas in which the Forrest Park church, Valdosta, Georgia, is working, we began to ready ourselves for an onslaught. Diligent and ongoing studies were made from available literature authored by faithful brethren which proved invaluable to us.

However, knowing the predisposition of many brethren to say, "You can't pass judgment until you actually go," it was decided that **Ray Joyner**, one of the Forrest Park elders and **Charles White**, one of the assistant coordinators of the Central American work, would make the journey to the 1988 *World Missions Seminar* sponsored by the Boston Church of Christ on September 1-4, 1988. The lessons we learned and the experience with which we were bombarded were so eye-opening and soul-shattering that it was deemed necessary to share this information with the brotherhood at large.

QUOTATIONS FROM LITERATURE ACQUIRED

We can learn much from what others say about this movement, but we knew that the best information was that available from the movement's own sources. Following are selections of quotes which faithful brethren should find enlightening:

From the Chicago Church of Christ publication, *Evangelism! Speed His Coming*, 1988 NAES Edition, Volume 2:

"Our theme this year reflects their constant awareness of the imminent return of Jesus to the earth [emphasis ours]...Peter warns that scoffers will come mocking their longing for Christ's return. He then reminds them of two things...Second, the reason his promise hasn't been fulfilled yet is that *he wants more men to repent!* [Emphasis ours]...He then gives an admonition for us to live godly lives as we look forward to that day and *speed its coming* [emphasis ours]....Maybe—just maybe—this is the age God has been waiting for." (Page 2)

COMMENT: The "speed his coming" aspect of this

teaching is exactly the same position as taken by the Jehovah's Witness organization.

"Matthew 24:4-14 pertains to another time in history than the one the disciples knew of. Matthew 24:15-28 is centered around first century circumstances." (Page 4)

COMMENT: Matthew 24:34 specifically teaches that the events mentioned from verse 4 through 34 would come to pass in the generation in which Jesus was speaking.

"From Jesus' end times message, there are only two things that are yet to happen—WORLDWIDE PERSECUTION and THE GOSPEL GOING INTO ALL NATIONS [emphasis theirs]. (Page 6)

COMMENT: Jesus prophesied the gospel would be preached in all the world (Matthew 24:14) and the gospel was preached into all the world in his generation (Colossians 1:23).

"Being handed over to persecution, hatred and betrayal, even death, are in store for Christians prior to Christ's return." (page 12)

"It is time to 'wake up' and believe God when he says that Jesus is coming soon." (Page 13)

COMMENT: *Where* does God say Jesus is coming "soon" anywhere in the Bible?

"The Lord will RETURN TO EARTH TO VISIT US, says Peter." (emphasis ours)

COMMENT: This is a fundamental tenet of premillennialism.

From the Chicago church of Christ publication, *Chicago Fire*, for September 1-4, 1988, Volume 6, Number 23, referring to a "reconstruction" in Charleston, Illinois:

"Later, Roger (Lamb) appointed John Mannel to serve as *Charleston's Elder.*" [Emphasis ours.]

From the Central London Church of Christ publication, *A Light to London*, for October, 1987, Volume 6, Number 10, referring to **John and Rose Partington**:

"John, together with the Evangelists, is participating in a
(Continued on Page 3)

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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Editorial...

“Alert But Not Alarmed”?

The frustration some of us feel at the lackadaisical attitude exhibited by others toward the *Boston/Crossroads Movement* and its encroachments upon the brotherhood of Christ is almost beyond expression.

For more than two decades now this movement has been forming its onslaught and gathering strength—marching like an army of soldier-ants across the land; yet, warn as we might, the “wise” ones among us never arouse themselves to do anything about it where *they* are until it already is *too late* to stop the invasion.

KNOCKING ON NASHVILLE'S GATE

As late as the Saturday morning of August 27, 1988, a front-page item appeared in the *Nashville Banner*, under the heading of “STUDENTS WARNED ABOUT SECT—Lipscomb Chief Urges Boycott.” Lipscomb University President **Harold Hazelip**, almost apologetically (finally) was warning his students, saying, “This is the first negative announcement I have made during my two years at Lipscomb; but I felt like I should do it.”

Indeed.

He has been *featuring* the likes of “Christians-in-All-Denominations” **Rubel Shelly** in chapel speeches on campus—even advocating letting him and apostate **Ashwood church of Christ** use the Lipscomb auditorium until *somebody else* blew the whistle and stopped it; but now he is all exercised because members of the Boston so-called “discipling” ministry were spreading printed invitations on the Lipscomb campus two days before!

TIME TO WARN IS BEFORE IT IS NEEDED

As to the relative threat to the truth of the gospel, comparing Boston with Shelly and Ashwood, brethren should not turn on their heels for the difference. Either philosophy, unless nullified, is a destructive force.

Yet, in the Banner article, Hazelip was wringing his hands against Boston, knowing full well that he would not do the same wherein Shelly and Ashwood are concerned. Verily, “**the legs of the lame are not equal**” (Proverbs 26:7).

And then, under date of September 11, 1988, in the Granny White Pike church bulletin that they call *Aim*, Editor **William Woodson** (who also heads up the graduate program at Lipscomb) headed his article, “**ALERT BUT NOT ALARMED.**”

Well, they had *better* be alarmed—and not with the “business-as-usual” type of concern either! Like insurance, the time to warn is *before* it is needed; if you wait until it is *needed*, it's *too late to get it!*

WHY ANOTHER BOSTON/CROSSROADS ISSUE?

Having devoted our *September/1988* issue to “A REVIEW OF THE BOSTON/CROSSROADS MOVEMENT,” brethren who refuse to be alarmed no doubt will question why have another one, back to

back, in October. Simply because this is how precipitately the threat is breaking.

As early as last May, all antennas should have been raised and quivering, when **Kip McKean/Boston** ordered the dissolution of the **Birmingham City [Alabama] Church** and the removal of its members to the Boston-style, apostate **Atlanta Church of Christ**, in Atlanta, Georgia. [Look for *The Birmingham News* article of Friday, May 27, 1988, reproduced in this issue of *Contending for the Faith*.]

Is it wisdom to wait until this pernicious, insidious movement is practically at our gate with a battering ram seeking to knock the door down before alerting our people to the danger? Or is it greater wisdom to warn our brethren and churches while there is *still time* both to *alert*—and also to *alarm*—everyone, so they can withstand and possibly even turn back the onslaught!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

We Went To Boston

(Continued from Page 1)

sponsored *parachute jump and extended fast to raise money for immediate aid to the needy [emphasis ours].*" (Page 2)

From the Birmingham Church of Christ publication, August, 1988, *Five Month Report*:

"Among the most zealous were the teens, who did some *street theatre* [emphasis ours] and attracted a large crowd in the market place. (Very scriptural!)"

From the *LOVE (Let Our Vision Expand)* offering for the poor brochure from Central London Church of Christ:

"Every *Wednesday night, as the plate is being passed, you put in your gift for the poor.*"

From the Atlanta Church of Christ brochure advertising the debut album of "*Two Thirty Eight*", a musical group:

"Stephen Bowen—*Electro-Drums and Vocals* [emphasis ours]
Robert Duncan—*Lyrics, Music, Keyboards and Vocals* [emphasis ours]

Kevin Holland—*Guitars, Vocals and Leadership* [emphasis ours]

Van Stewart—*Bass and Vocals* [emphasis ours]"

COMMENT: Lest we think this is just an "extra-curricular" group, the brochure is headlined, "**The Atlanta Church of Christ Presents...**"

The "church planting" in Singapore is called "The **Central Christian Church of Singapore.**"

A GREAT EMPHASIS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEADING

Throughout the seminar (and reflected in various literature), it is obvious that this movement believes the Holy Spirit leads them.

From the San Diego Church of Christ publication regarding the "reconstruction" of the Phoenix Valley Church of Christ:

"...the Spirit's fire had made it even hotter in the souls of the brothers and sisters..." (Page 1)

From the Sydney Church of Christ publication, *Attack on Australia*, Volume 2, Number 3 May/June, 1988:

"They will be blunt in expressing the truth; they will be known as sheep who drink the spirit of God..." (Page 1)

From the Hong Kong Church of Christ publication, Volume 1, Number 3, September 11, 1988:

"Pray for God to blast open the doors to China, to prepare radical disciples from this church, and for the Spirit to swiftly send us to Peking, Shanghai, Canton, Nanking, Taiwan, indeed all over this great and ancient land." (Page 4)

From the Indianapolis Church of Christ publication, *Indy Triumph*, Volume 1, Number 1, August 14, 1988:

"Today God's Spirit and his people rejoice at the appointment of Steve Staten as Evangelist of the Indianapolis Church of Christ." (Page 1)

From the Johannesburg Church of Christ publication, Volume 3, Number 2, referring to the "reconstruction" of the Johannesburg group:

"Every member was called back to their original commitment to be a disciple and the Holy Spirit began to work powerfully." (Page 1)

KIP MCKEAN CALLED "A PROPHET"

At the Friday evening session of the World Missions Seminar, a young man dedicated his book to **Kip McKean**, now the missions evangelist for the Boston church. The dedicatory poem was entitled, "There's a Prophet in the Land," referring to Kip McKean.

Dr. Al Baird, one of the elders/evangelists of the Boston church, stated:

"God has always raised up leaders... He raised up Noah, he raised up Abraham, he raised up Isaac, he raised up Jacob, he raised up John the Baptist, he raised up Paul, he raised up Luther, he raised up Zwingli, he raised up Calvin, he raised up Campbell, he raised up Stone, he raised up Lipscomb. And on, and on, and on. And, brothers and sisters, I'm here to tell you that God has raised up *Kip McKean*. You see, Kip leads this movement because *God has raised him up*... Kip is not Jesus; Kip is not an apostle; Kip is not inspired; Kip is not divine... Kip is not perfect and Kip is not even almost perfect, but he's a man of God so *God can use him.*" [Emphasis ours]

COMMENT: This is a most penetrating insight into the place Kip McKean has in this movement and the admiration which he is given.

However, throughout the seminar—in speeches, personal conversations we had and in writings we perused—the strong impression was given that Kip McKean is considered to be *on par* with the apostle Paul in leading the discipling movement into all the world. This impression is further underscored by the fact that Kip and Elena McKean have resigned as "leaders of the Boston church" to serve as missions evangelist and missions women's counsellor to the movement.

IN THE ASSEMBLIES THEMSELVES

On Thursday evening, 9,700 people assembled in the Boston Garden for the opening session. "Youth-Rally"-type songs were sung at the beginning and were accompanied by hand-clapping, foot-stomping and not a few incidents of actual dancing. After the singing, the lights were extinguished and a preview of the musical *Slingshot*, the story of King David, was shown. This preview featured David strumming on his lyre and backed by a choral group *and band*. At the call to prayer, 9,698 people got on their knees.

The main speaker, "lead-evangelist"-to-Mexico City **Phil Lamb** made the statement, "It's not doctrine that will save us, but love."

On Friday evening, devotional songs were again sung and the pre-speech entertainment was by a group from the Toronto Church of Christ which sang "gospel songs."

complete with *dancing* and *being accompanied by a band*. On Saturday evening, at the conclusion of the program, the musical *Slingshot* was presented, complete with *instrumental accompaniment*.

Kip McKean was the featured speaker on Saturday's program and during his very electrifying speech, he made the statement that we should kill some sacred cows, among which were mainline traditions such as *independent congregational autonomy*.

Three million dollars was the goal for the offering on Saturday evening and we have no doubt that this goal was reached.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

1. We figured the average age of the over 10,000 participants was about 20, and 95 percent of the people present were in this age bracket. This is definitely a "youth movement" and the influences of the discipling ministries will spill into the next generation-and-a-half unless it's stopped.

2. In the book displays, the *New International Version* was the *only* translation for sale and all scripture quotes were taken from the *NIV*. We noted that many of the erroneous teachings came directly from the *NIV*.

3. We had the distinct impression that the only difference between what we saw in these assemblies and a Pentecostal church assembly was the absence of healings and tongue-speaking.

4. This movement is not dying. It is vibrant, alive, dedicated, and seemingly has all the money it needs to accomplish its purposes. None of the books, printed handouts, seminar information and reports were shabbily done; they were all professionally designed and printed. When they tell us, "We're going to give our best," they are not joking.

5. It is obvious that the "discipling ministry movement" has given up on convincing the "mainline churches" that they are legitimate. They fully intend on financing their own operations, aggressively pursuing their goals throughout the world and taking their movement to every creature on the face of the earth—totally divorced from expecting any support from the mainline churches. If a mainline church wants to be "reconstructed," they will be delighted to oblige, but if no church in a town wants to be "reconstructed," they will then instigate a "church planting."

6. A well-known brother has observed about this movement that "**It's the illegitimate child of our own lethargy.**" As long as the focus of too many churches is not evangelism, but the purchasing of buildings, paying huge salaries to "church managers" who are called evangelists, calling our missionaries "beggars," streamlining our services to "beat the denominations" to the restaurant and showing our young people anything but energy, then we will surely pay an awful price.

We're already paying it and will continue to pay it until we wake up to this threat to New Testament Christianity.

Sadly, we fully realize that many brethren and churches state, "They must be doing *something* right—look at how they're growing." The same could be said (and too often isn't) about the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

(NOTE: *Ray Joyner* is an elder at the *Forrest Park church of Christ, Post Office Box 2331, Valdosta, Georgia 31604-2331. Telephone: (912) 242-2174. Charles White* is one of the assistant coordinators of *Central American Missions, which is under the oversight of the Forrest Park elders. Address: Post Office Box 3799, Valdosta, Georgia 31604-3799. Telephone: (912) 242-1069.*)

Editor Conducts Seminar Re: Boston/Crossroads For Las Vegas Area Churches In September



Ira Y. Rice Jr.

At the invitation of the Oakey Boulevard church of Christ, of Las Vegas, Nevada, **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**, Editor of *Contending for the Faith*, flew there for the weekend of September 16-18, 1988, to conduct an area-wide seminar regarding the doctrinal errors of Boston/Crossroads and their "Multiplying Ministries" movement.

Having been divided already—not just once, but twice—over a combination of this movement, plus a variety of other errors, it was felt by some at Oakey Boulevard that this might serve at least as a beginning toward the solution of the multifarious problems in that church and region.

Invitations were sent to every church in the immediate area of Las Vegas plus many others within a radius of 200 miles; and participation in the seminar was noted from many congregations in addition to Oakey Boulevard.

The Friday night session was devoted to an understanding of the history and background leading up to the "Crossroads" Movement, as it originated in Gainesville, Florida, in the late '60s. Saturday morning, we discussed the Crossroads Movement, *per se*—going on to set forth the further developments and refinements from Boston at the evening session.

Sunday morning, Rice left the general

theme of the weekend entirely in order to present a "positive" lesson on World Evangelism. At the closing session that evening, he concluded with "**The Boston/Crossroads Movement—What Can Be Done About It?**"

Other matters which appear to be plaguing the church at Oakey Boulevard, of course, were not addressed; however, the feeling was expressed at the close of the Seminar that at least Boston/Crossroadism no longer will be an issue there. Similar such efforts need to be held at strategic places all across the brotherhood, not waiting until the twin heresies from Boston and Crossroads already have split churches and it already is too late.

W. E. (Bill) Wardlaw, who ministers at *Farley/Huntsville, Alabama*, conducted a similar seminar some two or three years earlier at Henderson, Nevada.

Others who are prepared to carry out such efforts of enlightenment on this subject include **William S. (Bill) Cline**, Editor, *Firm Foundation*, of Pensacola, Florida; **Eddie Whitten**, elder, *Brown Trail/Hurst, Texas*; **Noel Merideth**, elder/preacher, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee; **B. C. Carr**, Director, Florida School of Preaching, of Lakeland, Florida; **Jackie Stearsman**, of the same school; and, no doubt, numbers of others.

LOCAL AUTONOMY DENIED WITH A VENGEANCE

Anyone who thinks that Kip McKean and the Boston so-called "Discipling" movement have not **TOTALLY ABANDONED** the doctrine of local autonomy among the churches of Christ needs to study what they did to the Birmingham City Congregation, in Birmingham, Alabama.

In the RELIGION section of *The Birmingham News* for Friday, May 27, 1988, News Religion Writer **Greg Garrison** told the story. By what right does the so-called "Pillar Church" in Atlanta "request" the Birmingham City Congregation to "dissolve", "uproot" and "move to Atlanta"? If you will refer back to our issue of October/1987, you will note that

it was Kip McKean and Boston who presumptuously **divided** the former Atlanta Highlands [Crossroads] Church, forming what they called "The Atlanta Church of Christ" out of the split, then, just as presumptuously, declared this new creation of their own invention to be "The Pillar Church For The Southeastern United States." Since Birmingham is in that sector, thus, by *their* reasoning, they can *set up, disband or move around* any congregation or portion thereof that they like.

But read it for yourself, as follows:

THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS

RELIGION

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1988

Including Metro South & Shelby and Life/Style-Sec. H

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A TEST OF FAITH



Jim and Gayle Lovvorn fought to get their daughter out of Birmingham City Congregation.

Church's role criticized by some as too dominant

Jones dropped out.

But his former fiancée remained, even going to Atlanta for a job interview, Jones said. When she returned from the interview wearing a new dress she had bought, her discipleship partner chastised her, saying it was a waste of money, he said.

Little more than a week ago, his former fiancée's mother called her daughter to immerse a Bible verse, he said. Instead of her immersing her daughter, she called a woman

over here.

He said that, as far as he knew, about 50 people were planning to move to Atlanta and join the Atlanta Church of Christ, where he will be serving as an intern beginning June 1.

This is what the Bible

didn't know how the church started. "I really had to pin them down to get the information," she said.

She was then directed to an elder who explained that the church had been started by General Church of Christ in Huntsville, which in turn had been started out of the Atlanta congregation, which in turn had been started from Boston. The Crossroads Church of Christ

Church's role criticized by some as too dominant

By Greg Garrison
News religion writer

Buddy Jones said last year he and his fiancée met members of the Birmingham City Congregation, who invited them to an informal discussion of the Bible in a home setting.

During the Bible study, the people were friendly and attentive, Jones said. They asked for and listened to his interpretation of Bible verses, he said.

Later, he and his fiancée confessed and repented their sins and they were baptized by immersion — they both had grown up in the United Methodist church, but any previous

baptism was invalid, according to their new church.

After they became members of the Birmingham City Congregation, their lives began to change dramatically, Jones said.

At one point, Jones, who had been dating his fiancée for about four years and talking marriage with her for the last three, suggested in a discussion with church leaders that maybe he needed to spend more time apart from her.

"They jumped on that," he said. "They started setting timetables for how many times we should see each other in a month."

While Jones' discipleship partner — the church member assigned to supervise his life as a Christian — advised him to spend less time with the woman he had planned to marry this fall, she was getting similar advice from her discipleship partner.

As time went on, church leaders intensified their efforts to keep Jones and his girlfriend apart, he said.

"We weren't supposed to call each other, we weren't supposed to see each other," Jones said. "The only time I would see her was at church services. I would maybe say 'Hi' to her in passing, but she might as well be a total stranger."

The mother of Jones' former fiancée had become alarmed by the changes in her daughter's life, she said. Her daughter had moved from a nice apartment near her job at a retail store and had moved in with three other girls from the church. "She (the 26-year-old daughter) said, 'Mother, I've had to borrow money to live.' That's unusual, because she has a very good job," the mother said.

"We were encouraged to live with only people in the congregation," Jones said. "The only people you see and talk to is them, except when you're out evangelizing."

Young unmarried couples were not allowed to spend too much time together, apparently for fear that they might begin to discuss differences with the church teachings, Jones said. He said he was encouraged to go out with different single women in the church, rather than the same person on a regular basis.

Not long after church leaders announced on Easter that they wanted to dissolve the Birmingham congregation and have members move to join the Atlanta congregation, Jones dropped out.



NEWS STAFF PHOTO/JOE SONGER

Buddy Jones, former church member, left congregation after move to Atlanta was announced.

But his former fiancée remained, even going to Atlanta for a job interview, Jones said. When she returned from the interview wearing a new dress she had bought, her discipleship partner chastised her, saying it was a waste of money, he said.

Little more than a week ago his former fiancée's mother asked her daughter to interpret a Bible verse, he said. Instead of her interpreting it herself, she called a woman from the Birmingham City Congregation to ask for an interpretation.

"That is bordering on mindlessness," Jones said.

Since then, Jones' former fiancée, whose family asked that she not be identified, has left the church and sought counseling, Jones said.

"I don't know if we're meant to be together or not," he said of their relationship. "But as a part of that church we would have never had a chance to find out."

Jones insisted that he is not speaking out of bitterness.

"All the people are very loving and seem very caring and open with each other," he said. But he added, "You can be deceived by people who themselves are deceived and don't know it."

Richard Fendler, a professor of finance at Birmingham-Southern College, and his wife, B.J., have been mem

bers of the Birmingham City Congregation for more than two years — longer than lead minister Dale Mahfood and associate minister Brad Simpson.

They saw the former minister, Tom Jones, leave about a year and a half ago to take on new assignments in Huntsville and then Boston. They saw Dale Mahfood arrive as his replacement.

The Fendlers have led "Bible talks" in their home for married couples. That is just one aspect of their religious life in the Birmingham City Congregation, a church that has enriched their lives, Fendler said.

"It gives a common focus in your marriage that draws you together," he said. "I've seen people very dedicated to prayer."

Although the church is dissolving and joining another church in Atlanta, Fendler said that is not why he decided to accept a job this fall at Georgia State University, although he will be attending Atlanta Church of Christ with other former Birmingham church members.

"In Atlanta, most of the people are married," said Fendler, who said he has seen admirable qualities in the other married couples during their periodic visits with the Atlanta congregation.



Serious relationships with God

Members of the Birmingham City Congregation and the Atlanta Church of Christ are not casual Christians, Fendler said.

"People are very serious about their relationships with God," he said, adding that they are a close-knit group.

"I have some of the best friends that I've had in my life right now," Fendler said.

Dale Mahfood, born in Jamaica and raised in Florida, said he came to Birmingham after a two-year internship in London.

He said he is not fully trained yet and was only supposed to lead the Birmingham City Congregation on an interim basis, but no one is available to replace him at the moment.

"That's pretty much the reason we're closing the congregation," he said. "There's nobody who's equipped to take over here."

He said that, as far as he knew, about 30 people were planning to move to Atlanta and join the Atlanta Church of Christ, where he will be serving as an intern beginning June 1.



'This is what the Bible says'

What sets "the movement," as he refers to the Crossroads Church of Christ discipling movement, apart from



Dale Mahfood

other churches is its emphasis on using the model of Jesus' relationship with His disciples.

"We try to pattern our ministry on that of Jesus," he said. "I've not seen that (in other churches)." The goal is "helping one another to become like Christ," he said.

Mahfood, who is unmarried and has lived in an apartment on the UAB campus, has emphasized work with single church members and

evangelization on the UAB campus. He said he goes door-to-door or just walks up to people at the University Center and begins conversations.

He said his church teaches a strict morality, but "we're not into the legalism of 'You can't go to the movies,' or 'If your foot hits the dance floor, you're dead,'" he explained.

However, sinners are confronted, he said.

"I will say, 'Sister, this is what I've seen. This is what the Bible says.' We don't go pointing our finger and saying, 'Repent, you sinner,'" he said.

"It really helps if you go to them with a loving spirit."

He said dating anyone outside the congregation is discouraged, but "dating goes on all the time" within the congregation.

Mahfood also said the church is not too concerned about how people spend their money outside the church. "Some people need expensive clothes for work," he said.

Brad Simpson, associate evangelist for the church, said church leaders may sometimes give bad advice. "You try to make decisions for a group of people that will be best for them and for you," he said. "I feel this has been moving closer to what Jesus was doing with those 12 disciples."

Simpson, who is moving with his wife to join a congregation in Kansas City, the location of another affiliate to the Boston Church of Christ, said the congregation is "for lack of a better word, aggressive, in the sense of wanting to see more people become Christians."

The church's work requires serious members who are willing to evangelize, Mahfood said.

"The people this church is for are people who want to be disciples of Jesus Christ," he said. "Every person who is made a disciple is to be taught to make disciples."

Jim and Gayle Lovvorn said the Birmingham City Congregation is a cult that virtually controlled their daughter's life for six months. Church leaders discouraged contact with them and anything else that distracted attention from the church's aggressive evangelism activity, they said.

The Lovvorns, Southern Baptists, went along with their daughter to the church's Sunday service July 6 last year at the Fraternal Order of Police lodge on Green Springs Highway. Like the Boston Church of Christ, which has services in the Boston Garden, the congregation rents buildings for its worship meetings.

Mrs. Lovvorn said she wanted to know about the church's origins and asked several members, who replied that they didn't know how the church started. "I really had to pin them down to get the information," she said.

She was then directed to an elder who explained that the church had been started by Central Church of Christ in Huntsville, which in turn had been started out of the Atlanta congregation, which in turn had been started from Boston Church of Christ, which in turn had been started from the the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Fla., she said.

"When he said that, I wanted to die," she said. She had heard — negatively — of the Crossroads movement that started in Gainesville, where Chuck Lucas had pioneered a multiplication ministry in the early 1970s. The movement is now headquartered at Boston Church of Christ, led by Kip McKean.



Craig Branch

The Lovvorns set out on a crusade to let people know about the movement and to get their daughter out of it.

"We just wouldn't forsake her," Mrs. Lovvorn said. "We just kept hanging on to every little contact we had with her."

Gina Lovvorn, who dropped out just before the church announced its move to Atlanta on Easter Sunday, said she still has "a lot of mixed emotions" about the church.

"I don't think it's a bad thing," said Miss Lovvorn, who joined the congregation shortly after receiving an associate degree from UAB. "They're just carrying it to an extreme. The part about what you think and what you feel and trying to get in there (inside the mind) — that's the part that bothered me."



Critics acknowledge positives

Even critics of the church have kind words for it.

"They are sincere, dedicated, hard-working people," said F.H. Martin, evangelist for the Cape Cod Church of Christ in Massachusetts and one of the loudest critics of the Boston Church of Christ.

There has never been evidence of financial mismanagement in the movement, although the group has been criticized for using very little of its money for benevolence purposes, he said.

But Martin, who tracks the activities of the Crossroads Church of Christ movement, said the church is dangerous.

He said he tried the same evangelism technique when he was the minister of a Church of Christ in Marietta, Ohio, but abandoned it because of the harmful psychological effects.

The individuals in the church are like layers of authority, beginning with the newest members, moving up to their discipleship partners, who in turn have someone in authority over them.

The churches are structured the same way, with the Birmingham congregation under the supervision of the Atlanta congregation, which is under the supervision of the Boston congregation.

The Huntsville congregation no longer follows the Boston church because it does not believe one church should have authority over another, according to David Evans, who recently dropped out of the Birmingham congregation with his wife, Carol, to join Riverchase Church of Christ, which is not part of the Crossroads movement.

Evans came with his wife from Central Church of Christ in Huntsville to help the Birmingham congregation grow, he said. But he became wary of the discipling tactics of the Birmingham congregation.

"When you start building a pyramid, where one person has authority over five ... whenever one person has that kind of authority over another, it's not biblical," he said, adding that the Birmingham church also has stood for "a great deal of good — a lot of unity, a lot of conversions."

But while the hard work of evangelization is necessary, the system of authority is not, he said.

"There are actually some positive aspects to it, if it wasn't in the context of deception," said Craig Branch, director of the Alabama Chapter of Watchman Fellowship, an evangelical "counter-cult" ministry which has offered counseling to Birmingham City Congregation members.

"Once you submit to baptism then there's pressure on you to conform to the standards of the group," Branch said.

When people leave the movement, "their ability to think has been clouded, their identity has been attacked or destroyed," he said. "Leaders are not consciously doing this. They're victims of the system themselves."

If Branch and Martin are to be believed in their assertion that church leaders exert powerful control over the congregation, then for many the request to uproot and move to Atlanta is the severest test of faith yet for most of the members.

Although the Birmingham City Congregation will soon be disbanded, it may return as the Birmingham Church of Christ.

"There was a plan to come back to Birmingham," Evans said. "The timetable that has been mentioned is three years."

HAROLD HAZELIP (BELATEDLY) GETS EXERCISED RE: BOSTON/CROSSROADS

Under date of Saturday, August 27, 1988, front-paged as a top story in the *Nashville Banner*, of Nashville, Tennessee, appeared an article by Banner Religion Editor **Frances Meeker**, captioned, "STUDENTS WARNED ABOUT SECT—Lipscomb Chief Urges Boycott."

Much appreciation to brother **Wayne Coats**, of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, for sending us an uncut copy of that issue of the *Banner*, bringing the article to our attention.

Aware as we are of how uncaring Harold Hazelip has demonstrated himself to be across the past two decades

while the cause of truth was going down the drain all around him, how astonishing it was to read his call to the students of David Lipscomb University to resist the Boston "discipling" movement, likening it to "a cult that practices mind control on its followers."

Elsewhere in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* is an article by brother Coats, entitled, "WHY SHOULD WE BE WORRIED IN NASHVILLE?" In connection with that article, please read the one by Frances Meeker, photo-reproduced directly out of the *Banner*, as follows:

SATURDAY MORNING, AUGUST 27, 1988. □ Nashville, Tennessee □

Students warned about sect

Lipscomb chief urges boycott

By **Frances Meeker**
Banner Religion Editor

The president of Church of Christ-affiliated David Lipscomb

University is calling upon students to resist a group he likens to a cult that practices mind control on its followers.

"This is the first negative announcement I have made during my two years at Lipscomb," university president Harold Hazelip said Friday. "But I felt like I should do it."

Members of a controversial "discipling" ministry were spreading printed invitations on the Lipscomb campus Friday, Hazelip said.

The invitations announced a "Bring Your Neighbor Day" service at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center on Sunday, but they carried no church name or insignia to identify their source.

It could not be immediately learned what group has rented TPAC at 11 a.m. Sunday.

The messengers delivering the invitations could not be located, but Hazelip said he believes they were distributed by a group affiliated with the Boston Church of Christ.

That church is an offshoot that is causing increasing division in the traditionally Southern, conservative Church of Christ.

"It is the mind-control technique that worries me," Hazelip said, after speaking out against the movement during the morning chapel service today.

"I have seen families broken up and congregations divided because of this movement."

The Boston church, as well as the similar Centennial Park Church of Christ in Nashville, perform "discipling" — an intense one-on-one relationship between a person in the congregation called a "discipler" and the new convert.

The person being disciplined is taught to submit to the discipler in personal as well as spiritual matters in what can become an almost constant relationship intended to answer all questions and objections of the convert.

Traditional Church of Christ followers, like retired Nashville minister Jim Bill McInteer, fear the technique that often targets young members of the church.

McInteer, retired minister of West End Church of Christ, called the movement "the biggest assault against Christian liberty" he has ever seen, adding it is "filled with doctrinal errors."

But Nashvillians involved in the local Centennial Park church said there is nothing to fear and find the criticism of "discipling" unfair.

Monte Drenner, 30, is minister of Centennial Park Church of Christ, a church he said is not directly affiliated with the Boston church, although he said he shares that church's ideals.

Drenner said he is aware that parents sometimes disapprove of their children joining the move-

ment and that the movement receives much criticism.

"But that happened to Jesus," he said. "We have to follow God even if it means giving up our families."

"You could find about 3,000 people in Boston who like the church, but those aren't the people who are considered newsworthy," said Dr. Gary Jacques, a co-founder of Centennial Park church, which meets Sundays at Harris-Hillman School on Blakemore Avenue.

"It's the people who don't like the church who make the news," he said.

Jacques said he sees the movement as "a great exciting church that has a great impact on lots of peoples' lives."

A Nashville woman blames a rift in her family on the movement.

"This movement has gone on too long, and it is time the elders and ministers of the Church of Christ came out and talked about it," said Carol Ann Turner, a member of West End Church of Christ.

She described it as "an insidious cult," which gains control of its members' minds and lives.

Mrs. Turner's two daughters joined the discipling movement nearly 10 years ago when they were students at David Lipscomb College, through the influence of

missionaries from the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Fla.

Both remain active in the church, one in Boston, the other in Sweden, she said. Neither could be reached for comment.

The discipling movement began at the Crossroads Church of Christ in the late 1970s and moved to Boston, where it developed further and began spreading to other cities.

Traditionally, the Church of Christ is a predominantly Southern church that practices conservative worship based on teachings of the New Testament. The church structures its beliefs on literal interpretations of the Bible and tries to model its worship on the practices of the early church.

Churches of Christ are traditionally autonomous and self-governing.

McInteer and Hazelip said they also oppose the movement because it imposes a hierarchy on the church.

The discipling church has the Boston church at its top, with "pillar" churches in key cities and simple congregations in others. Church missionaries travel to distant cities and countries to start new congregations.

Just two days after the foregoing initial article about Boston/Crossroads appeared in the Banner, a second article appeared under date of Monday, August 29, 1988.

Also written by Banner Religion Editor **Frances Meeker**, it apprised us all that the inaugural service of what Boston was naming the "Central Nashville Church of Christ" (completely ignoring the old Central Church of Christ, which has met for decades on Fifth Avenue) had been conducted at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center the previous day—and that 576 had attended, anteing up \$58,678 for their opening contribution to world missions.

Please read—and study—this second article, as follows:

Boston church launched here

'Discipling' ministry takes hold, 576 give \$58,678 at TPAC

By **Frances Meeker**
Banner Religion Editor

More than 550 worshipers attended the inaugural service Sunday of a controversial new Church

of Christ congregation denounced as a "cult" by some leaders of that denomination.

The new Central Nashville Church of Christ, an affiliate of

the Boston Church of Christ, was launched Sunday at a service at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center.

The Boston church is an offshoot of the Church of Christ, which has 32,000 members in 120 churches in Davidson County. Nationally, the traditionally conservative church has 1.2 million members in more than 13,000 churches.

"This is the first official meeting of the Central Nashville Church of Christ," evangelist James J. Condon told the worshippers Sunday.

"All the parking lots are full, and people are walking five and six blocks to get here," he said. "People are going to take notice that something different is going on here."

Condon said Sunday's 576 worshippers anted up \$58,678 into the new church's coffers. The donations will go to missions, he said.

Condon, 46, who came to Nashville four weeks ago from the Boston church to lead the local congregation, called attention to an article in Saturday's *Nashville Banner* reporting the opposition of some Nashville Church of Christ members to the "discipling ministry" practiced by the Boston church.

Discipling is an intense one-on-one relationship between a person in the congregation called a "discipler" and a new convert.

The person being disciplined is taught to submit to the discipler in personal as well as spiritual matters in what can become an almost constant relationship intended to answer all questions and objections of the convert.

Opponents of the movement include Harold Hazelip, president of the Church of Christ-affiliated David Lipscomb College, who on Friday urged his students not to affiliate with the new congregation.

Members of the new congregation passed out circulars on campus last week announcing the Sunday service at TPAC.

Hazelip said he feared the effects of discipling, which he described as a mind-control technique used by the Boston church and its branch congregations.

Just as each discipler has a person in authority over him, each affiliate of the Boston church has a parent church over it.

The Nashville congregation is under the supervision of the Boston congregation, led by evangelist Kip McKean, who built the

Massachusetts congregation from about 80 to 3,300 members in less than 10 years.

On Sunday, Boston evangelist Condon told the new congregation to ignore the church's critics.

He said local ministers should get out of their pulpits and on to the streets of Nashville because "that is where the lost people are dying and going to h---."

His thunderous sermon was received with applause, shouts and enthusiastic responses of "Amen," "Yes" and "That's right."

One verse of a congregational song declared that "I'm not going to let David Lipscomb turn me around. . . . I'm going to keep walking to the Promised Land."

Condon said evangelistic work is already going on at two Nashville universities, Vanderbilt and Tennessee State. Two groups meet at TSU on Tuesday nights, and a group meets at Vanderbilt on Thursday nights.

The new congregation had its start here about two years ago in the organization of the Centennial

By Tuesday afternoon, the following day, under date of August 30, 1988, Frances Meeker was pursuing the ongoing story, as a good reporter should, resulting in yet a *third* article appearing in the *Nashville Banner*.

As always, we were treated to the spectacle of a preacher, whose congregation had been split by the Boston movement, warning unsuspecting brethren of what they were in for—and the latter neglecting or refusing to be warned.

But read it for yourself, as follows:

Boston church divides, conquers, minister warns

By Frances Meeker
Banner Religion Editor

A minister who says his church was split by the Boston Church of Christ is taking to the pulpit to warn his members about the group, which formed a congregation here Sunday.

"The people need to be informed so we don't fall prey to them again and so our children don't fall prey to them," said Darrell Blankenship, minister of Central Pike Church of Christ of Nashville.

"They come into a congregation as members and work secretly until they get such a hold that they can call for the resignation of the church elders and then take over," Blankenship said.

The Boston church is an offshoot that is causing increasing division in the traditionally South-

Park Church, led by Monte Drenner and Dr. Gary Jacques, who now are leaders in the Central Nashville congregation.

Several local Church of Christ leaders say the Boston Church differs from traditional Church of Christ traditions of freedom of conscience and congregational autonomy.

Central Nashville congregational leaders, including Drenner, were cordial Sunday but declined to comment on the congregation or its work. Instead, they referred all questions to Condon.

Condon scoffed at claims by other Church of Christ leaders, including Hazelip, that discipling techniques used by affiliates of the Boston church broke up families and congregations.

The Boston evangelist, a former Catholic who converted to the Church of Christ 18 years ago and the Boston church four years ago, said the movement's methods of discipling lead people to conform to the life of Jesus, who "discipled" his followers.

ern, conservative Church of Christ.

Some members of the established church claim the newcomer uses "discipling ministry" mind control techniques and grows by infiltrating, dividing and conquering established congregations.

However, Al Baird, an elder in the Boston Church, said his organization begins "reconstruction" of an established church only if it "is not doing too well" and has asked the Boston Church to send it an evangelist.

"We don't think we are a cult," Baird said. "Our philosophy is centered on following Jesus, being like Jesus and leading others to be like Jesus."

Baird said he was in Nashville three weeks ago assisting evangelist James J. Condon in establish-

ing the new Central Nashville Church of Christ congregation that was launched in a large service at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center on Sunday.

The nucleus for the new congregation was the Centennial Park Church, which was started in Nashville nearly two years ago. The Centennial Park congregation held services at Harris-Hillman Elementary School, 1706 26th Ave. S.

Baird scoffed at the charges of mind control.

He said he is the discipler, or spiritual guide, for Condon, who will lead the new Nashville congregation.

"He will get a lot of advice from me," Baird said. "We will

talk at least a couple of times a week on the phone."

The Boston church teaches discipling, a one-on-one counseling technique in which a "discipler" provides intensive guidance to a junior convert of the faith.

An Alabama man who quit his job to move to Nashville to help start the new congregation also denies that the Boston Church is a cult.

Craig Smith was a member of the Huntsville, Ala. church, which was started by the Atlanta Church of Christ, which in turn was started by the Boston Church.

"I really wrestled with the idea that this was a cult," said Smith, a former United Methodist who joined the Boston Church move-

ment three years ago.

He said, however, when he attended the annual seminar at the Boston Church he was convinced it was not a cult. He said the Bible is the only resource used in teaching.

Many of the new congregation's members and leaders, including Condon, are planning to go to Boston this week for the annual seminar, which is expected to attract 9,000 adherents.

The established Church of Christ has 32,000 members in 120 Davidson County churches, and numbers about 1.2 million nationwide.

Many Church of Christ ministers and members said this week that they had only scant knowledge of the 3,300-member Boston Church of Christ, which has started more than 15 congregations.

About the only encouraging development in this ongoing saga of the Boston church injecting itself onto the Nashville scene, **Frances Meeker's** concluding article in this series, under date of Monday, September 5, 1988, was captioned **"BOSTON CHURCH CROWD DROPS TO 20 AT 2ND SERVICE."**

However, anyone who thinks it will stay down like that for long isn't thinking. Instead of following just the Bible, as

some were claiming, their basic philosophy is taken from **"THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM"** by **Robert E. Coleman**, a denominational writer. They say it all comes from God; however, all you need do is read Coleman's work, and you'll see at once that this is a false claim.

Here is the concluding article of the early Banner report:

Boston church crowd drops to 20 at 2nd service

By **Frances Meeker**
Banner Religion Editor

A controversial congregation launched a week ago at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center with 576 people, in attendance dwindled to about 20 on the second Sunday.

Most members of the new Central Nashville Church of Christ are reportedly returning today from Boston, where they have been since last Thursday, attending a seminar sponsored by the Boston Church of Christ.

The Boston church, denounced as cult-like by its critics, calls the shots for the Nashville congregation and dozens of other congregations planted across the country and in other countries.

Because of the anticipated small group of worshipers, the Central Nashville congregation met on Sunday at Harris-Hillman Special Education School instead of at TPAC, which has been rented by the group for regular Sunday morning worship services.

Church leaders said Central Nashville church worship services

will resume at TPAC's Polk Theater next Sunday.

A TPAC spokesman said the rental rate on the Polk Theater is \$1,050 a day but the Central Nashville church is receiving a discount rate since it has rented the site for a full year. The spokesman declined to reveal the rent charged the Central Nashville congregation.

Doug Morris, a Vanderbilt University student, led the service at Harris-Hillman, substituting for the congregation's evangelist, James J. Condon, who was sent by the Boston Church to lead the local congregation. Condon is in Boston.

Instead of a sermon, Morris and two other young men gave their Christian testimony and led the worshipers in hymns and prayers.

"The newspapers are writing about us and people are talking about us, but who cares?" Morris said. "We will continue to go forward."

He said the devil was responsible for lies being spread about the church.

The Boston church, which has

grown from about 80 members to 3,600 since 1979, has experienced sharp criticism because of its use of the "discipling" method of control over its members.

"New converts are taught they must confess their sins to their disciplers," said Flavil R. Yeakley Jr., a Church of Christ educator and minister in Abilene, Texas, who has conducted extensive research on the Boston Church and the discipling movement.

"If they seem reluctant to confess their sins, they are asked a lot of personal questions," Yeakley said in an interview. "If they still have no sins to confess, they are told that a refusal to admit sin is sin within itself."

In their witness on Sunday, the three Nashville men said their lives had been changed for the better since they came into the Nashville congregation.

One said he had been baptized into a church when he was 13 years old but felt he was never a Christian until he joined the Central Nashville group, formerly called the Centennial Park Church.

The three said they benefited spiritually by revealing their innermost thoughts and actions to their "discipler."



Beverly Asbury
Flagrant violation

By Frances Meeker
Banner Religion Editor

Vanderbilt University has denied a controversial religious group access to the campus after learning the group was holding unauthorized meetings in violation of university rules.

University chaplain Beverly Asbury said he wrote letters this week to Kelly Boyd, a representative of the new Central Nashville Church of Christ, telling Boyd that the group is not an authorized campus organization and cannot meet on campus.

As a result of the violation, Boyd is not welcome on Vanderbilt campus even as a guest speaker, the Asbury said.

The Central Nashville Church of Christ, which holds Sunday worship services at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, is an affiliate of the Boston Church of Christ. Traditional Churches of Christ criticize the Boston Church movement as a cult-like organization that uses mind control techniques to convert and hold its members.

Asbury said he learned that Boyd had been leading a group in a religious meeting in Carmichael Towers East on Thursday nights without the knowledge or authorization of university officials. They were meeting in an unlocked room in the Vanderbilt dormitory, the chaplain said.

VU bans Boston Church meetings

"This was a meeting in an unauthorized room by an unauthorized group in flagrant violation of every campus regulation concerning religious organizations," Asbury said.

The Vanderbilt chaplain said he had explained the regulations earlier to Boyd and to a Vanderbilt student who assists Boyd in the meetings. Applications made by Boyd's group have not met the university regulations.

Asbury said the university action was not made in judgement of the beliefs of Boyd's group, but because the group has not met the requirements for recognition as an official student organization.

Vanderbilt requires that campus organizations be led and controlled by full-time Vanderbilt students. While the student organizations may invite outside speakers, the organization cannot be affiliated with or controlled by an off-campus group. Also, an outside speaker cannot become a regular speaker on campus.

Meanwhile, Boyd said the Vanderbilt group was meeting this week at his apartment on Elliston Place. He denied that he was the leader of the group that had been meeting in the dormitory.

"I went there as a guest speaker at a Bible study led by a Vanderbilt student," Boyd said. "I didn't realize it would cause so much trouble."

A few weeks ago, David Lipscomb University president Harold Hazelip urged Lipscomb students to resist evangelists from the Boston Church, who distributed leaflets on the Lipscomb campus at the beginning of the current semester. Lipscomb is a Church of Christ-affiliated university.

Also, the Rev. Willie Burchfield, head of the Wesley Foundation at Tennessee State University, said a member of the TSU student body government warned freshmen

"about the cult-like organization operating on campus." Burchfield said the reference was to the Central Nashville Church of Christ.

Central Nashville Church of Christ leaders said they have two groups meeting on Tuesday nights at TSU and one at Vanderbilt on Thursday nights.

The Boston Church teaches discipling, an intense one-on-one counseling technique that critics say results in psychological manipulation.

Church members vigorously deny charges of mind control, contending that the Christian life demands sacrifice and structure.

The Vanderbilt chaplain said he first came in contact with Boyd, who holds the title of campus minister with the Central Nashville Church of Christ, when Boyd applied for a "campus minister" parking permit at Vanderbilt.

"I told him that the university does not permit representatives of local churches or religious groups to minister on the campus but that we have chaplains on campus representing various denominations," Asbury said.

The Vanderbilt chaplain learned later that Boyd was frequenting Rand Hall student center and dining area. On one occasion Boyd stopped the new Vanderbilt Catholic chaplain Kathleen Flood and asked her if she were a "real Christian," Asbury said.

"So here again was evidence that this evangelist trained by the Boston Church of Christ was working on campus when he had been told he could not," Asbury said.

According to Vanderbilt regulations, a representative of a religious organization can talk to students or distribute literature on the public streets on the campus.

"But if a group tries to set up an 'outpost' on campus, we will close them down," Asbury said.

Boston Church of Christ members have been barred from proselytizing on the campuses of Boston University and Northeastern University, also in Boston, because students complained they were being harangued to join Bible study groups.

Asbury said he discussed the Boston Church movement with Robert Thornburg, the university chaplain at Boston University.

Thornburg told me he felt the

Boston Church is the single most dangerous religious group we have ever dealt with and that all other cults pale in comparison," Asbury said.

[NOTE: meanwhile, W. Wayne Coats, a Lipscomb alumni, wrote the following article showing why Nashville should be both alert AND alarmed. (YRJR.)

Why Should We Be Worried In Nashville?

W. Wayne Coats

Great numbers of people in the Nashville area seem to have received a tremendous shock resulting from the Boston cult moving into Music City. Several newspaper articles have appeared relative to the new group and various quotations have been cited from different sources.

Why *anyone* should be astonished over the matter, I do not understand—for two reasons: First, it should have been obvious to anyone but a spiritual corpse that the Boston wrecking crew would come to Nashville. When they moved into Atlanta and did such an effective job of tearing the Atlanta Highlands Church there into shreds, they advertised that what *they* call the **Atlanta Church of Christ** would be the "Pillar Church" for the entire southeastern part of the United States. Nashville happens to be in the southeastern sector.

[When Paul Revere warned the American people a couple of hundred years ago that "the British are coming," thankfully those people did not act like some of "us" and start jabbering "positively."]

It doesn't take the Boston cult forever to bake its beans; but it takes many Nashville elders, preachers and others almost forever to get ready to commence to start to say their piece. As early as two years ago, my young friend **Mark Vaughn**, related that he was a member of the Antioch congregation, in Nashville, and that he had just returned from Boston. When I tried hard to get information about his trip, what he learned, and why he went, he finally told me that **Alan Bryan** (who is on the Antioch Church staff) had encouraged him to make the visit. There were others from Antioch who had gone to Boston for their brand of beans—but most elders and preachers in Nashville looked the other way and practiced "Quiet Time." With such silence and colossal ignorance of the Boston Movement (as is so obvious in Nashville), why be perturbed when this heresy sails into town? This would be my *second* reason for not being surprised. It's a little late for most of us to start doing the St. Vitus dance.

YOU JUST CAN'T SEEM TO WARN SOME PEOPLE

What *should* be astonishing is the *Nashville Banner* Religion Editor's report that "many Church of Christ ministers and members said this week that they had only scant knowledge of the 3,300-member Boston Church of Christ..." Indeed, you cannot show some people what they need to know! If the "many ministers" in Nashville had done their homework, such heretics would have a difficult time.

When I wrote *A Critique of "How Christianity Grows in the City,"* I gave a copy to a Nashville preacher. Later he told me that he "didn't know enough about what I was writing about to understand." He was a *Lipscomb professor!*

Another Nashville preacher recently was asked to deal with the Boston Controversy; and he replied that he didn't know enough about it to preach even one sermon!

A friend of mine tried to get the Lipscomb Bookstore to accept and sell the above-mentioned "Critique." It never yet has gotten into the bookstore. [I really do not need to sell the books; but to see all the inanities they are offering for sale in that store is really something!]

Another good friend talked with someone at the *Gospel Advocate* Bookstore and offered to purchase copies of the "Critique" and give them to that bookstore FREE, if only they would sell the books to their customers. I suppose they just do not have room for the "Critique," albeit they *DO* sell the book by **Alvin Jennings** that it exposes, and God only knows what other false doctrines!

Yes, there are many in Nashville who like to repose with "scant knowledge"—and there are many who want to KEEP it that way!

HAROLD HAZELIP AND HIS NEGATIVE LOCKJAW

That the Lipscomb President finally has gotten rid of his negative lockjaw is simply incredible. Why, he even likens the Boston group to a "cult that practices mind control on its followers." He goes on to say, "This is the first negative announcement I have made during my two years at Lipscomb... but I felt like I should do it."

So said the Lipscomb President—and he has the temerity to speak of "mind control!" It is mind control pure and simple when a college or university president can go for two years and not make a negative announcement. That's brilliant, you know! Has it been a sin to speak negatively? Did the President not feel like speaking negatively? Has there not been anything on campus, in the city, state, nation or world that would merit a negative announcement?

Just when and upon what occasion should one become negative? Feature a physician trying to be not negative for two years! Imagine an attorney in Nashville not making a negative statement in 24 months! Can you fathom a man saying, "I have seen families broken up and congregations divided because of this movement," and yet not say anything against this heresy for two years? Why, **why, WHY?**

It seems that the President is worried because of that "mind-control technique." We wish he had worried extensively about permitting **Rubel Shelly** to speak in chapel at Lipscomb. It is inconsistent to welcome one false teacher but rebuff another. Even I know better than this.

WHY HAVEN'T OTHERS SPOKEN OUT?

If, as **Jim Bill McInTeer** avers, this Boston Movement "...is the biggest assault against Christian liberty" that he has ever seen, why has he not used his influence through the

20th Century Christian to oppose it? If, as he charges, it is "...filled with doctrinal errors," why all the silence?

Why are so many members and ministers so blank, with such "scant knowledge" about all those "doctrinal errors?" [We very respectfully request Jim Bill to clean up his act with Rubel before he talks about "doctrinal errors" on the part of anyone. There is no difference in error regardless of who promulgates it.]

We sympathize with Mrs. Carol Ann Turner, who said, "This movement has gone on too long, and it is time the elders and ministers of the church of Christ came out and talked about it." Poor soul! She is a member of the West End church of Christ and apparently needs information. [NOTE: That's where Jim Bill preaches. IYR Jr.] Her family has suffered for TEN YEARS as a result of two daughters becoming involved in the Crossroads Cult, while students at Lipscomb!

As an alumnus of Lipscomb, I wonder how much the President is paid to NOT make a negative statement in two years? May I urge the President to do some serious study of the methods and message of Jesus Christ and the apostles, then be determined to follow them? Without such determination, all "announcements" about "false teaching" will prove to be but a farce.

—184 Hillview Road
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Wayne Coats understands fully what Jesus said about a prophet not being without honor except among his own. However, knowing as he does that his extraordinary exposé of the Boston Movement, A Critique of "How Christianity Grows in the City," has been distributed by his brethren in other cities not only brotherhood-wide, but nationwide and worldwide, how galling it must be that those of his own city and area have paid so little attention!

When his book first appeared in 1986, brother Coats' initial print order was for 5,000 copies. Contending for the Faith ordered a large supply of these, most of which already have gone out; but we still have some on hand. Then, last year, I mentioned to Dub McClish that if the Pearl Street elders at Denton, Texas, would take it on as a project, I personally would go all out to help raise the fund it would take to print and mail out—FREE OF CHARGE—one copy to each of 15,000 churches—across the nation and around the world. Response was so great that these all were mailed out—and 5,000 more had to be printed—making a total of 25,000 in all!

Individuals desiring to purchase a copy of brother Coats' "Critique," please address your orders either to Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506 or to Wayne Coats, 184 Hillview Road, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122. —Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

Notes & Quotes...

SOUTH TEXAS SUMMER LECTURESHIP AND CAMPAIGN, AT BEEVILLE, TEXAS

Eleven precious souls responded to the gospel invitation the closing night of Beeville's SOUTH TEXAS SUMMER LECTURESHIP AND CAMPAIGN, August 19 through 21, 1988.

Centered around the general theme of "The Church You Can Read About in Your New Testament," this lectureship had a special flavor in that to the extent possible it was bilingual—Spanish as well as English.

The local preacher, Joe Cox, led off the first day with "Are Christians Still Under the Ten Commandments or Old Testament Law?"; Darrell Conley, of San Antonio, spoke on "The Worship of the New Testament Church"; David Brown, of Austin, gave "A Review of 'The Worldly Church'"; Ron Greiner pointed to "The Need and Importance of Repentance"; Billy Balk stressed "The Church's Need of Edification." At the first evening service, while Bill Jackson, of Austin, was giving "The History of the Church (from Pentecost)" in the main auditorium, the Spanish-speaking members were hearing "Historia de la Iglesia" (from Pentecost), by Tony Rangel, in the Annex. David Brown then closed out the first day with a combined service on "What Must I Do to Be Saved?"

On Saturday, Tom Bright had the 9 a.m. lesson, on "Problems Facing the Church (Externally)"; in the absence of William S. (Bill) Cline, H. A. (Buster) Dobbs spoke on "Problems Facing the Church (Internally)"; Steve Orbison set forth "God's Divine Purpose for the Church"; Shan Jackson dealt with "Keeping Our Converts"; Jerry Cotham with "The Work of the Holy Spirit"; and Ira Y. Rice, Jr., filled in for Bill Cline on "Problems Facing the Church (Internally)—Part II". At 6 p.m., Jullo Zuniga had a Spanish service in the main auditorium on "Examinado Todo Retened Lo Bueno" (Thessalonians 5:21); at 7 p.m., George Pledger, of Corpus Christi,

discussed "The Good Confession" in the auditorium, while Max Perez explained "Haciendo La Buena Confesion" in the Annex. Then, at 8 p.m., Curtis Cates filled in for Tom Bright on "Ye Must Be Born Again."

The Lord's Day morning services had Curtis Cates in the auditorium asking "Can We Be Sure We Have the Word of God?", while at the same time, in the annex, Marvin Autry was discussing "Podemos Estar Seguros Que Tenemos La Palabra De Dios?" H. A. (Buster) Dobbs followed with "Growing in Grace and Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ"; Jim Snell, with "The Divine Government of the Church"; Dobbs again with "Will There Be a Day of Judgment?"; Ira Y. Rice, Jr., followed with "Beginning in Jerusalem (Our Vision for the Future)"; and Perry Cotham closed out the entire event with "We Shall Meet on That Beautiful Shore."

Reception of this unique Lectureship/Campaign was so enthusiastic the Beeville elders may decide to make it an annual affair. This was the first of its kind in that part of Texas.

Brief Statement Concerning Our Proposed Work

Lynn Parker

The church of Christ meeting on Corinth Road in Jacksonville, Texas, along with the Lynn Parker family, currently is seeking a site for stateside evangelistic work.

The proposal is for the Parker family to work with a small congregation that is unable to fully support a preacher, at a site that has the potential to become self-supporting within 5 years. The congregation must be sound in the faith! It would be helpful if the prospective congregation was capable of helping in some way, even if very small.

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY LECTURESHIP

Speaking of unique lectureships, the one slated for October 2-5, 1988, at Faulkner University, of Montgomery, Alabama, has something a little different in that all the speakers on the general theme of "Blessed Assurance" will be aged 60 or above!

If you're ever going to see a rainbow,
you've got to stand a little rain.

In a church bulletin which I ordinarily value highly, I ran across an article by Dick Marcear in which he was calling attention to something Charles Swindoll said in a new book. Even though what was said was pithy, the fact that Swindoll himself is not a Christian I found offensive. Brethren, how long is it going to take us to quit using non-Christians as our examples? There are so many fine illustrations we could use with Christians as our examples, let's look for these—and use them—instead.

David & Karen Adams, of Texarkana, Texas, sent \$20.00, saying, "Use as needed where you see a need."

Fred & Opal McClung, of Fort Worth, Texas, helped \$50.00 on the Pearl Street mailing exposing the false teachings of Alvin Jennings.

Lynn Parker attended Preston Road School of Preaching (when it was under the direction of Eldred Stevens) and Alabama Christian School of Religion and has preached in Texas and Oklahoma. He is dedicated to preaching the "old paths."

Interested congregations should contact the church in Jacksonville or brother Lynn Parker by calling (214) 586-5262 or writing to him at this address:

Corinth Road church of Christ
Route 1, Box 12
Jacksonville, Texas 75766

Bellview church of Christ calls your attention to—

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES

DUB McCCLISH, DIRECTOR



*"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."
(1 The. 5:21)*

STUDIES IN 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS AND PHILEMON

NOVEMBER 13-17, 1988

SEVENTH ADL SCHEDULE - STUDIES IN 1, 2 THESSALONIANS AND PHILEMON

5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Gospel Music
8:00 PM Andrew Connally

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13

9:00 AM David Brown
10:00 AM Dub McClish
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Tom Wacaster

3:00 PM Richard Nelson
4:00 PM Bubba Phillips
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
8:00 PM Dave Miller

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9:00 AM Marvin Weir
10:00 AM Gary Workman
11:00 AM Roy Deaver
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM J. Noel Merideth
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Bill Jackson
3:45 PM Bill Jackson
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Garland Elkins
8:00 PM Robert Taylor, Jr.

9:00 AM Darrell Conley
10:00 AM Mike McElroy
11:00 AM Mike Vestal
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Mike Hatcher
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Alan Highers
3:45 PM Alan Highers
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM James Meadows
8:00 PM Jerry Moffitt

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

9:00 AM Perry Hall
10:00 AM Jack Scott, Jr.
11:00 AM Thomas B. Warren
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Foy Forehand
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Wayne Jackson
3:45 PM Wayne Jackson

9:00 AM Darrell Conley
10:00 AM Mike McElroy
11:00 AM Mike Vestal
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Mike Hatcher
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Alan Highers
3:45 PM Alan Highers
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM James Meadows
8:00 PM Jerry Moffitt

9:00 AM Darrell Conley
10:00 AM Mike McElroy
11:00 AM Mike Vestal
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Mike Hatcher
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Alan Highers
3:45 PM Alan Highers
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM James Meadows
8:00 PM Jerry Moffitt

An Exhortation on Sanctification (1 The. 4:1-8)
Paul's Mode of Preaching and Practice (1 The. 2:1-12)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

9:00 AM Jerry Moffitt
10:00 AM Don Walker
11:00 AM Oran Rhodes
12:00 PM Lunch Break
2:00 PM Steve Gibson
3:00 PM Discussion Forum:
Wayne Jackson
3:45 PM Wayne Jackson
5:00 PM Dinner Break
7:00 PM Curtis Cates
8:00 PM Bert Thompson

The Command to Withdraw and Paul's Closing Words (2 The. 3:6-18)
The Coming of "THE DAY OF THE LORD" (1 The. 5:1-5)
Paul's Concluding Words (1 The. 5:23-28)

Fidelity Under Fire (1 The. 2:13-16)
Preparing for "THE DAY OF THE LORD" (1 The. 5:6-11)
Paul's Anxiety for the Thessalonians (1 The. 3:1-5)
Difficult Passages in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon: Who or what is the "man of sin" (2 The. 2:3-10)? Why would a loving God permit men to believe a lie and be damned (2 The. 2:11-12)?
Paul's Imploping Epistle to Philemon (Phile. 1:25)

Duties to Elders and to Other Brethren (1 The. 5:12-15)
The Wrath of God
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Paul's Great Desire for Reunion (1 The. 3:9-13)
Exhortations on Brotherly Love and Doing One's Work (1 The. 4:9-12)
Paul's Salvation and Thanksgiving (2 The. 1:1-5)
Difficult Passages in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon: Are those "over you in the Lord" elders (1 The. 5:12)? How does one "quench" the Spirit (1 The. 5:19)? What is the difference between the "spirit" and the "soul" of man (1 The. 5:23)? If slavery is wrong under the law of Christ, why was it tolerated (Phile. 12)?
Eight Significant Imperatives (1 The. 5:16-22)

A Thanksgiving, an Exhortation and a Prayer (2 The. 2:13-17)
The Spirit of Antinomianism
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Paul's Elation over the Thessalonians (1 The. 3:6-8)
Answering False Doctrines Relating to 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon: There will be a "rapture" period before the Millennium (1 The. 3:13; 4:17). The dead in Christ will be raised first before the dead outside of Christ (1 The. 4:16). "Eternal destruction" means that the lost will be annihilated (2 The. 1:9).
A Request for Prayer and a Statement of Confidence (2 The. 3:1-5)

Rewards at the Lord's Coming (2 The. 1:6-12)

The Status of the "Instrumental Music in Worship" Controversy
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

A Study of "THE DAY OF THE LORD" in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon
The Thessalonian Letters and Philemon--A Summary

A Study of Inspiration in 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon
Worship and New Testament Authority
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Words of Comfort for Anxious Saints (1 The. 4:13-18)
The Gospel Received and Applied (1 The. 1:6-10)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17
Paul's Elation over the Thessalonians (1 The. 3:6-8)
Answering False Doctrines Relating to 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon: There will be a "rapture" period before the Millennium (1 The. 3:13; 4:17). The dead in Christ will be raised first before the dead outside of Christ (1 The. 4:16). "Eternal destruction" means that the lost will be annihilated (2 The. 1:9).
A Request for Prayer and a Statement of Confidence (2 The. 3:1-5)

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DAILY DISCUSSION FORUMS ON CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS

**JOHN H. RENSHAW RESIGNS
AFTER 14 YEARS SERVICE AT
MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

Under date of July 19, 1988, the elders of the Knight Arnold church of Christ, of Memphis, Tennessee, together with **Curtis A. Cates**, Director of Memphis School of Preaching, announced the resignation of brother **John H. Renshaw** as instructor at Memphis School of Preaching as follows:

July 19, 1988

To The Members of
Knight Arnold Church of Christ:

The elders and brother **Curtis A. Cates** have accepted the resignation of brother **John H. Renshaw** as instructor at Memphis School of Preaching, effective August 31, 1988. His service with the school began in 1974.

We appreciate brother **Renshaw** for his faithfulness and hard work in training preacher students during this time. He taught from a wealth of study and experience as a gospel preacher, and his students had a high regard for him. Three of the present faculty members were taught by brother **Renshaw** while students at the Memphis School of Preaching.

Brother **Renshaw** has willingly preached and taught classes at the Knight Arnold congregation when called upon. We are grateful to him for this. He is presently preaching for the Cliff Creek church near Brownsville, Tennessee.

Our thanks and best wishes are extended to brother **Renshaw**, and our prayers are on his behalf.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

James A. Bobbitt
Bert Embry
Dorrman Kirby
Floyd M. Hayes
Harold D. Mangrum
The Elders and
Curtis A. Cates, Director

**MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING
ENTERS 23RD YEAR**

The Memphis School of Preaching began its 23rd year on August 22nd with 38 students enrolled.

The new students join the 25 already enrolled. They will be joined, as it appears, by two students in November (one of whom from Missouri is marrying in August and one of whom from Florida was not able to arrange his affairs to arrive in August) and by another student who is to be discharged from the

Navy in December and is to enroll in January, 1989. Another student from Memphis, who took summer school classes this year, had to interrupt his enrollment (he hopes for only one quarter) to arrange his business affairs so he can re-enroll in November. Please pray for these fine men and their families.

The enrollment of these new men (with their families) in the intensive program of the school would not be possible without the support of faithful individuals and congregations. Thank you, beloved brethren, for your help. Some have enrolled on faith, not by sight. They still need monthly support. If you can do more, please contact the school.

As long as faithful preachers are needed in this world, it will require money to train them. Can you help support a preacher as he trains at the feet of strong, Bible-loving and respectful instructors under the faithful and competent oversight of the elders of the Knight Arnold church of Christ? The elders join us in expressing sincere gratitude!—**Curtis A. Cates**, Director, Memphis School of Preaching, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.

[NOTE: Brother **Cates**, in addition to conducting the Memphis School of Preaching so capably in harmony with the sound doctrine for which it always has stood, also is busy in lectureships and gospel meetings all around the country. I was just with him on the South Texas Summer Lectureship and Campaign, August 19-21, 1988, where **Joe Cox** preaches, at Beeville, Texas; then I noticed that **Dub McClish** and the **Pearl Street** brethren had him August 28-31, 1988, at Denton, Texas. With a preachers' preacher, like that, heading it up, no wonder Memphis School of Preaching is still moving solidly ahead as always. [YR Jr.]

WHAT NEXT?

It seems that there is no end to the move away from truth by our brethren. Just a few years ago we were introduced to the gadgets and gimmicks designed to draw the crowds. Then came the entertainment events designed to appeal to man's fleshly nature, even to the providing of buildings for that purpose known as "family life centers." Our preachers began changing positions on marriage, divorce and remarriage, law and grace, commitment and what constitutes such and then the summits designed to restore digressive churches and false teachers into fellowship without repentance.

Now we are hearing, from our own brethren, that the church and kingdom are not the same institution (**Shelly**). Just recently here in our area **ACAPPELLA** and **Jeff Walling** were invited in spite of their association and fellowship with denominationalism. Now we learn that Harding Graduate School of Religion is having "Dr." **Rubel Shelly** on its program September 13 and **Lynn Anderson** among others later this month.

What do we look for next? What ever happened to our practice of passages such as

Ephesians 5:11? "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." I fear the things that will be happening in the church by the time my children become young adults.

It is time that brethren become more concerned with truth than reputation, jobs, family ties or anything else. The Lord's church is too valuable to allow it to be overrun because of our involvement with unscriptural practices or our failure to speak out against the same—**Sidney White**, *East Main Informer* for August 30, 1988, Tupelo, Mississippi.

Donald & Linda Underwood, of APO, New York 09194, subscribed for three years, saying, "My family and I truly enjoy this valuable publication. Keep up the good work!"

**NIV PACKETS & CROSSROADS PACKETS
ARE STILL AVAILABLE**

Numbers of readers continue to order our "NIV PACKETS" as well as our "CROSSROADS PACKETS" of back issues especially devoted to these two vexatious subjects. Not previously reported, **Annie H. Wilkinson**, of Vicksburg, Mississippi, ordered one set of our "NIV Packet," as did **Bill Coe**, of Celina, Tennessee; **J. Rosa**, of Mayport, Florida; and **Mike Swanson**, of Pontotoc, Mississippi. **Billy H. Smith**, of Nashville, Tennessee, ordered two. The **Calvin Miltons**, of Petersburg, Virginia, ordered the "Crossroad Packet," saying, "We love you and what you stand for—the truth." **Clayton McDonald**, of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, ordered six of the "NIV Packet" and one of the "Crossroads Packet."


For those wanting the "NIV Packets," they are \$3.50 each; the "Crossroads Packets" are \$9.95 each. Please enclose payment with orders addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, P. O. Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226**.

"There are many ways to be wrong, but only one way to be right."—**Joe Gilmore**, March 20, 1987, in the *West Coast/Firm Foundation* Lectureship, at San Lorenzo, California.

YOUR ASSISTANCE NEEDED

As you know, I have been working on my biography, in odd moments, for quite some time. Any of our readers who have heard me referred to as harsh, unloving, judgmental, buzzard-like or other such ugly, unbecoming terms, please call them to my attention—also their source, if you know it. Much appreciation, **Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor**.

Richard Barr, minister, Church of Christ, 409 Upham Street, Melrose, Massachusetts 02176 needs the current name and address of a faithful church of Christ in Seoul, Korea and also in Tokyo, Japan. "Have you had any contact with them, re: Boston?" he writes. "Looking at the proposed targeting of these areas in the future by Boston, I would like to contact the brethren there..."

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Contending FOR THE Faith

FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT (Acts 2:39)

Wayne Price and Ron Cosby

Since the first century, faithful brethren have taught that God gave miraculous gifts unto certain chosen Christians in that first century for the purpose of confirming the word of God as being genuine (Hebrews 2:3-4). It is our studied conviction that Acts 2:38 AND 39 are yet another passage teaching the same truth. By a close study of the words and phrases used by Peter, it will be shown that this is both plausible and probable. Let it be remembered that the miraculous age ceased in that first century after God's word had been confirmed. This fact also is implied in Acts 2:39.

As noted in a previous article ("Receiving the Spirit") in the August 87 issue of *Contending for the Faith*, the phrase "gift of the Holy Spirit" is used but twice in the Scriptures, Acts 2:38 and Acts 10:45 (we urge the reader to review that work before going further into this study). It was demonstrated that the phrase "gift of the Spirit" in Acts 10:45 unmistakably refers to miraculous gifts of the first century given by the Spirit. Why should that phrase, used by the same speaker (*an inspired apostle*) and found in the same book (*Acts of Apostles*), be understood differently in Acts 2:38? We ask, which should take precedence: an *assumed* meaning in verse 38 that the "gift of the Spirit" is a personal, yet non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit in a Christian, or the KNOWN meaning of Acts 10:45 where the term "gift of the Spirit" unquestionably refers to the miraculous?

The text of Acts 2:38-39 reads as follows:

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him."

We call your attention to the Greek word *gar*, translated "for" (v. 39). This word may be a particle signifying the reason or cause for the previous statement. A more probable use of the word here is its force as an explicative, that is, it serves to make clear, explain, or illustrate a preceding word or thought.

"THE PROMISE"

What then, one may ask, is the "promise" of Acts 2:39?

Luke, the writer both of this book of Acts and the book of Luke, closes that first work by giving Christ's remarks to his apostles: **"And, behold, I send the PROMISE of my Father upon you..."** (Luke 24:49). This refers to the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Then, as Luke begins his *second* volume, he again refers to the Lord using the term "promise" as Christ tells his apostles: **"wait for the PROMISE of the Father"** (Acts 1:4). In the next chapter, Luke describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles as "power" given by and coming from the Holy Spirit. In referring to Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16) Peter, the speaker on that occasion, uses the preposition *apo* (used only with the ablative to show origin or source—see Acts 2:17) which proves that instead of the Spirit himself being the gift that was given, the gift was something which came "from" the Spirit. This cannot be successfully denied, for such is the very function of the ablative case in the original language in which the New Testament was written.

Next Peter explained that the things these Pentecostians had **seen and heard** were connected with the same **promise** of the Spirit (Acts 2:33). Note that the same consistent pattern is followed even here, that is, the promise was from the Father, to Christ the Son, through the Spirit to the apostles. God made the promise, yet Christ sent it upon the apostles (Luke 24:49). Jesus had previously declared that the Father would send the Spirit "in MY (*i.e.*, Christ's) name" (John 14:26). Moments later, he informs them that it was expedient for them that he should go away, **"for if I go not away,"** he said, **"the Comforter (the Spirit) will not come unto you, but if I depart, I WILL SEND HIM UNTO YOU"** (John 16:7), and that he would guide them into all the truth (John 16:13). This having occurred in the first part of Acts 2, Peter then tells the puzzled multitude the meaning behind the miraculous display that they had witnessed that day: Prophecy, hundreds of years old, was being fulfilled before their eyes! Christ had been raised from the dead (Acts 2:31-32), and it was he who had shed forth that which they saw and heard (Acts 2:33).

(Continued on Page 3)

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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Editorial...

Some Things Make No Sense At All

Recognizing that each church is locally autonomous and that God has told us *what* to do on *everything* but no *exclusive* method for doing *anything* he requires, yet *some* things make no sense at all.

For example, many elders evidently feel that by keeping local members ignorant of brotherhood issues, this somehow will *protect them from error!* Also, such elders themselves refuse to read what is happening in the brotherhood around them, hence blissfully keep *themselves* in a state of reinforced ignorance.

This is an emotional type of reasoning and very deceptive. *Unity in ignorance* clearly is NOT what Jesus had in mind, when he said, "**Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.**" (John 8:32)

WHICH DIVIDED—ERROR OR TRUTH?

Some seem to think that if we oppose error we somehow are guilty of dividing the body of our Lord, when, in fact, it is just the other way around.

What does Titus 3:10 mean, when it says, "**A man that is an heretick [a factious man] after the first and second admonition reject...**"?

When I visit such churches, I get an uneasy feeling wherein the doctrine of Christ is concerned. Emotionally, this type of reasoning may be very satisfying to them; however, the basic truth of the word of God suffers.

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

RESPONSIBILITY BEYOND LOCAL CHURCH

Then there are those elders who seem to feel that if they take care of the local church, they have no responsibility beyond. Such may have lots of charisma and seeming "love"; however, as a rule they downgrade the doctrine of Christ. The entire brotherhood could go down the drain all around them, doctrinally speaking, and they would sense no responsibility whatsoever.

Such brethren mistake emotion for depth. *Some* of what they say and do, no doubt, has merit. They excuse error by saying we are ALL wrong in *SOME* things. However, in the mistaken name of "love", they excuse those who accept *part* of the doctrine of Christ while denying *other* parts.

Although Jesus (our example) was "of Nazareth," he did not limit responsibility just to that one town or city. In Luke 10:1, for instance, "**the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face**

into every city and place, whither he himself would come."

And, as he went, among the things he taught was "these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." (Matthew 23:23)

WHY A "RESTORATION MOVEMENT"?

Why did there ever *have* to be a "restoration movement" in the first place? Was it not because of just such self-religion as this? As Jeremiah 10:23 put it, "**O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps.**"

Can't you just see such elders in a former day refusing any responsibility beyond their own local church until the brotherhood all around them had apostatized?—and then joining the apostasy themselves! Such is nothing short of religious anarchy. Mistaking such anarchy for "enlightenment," elders and preachers, such as these, follow blind leaders of the blind until they all fall into the ditch.

They may stigmatize our insistence on reliable Bibles and true doctrine as "legalism," but just calling them that does not make it so. Somehow or other we must ALL get back to being "our brother's keepers"—brotherhood-wide—or the "restoration" that began almost 200 years ago soon will have to be done all over again!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT

(Continued from Page 1)

After informing the great assembly who heard that first gospel sermon what they needed to do to get their sins remitted, he then declared: "for the **PROMISE** is to you..." (Acts 2:39). **QUESTION?** Do you believe that under these circumstances Peter's audience would have understood that he was speaking of a non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit? It is true that the Holy Spirit given the apostles was a reference to power they received, and though not identical to the power given through the laying on of their (apostles') hands (see Acts 8:14-18), yet the giving of the Spirit in both cases refers to miraculous gifts of that first century.

"TO YOU"

To whom was the promise made? To those in Peter's audience that day, yet not even to all of them, for certainly those who did not "gladly receive the word" and who were not "baptized" (Acts 2:41) were not its recipients. The promise then was made to obedient believers that day who were baptized into Christ, *i.e.*, those of that generation!

At times, faithful brethren conclude that Peter switches promises between verse 38 and verse 39 of Acts 2, and that Peter refers to Joel's promise in verse 38, but in verse 39 he refers to the Abrahamic promise (all of the world being blessed through Christ: Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:16, 29, and related passages). Though salvation in Christ is to be included in the context of all the above references, it should be remembered that the revelation of God's plan of salvation for fallen mankind was confirmed by the miraculous phenomena when that revelation was being given in the first century A.D. This is how the false teacher could be distinguished from the true, and how objective truth could

be contrasted with the deceptive subjectivism so typical of emotional man.

We ask: Why should the **promise** of verse 39 be understood differently from the promise of the previous verse, yea even the promise mentioned consistently in this same chapter? Note the following facts: Acts 1:4, Acts 2:16 and 17, Acts 2:33, and Acts 2:38 all refer to miraculous gifts coming from the Holy Spirit. The very next verse, Acts 2:39, which explains the meaning of verse 38 in more detail (for so is the function of the word *gar*) says "**for the PROMISE is to you...**" To which promise would Peter's audience that day have understood him to be referring? Surely that of Joel which was being "seen" and "heard"—hence, the miraculous (Acts 2:33).

"AND TO YOUR CHILDREN"

This promise was to those Jews and to their children (also Jews) who obeyed the gospel. Salvation? Certainly it is involved, but that is not the point Peter makes as he is still referring to Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16-17). This promise of the Spirit was made to some of those in Peter's audience who accepted Christ's plan for saving men, but it also included their children, that is, the next generation who would also obey the gospel.

It is understood by many that when Peter used the term "your children," he was referring to their posterity in general, for centuries to come. Such is not the case! Upon closer examination, it is seen that the New Testament writers used the phrase "your children" seven times, and in each instance, reference was made to the *next* generation—not posterity for ages to come. For example, in Luke 23:38, when our Lord addressed the daughters of Jerusalem, he said: "**Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for YOUR CHILDREN.**" The Son of God was foretelling the terrible destruction which would befall Jerusalem, in the life span of their children. Other passages where the phrase is used are: Matthew 7:11; Luke 11:13; I Corinthians 7:14; Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21, all of which verify that "your children" does not mean posterity in general.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto **YOUR CHILDREN**, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (Matthew 7:11; see also Luke 11:13).

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were **YOUR CHILDREN** unclean; but now they are holy" (I Corinthians 7:14).

"Ye fathers, provoke not **YOUR CHILDREN** to wrath..." (Ephesians 6:4; see also Colossians 3:21).

In addition to this usage of the term **your children** in the New Testament, note how Joel (the prophet quoted by Peter) used it: "**Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation**" (Joel 1:2-3). Here, to express more than one generation, he had to say more than just "your children." Doubtlessly, "your children" as used by Joel can only mean the next generation which followed, and no other!

One might ask, why would Peter purposely use terms that indicated that Joel's promise would be limited to his present generation of obedient Christians, and to the next generation only? Why was this gift of the Spirit restricted to a time frame encompassing but two generations? The obvious conclusion is that such gifts of the Spirit were given to confirm revelation then being given (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). God's word having been confirmed by the close of that second generation, gifts given to confirm that revelation ceased. This should not appear strange since the cessation of

such gifts was a matter of Old Testament prophecy (Joel even prophesies the fall of Jerusalem in Joel 2:31; see also Micah 7:15 and Zechariah 13:1-2).

"ALL THAT ARE AFAR OFF"

Some contend this term proves that the gift of the Spirit is "for all time—more than one generation." Others counter with the argument that this refers to a call to salvation, and it is this specific call to which Peter refers. We suggest that the context still speaks of miraculous gifts, and Joel's prophecy still forms the background for Peter's inspired remarks in Acts 2:39. However, Peter (in perfect agreement with other prophecies on the cessation of spiritual gifts) includes a term here which, when understood properly, limits the gift of the Spirit to first century Christians in their confirming the word with signs which followed the giving of revelation. Paul defines the term "afar off" when he uses it to refer to the Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-17). In Ephesians 2:13 Paul declares that they were once "afar off" but were made nigh by the blood of Christ. In Ephesians 2:17 Paul reminds the Ephesians that they were once "afar off ones" to whom Christ came and preached peace through the teaching of inspired men like Paul. Not only was this for those "afar off" (the Gentiles), but this preaching of peace also was proclaimed to those who "were nigh" (the Jews) according to Ephesians 2:17. That both Jew and Gentile are contemplated in the contrast between those "nigh" and those "afar off" harmonizes beautifully with Joel's prophecy that the outpouring from the Spirit would come upon ALL FLESH. Notice the following chart:

<p>Joel 2:28-32 "all flesh" (2:28)</p> <p>"sons and daughters prophesy" (Joel 2:28-29)</p> <p>"servants and handmaids in those days" (Joel 2:29)</p>	<p>Acts 2:16-39 "you" (Jews) and "afar off" (Gentiles) Acts 2:39</p> <p>"your children" (Acts 2:39)</p> <p>"as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39)</p>
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In fulfillment of this prophecy of Joel's, both Jews and Gentiles of the first century received this gift of the Spirit. Not only does this prophecy include both the outpourings of Acts 2 and Acts 10, but also the laying on of Apostles' hands through which the Spirit was given to first century Christians, both men and women (1 Corinthians 11:5; 12-14; Acts 8:14-18; Acts 19:6; and 1 Timothy 1:6).

"AS MANY AS"

The promise of the Spirit (Acts 2:39) is further described by Peter as being given to "as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him" (ASV). The term "as many as," followed by the particle *an* in Greek, forms an indefinite relative literally rendered "as many as ever." An interesting feature about this word is that it is used to denote a smaller, more select group being contemplated whenever it is found in combination with a larger group.

Note how the phrase "as many as" depicts a restricted group when contrasted with a multitude in the following examples:

- (1) In Matthew 22:9, of all those traveling the highways, only those who "were found" received an invitation to the wedding feast. Others were not invited.
- (2) In John 1:12, to how many people did the Lord give the power to become sons of God? Of the group mentioned in the previous verse, only those who "received him" as Christ were given such power.
- (3) Among the thousands of Christians in Jerusalem, all "the haves" and "the have nots," it was the more restricted

group of landowners and/or property owners who sold their possessions and donated the proceeds to help the relief effort being conducted there at Jerusalem (Acts 4:34).

In each of the above cases (and the list of examples could be enlarged greatly) there are two groups under consideration—a larger and a smaller—with the term "as many as" designating a smaller, more restricted group. Likewise in Acts 2:39 there are two groups under consideration: those bidden and those not bidden of God. If one objects that God's call to salvation is not limited, but rather is a universal call, be it remembered that this is not referring to such a call. A restricted call of salvation is a part of the doctrine of Calvinism, a doctrine condemned by the Bible. Since this call of Acts 2:39 is limited, it does not refer to God bidding the lost to salvation, but instead has another purpose in mind.

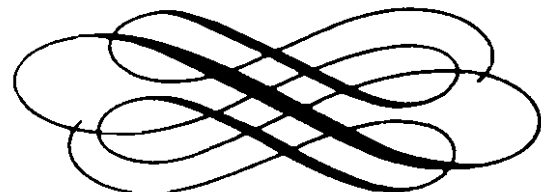
"GOD SHALL CALL"

It is true that God calls sinners to salvation through the gospel message (11 Thessalonians 2:14); but the verb "call" used there is *kaleo*, while the verb used by Luke in Acts 2:39 is *proskaleomai*, meaning "call to oneself." In the texts referring to God's summons to salvation, the verb used is *kaleo*, but this particular "call" of Acts 2:39 is more restrictive, hence another verb was selected by the Holy Spirit to convey such an idea. *The Arndt and Gingrich Lexicon* (p. 722) mentions the verb *proskaleomai* being used to designate a "special task of office." More to the point, the *Analytical Greek Lexicon* (p. 722) lists one meaning of the term as "to call to the performance of a thing, to appoint." In Acts 13:2 the Holy Spirit "called" (the word is *proskaleomai*) or appointed Paul and Barnabas to preach to the Gentile world. In Acts 16:10 the Lord appointed Paul and Luke for the work in Macedonia. In these examples, Christians were "called to the performance of a thing" or in other words "appointed." They had already obeyed the gospel, and since this summons was not a "call" to salvation, the verb *proskaleomai* was used. The basic meaning of the term is to "call to oneself" and is used 30 times in our New Testament, but never to refer to the calling of a sinner to salvation—UNLESS ACTS 2:39 IS THE ONLY EXCEPTION! If all the other 29 occurrences are never so used, and if the call to salvation normally uses the word *kaleo*, is it not probable that something other than a call to salvation is under consideration in Acts 2:39?

Since the "promise of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:33 is unquestionably a reference to the miraculous element, and since the promise of the "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 refers to a gift given through the laying on of hands of an apostle sometime subsequent to a believer being baptized into Christ, why should we expect the "promise" of the very next verse to be unrelated to the context in which it is located? It would appear that a better interpretation of the promise of Acts 2:39 is that it also refers to God's appointment of some in the 1st century to work miracles of confirmation.

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THE SUBSTITUTIONS OF JEREBOAM

Eddie Helms

Man often learns by his mistakes and the mistakes that are seen in the lives of others. One reason that history is taught to school-aged children is to learn from the successes and from the failures of the past. Jehovah God has given unto man an inspired history book by which man can learn (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6).

In this Great Book man learns that God was sorely displeased when people substituted God's way with their own. Man learns that when substitutions are made he is severely punished (Genesis 4:1-8; Leviticus 10:1-2). Man learns that when God gives directions unto his people to follow he should not change that way for some substitute or alternative (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19).

We find an example of this failure to hearken unto God in the life of Jereboam, the son of Nebat (1 Kings 12:25-33). Jereboam provided substitutes for the people which turned out to be sin (1 Kings 12:30). What substitutes did he provide for them and what can we learn from those mistakes?

A SUBSTITUTE PLACE OF WORSHIP

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PLACE OF WORSHIP (1 Kings 12:27-29). Jerusalem was God's appointed place of worship (Deuteronomy 12:5-14; 1 Kings 11:32). Jereboam said, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" (1 Kings 12:28—ASV); so he made two calves, placing them in Dan and Bethel, providing substitutes for the children of Israel.

Man provides substitutes today for God's appointed place. Denominationalism, cultism and spiritualism are all alternatives that suit the many desires of man. For those who desire a social atmosphere and humanitarian goals combined with a little religion, man has provided for himself the Salvation Army and Masonic Lodges as alternatives to God's appointed place.

In the New Testament Age, however, God's ordained place for man to worship and serve him is the church of God's Son, Jesus Christ! Man is to glorify God in this appointed place (Ephesians 3:21). All the saved are in this body where all spiritual blessings are found (Ephesians 5:23-27; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Corporate worship is to take place in the public assembly of God's body of the saved, the church (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; 16:1-2; Acts 20:7). Why would *anyone* want to forsake this assembly for any alternative (Hebrews 10:24-25)? In Acts 20:28 we learn that Christ's blood purchased the church—HIS CHURCH! The Baptist Church belongs to them, the Methodist Church belongs to the Methodists, the Masonic Lodge belongs to the Masons and the Salvation Army belongs to those folks. Christ did not die for these substitutes! If we substitute these groups for the church it becomes a sin for us!

A SUBSTITUTE PRIESTHOOD

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PRIESTHOOD (1 Kings 12:31; 13:33-34). God had appointed Aaron's sons to the office of the High Priest and the other families of the Levites performed the various duties around the tabernacle (Numbers 4; 18:1-7). However, Jereboam appointed priests from tribes other than the tribe of Levi, which was a sin (1 Kings 13:34).

Denominationalism has a system something like the system of Jereboam. The clergy/laity distinction is the product of denominationalism. The pastor system of

denominationalism is a substitute form of the already substituted form of Catholicism where the members are required to "pray through" the priests to receive salvation. The pastor concept is that each member must call on the pastor with his needs. Many times in the Lord's church our actions and ideas are not far from this denominational concept of the "preacher being the pastor."

Brethren, the Lord teaches through his Word that each Christian is a priest; yea, the entire body of Christ is a kingdom of priests (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:5-6; 5:9-10). All have the privilege as individuals to offer acceptable sacrifices to God (Hebrews 13:5; 1 Peter 2:5).

Let us not substitute God's New Testament system of church government. The Bible teaches that God has selected elders (pastors, bishops, presbyters) as God's overseers of the church—and not preachers (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:13-14).

Many have given over their responsibility of evangelism to the preacher, thinking that their contribution has paid the preacher to do their part. What is this but a substitution like that of Jereboam? Do not substitute God's selection and obligation of every-member evangelism with the idea that someone else can do your job for you! The great commission was given to *every* member (Matthew 29:18-20; Acts 8:4; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Titus 2:14; Philippians 2:14-16). Let us appreciate the responsibilities and the obligations we have as God's priests and do away with the substitutes and alternative ideas!

A SUBSTITUTE PERSON OF WORSHIP

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PERSON of worship (1 Kings 12:28-29). The King made two golden calves placing one at Dan and the other at Bethel. This reminds us of the folly of Aaron in Exodus 32:4-8. Israel served the god Baal (1 Kings 18:21). Israel served materialism (Jeremiah 6:13). All these were substitutes and all substitutes are sin (Isaiah 43:10-13). Jehovah God is the person of worship (Exodus 20:2-5).

Man must never substitute the person of his worship. Man must worship and serve the Creator God of the universe and not the creature (John 4:23-24; Matthew 4:8-10; Romans 1:24-25). All substitutes will fail! Materialism will fail (Luke 12:20-21). Trusting in self will cause one to lose his spiritual life, therefore it will fail as a substitute (Matthew 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-25). Trusting in man also will fail (1 Timothy 2:16-19). Don't settle for anything less than that which God gives and blesses man with, for all will fail except God! "...I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Hebrews 13:5b-6—ASV). Do not settle for any substitute (Revelation 22:8-9)!

A SUBSTITUTE PATTERN OF WORSHIP

Jereboam provided for the people a substitute PATTERN of worship (1 Kings 12:32-33). Jehovah God gave unto Israel laws concerning the religious festivals including the requirements of the worship to be carried out by them during the seventh month (Leviticus 23). God had demanded strict adherence to the pattern (Exodus 25:40) and he always demands obedience (Hebrews 2:1-3).

Substitute patterns are numerous today when it comes to the worship of God. It seems that many have the "Jereboam

Complex." The New Testament shows God's pattern of worship. The New Testament is the covenant enacted upon better promises and is a better covenant than the Old Testament. Therefore, it behooves us today to conform to the pattern of worship given us by Almighty God (Hebrews 8:5-6).

The New Testament pattern commands God's people to worship on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). It was on this day that the first century saints gathered together to partake of the Lord's supper. To partake of this memorial feast on any other day or to propose to ponder upon the elements which represent the body and the blood of the Lord only on special occasions or once every quarter, is to reject the pattern given by Jehovah God.

God's church is to be supported by free-will offerings collected upon the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 11 Corinthians 9:6-7). In this day of substitution and rejection of authority, many money-making schemes are advanced in the name of religion. One may see walk-a-thons, fast-a-thons, car washes, garage sales, spaghetti suppers and even gambling in the form of bingo used to raise funds for the church. And, brethren, many would be surprised to know that even in the church of the Lord some of these actions are being condoned in certain areas! These substitutions are sin!

The Lord's people are to come together and sing with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). God has given the type of music he desires as far as New Testament worship is concerned and all the references

in the New Testament require vocal music. Yes, and the Bible gets even more specific than vocal music. The record says to "sing" and "speak", using words that teach and admonish. Some, however, want to add something else, having undoubtedly the Jereboam complex. In the church today, there are some who are substituting the Divine command to sing, choosing to sing and hum, sing and clap and to sing with recorded sounds of voices mimicking mechanical instruments of music. Hand-clapping, humming and vocal bands are additions to the command to sing! Brethren, you cannot speak to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs through the sounds of percussion instruments nor can you teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs through hand-clapping. You can only speak, teach and admonish one another through verbal communication, through words, just as God has commanded! May we always be found striving to conform to the pattern and always contending for that pattern (Jude 3).

Jereboam's religion was a religion of substitutes which was a religion of sin. It was a religion which brought condemnation because it was a false religion, having its origin in men rather than in God. In order to be pleasing to God, men must be doers of God's word (James 1:22). Men must be followers of the way of Jesus rather than the ways of Jereboam (John 8:31-32). Let's not substitute his way for our ways, but always make *our* ways conform to his way!

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LORD, TELL US PLAINLY

Joe W. Nichols

Israel reflected upon God's method of teaching them through the prophets (Isaiah 28:9). The people erred through strong drink and having dim vision, consequently rendered vain judgment. They had allowed themselves to be polluted by heathen religions (verse 7). Their table was full of vomit and filthiness (verse 8). In reference to God, they said, "**whom shall he teach knowledge and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?**" (verse 9). They scoffed at God for treating them like babes and children in the plain and simple manner that he spoke to them through the prophets (as if they had a very limited capacity to receive the teaching). Howbeit, they had not received and obeyed the voice of the prophets; this resulted in God using a different method of teaching them: with "**stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people**" (verse 11). God had offered rest and refreshing, but "**they would not hear**" (verse 12). Therefore, God would give them an "**overflowing scourge**" and they would be "**trodden down by it**" (verse 18). The picture is clear, Israel would not heed the simple and plain language of the prophets; now they would learn through the language of a foreign people who would subdue them and by means of the whip make them glad to have the understanding lest they perish physically.

The Jews of Jesus' day "**came around about him, and said unto him, How long doth thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, TELL US PLAINLY?**" "Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believe not" (John 10:24-25; emphasis added). Luke's record reads, "**If thou art the**

Christ, TELL US? But he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask you, ye will not answer" (Luke 22:67; emphasis added).

Paul's instruction to Timothy, which is God's will for preaching the gospel in the Christian Age, was to "**preach the word** (gospel, doctrine, truth), **be instant in season and out of season, reprove** (bring to proof, or prove with evidence the untrue), **rebuke** (convict sin and sinners), **exhort** (call those of faith to action) **with all longsuffering and doctrine.**" Paul's reason for giving the instruction is made clear, "**For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine...**" (11 Timothy 4:2-3).

Peter's preaching on Pentecost was forceful in using Old Testament references proving that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. His statements were both plain and simple: "**this Jesus whom ye crucified**" (Acts 2:36); "**ye by the wicked hand of lawless men did crucify and slay**" (Acts 2:23). The effect of his preaching is noted: "**they were pricked in their heart, and said...what shall we do?**" (Acts 2:37). "**They then that gladly received his word were baptized**" (Acts 2:41). However, most of Israel failed to hear and was lost (Romans 9, 10, 11).

VARIED REACTIONS TO BE EXPECTED

It is evident from the foregoing references that those of us who preach the gospel can expect varied reactions to the preaching. Some say that they want it straightforward and "if you're not stepping on my toes, you're not preaching." Others say, "Preach, but don't preach negatively; preach

positively; preach love." Still others want us to "preach the truth" but what they mean is to preach it in such a way as to not recognize it and in this way slip up on the blind side of people. (Don't mention church, doctrine, blood, baptism, and such like). Yes, many people today claim that they want the truth and want it spoken PLAINLY, but in reality, they don't want it that way. (Preaching really hasn't changed that much, has it?) A claim is made for truth and plain Bible preaching but ridicule and scorn await those who make it too plain. (Paradoxical, isn't it?) Note:

1. We hear "church of your choice;" "one church is just as good as another;" "it really doesn't matter what church you are a member of." As preachers, we preach, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (singular); "gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body" (singular, and headquarters in heaven); "there is one body" (singular).

The church is 1955 years old; denominations are less than 450 years old. When we preach the plain truth about denominations, our brethren choke on it, denominational people refuse to hear it and even some of our own "more learned" preachers cringe as if we have committed some grave sin.

2. We hear, "Of what faith are you?" As preachers, we preach: "one faith" (singular); "that ye may all speak the same thing..." (one doctrine); "contend earnestly for the faith..." (singular); "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you...unto a different gospel..." (one Christ, one gospel).

When we preach the plain truth about one and only one faith and the principle of all speaking the same thing and one doctrine for all believers, some of our brethren choke on it wanting to give denominational doctrines (which are perversions of the gospel) equal standing with the truth of God. Denominational people label us "bigots" while finding pleasure in their own peculiar doctrines. Our "more learned" preachers question our right to such judgment.

3. We hear of offers to buy us (church of Christ) a piano or organ, so we can have music in our church. As preachers, we preach: "singing and making melody WITH YOUR HEARTS;" "singing with grace IN YOUR HEARTS unto God" (emphasis added). Out of the two distinct kinds of music, God legislated singing, NOT PLAYING, to be exercised by each Christian worshipper, individually, in a collective worship setting.

In our preaching, we emphasized the necessity of each member joining in collectively in singing praises to God and now our brethren are beginning to choke on it. (Some want choirs, quartets, soloists, humming and voices sounding like instruments of music). The denominations could care less about authority in the matter; and our "more learned" preachers would have us not make it a test of fellowship.

4. We hear: "Give your heart to Jesus;" "Take Christ as your personal Savior;" "Trust Jesus to save you." We preach the plain truth: "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation;" "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" "repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins;" "confession is made with the mouth unto salvation;" "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

As we preach the plain and simple plan of salvation, our brethren begin to choke; they would have us use a more

subtle approach with more personal witness and in some unsuspecting way carry the sinner to the water. Denominational people reject our quoted scriptures for John Calvin's doctrine of a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in saving the sinner and our "more learned" preachers would have us leave it all to the grace of God to decide.

Israel of old and the Jews of Jesus' day were not happy with God's methods of delivering truth to them. Human tradition became more important than what was spoken or written which led to ill-treatment of the true spokesmen of God. More and more, as preachers, we witness this same trend developing among our brethren. It is a hypocritical voice that says, "Tell us plainly," and then rejects the message spoken and ridicules the messengers who set it forth. When the truth presented in the manner prescribed by God is rejected, regretfully, God will then speak to his people in other ways and who can bear it?

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Satan In The Church?

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Several scriptures such as Isaiah 35:8-10 speak of the impossibility of unconverted people (Satan and his children) "entering" God's church. Of course, this is because God adds only *saved* people to his church (Acts 2:47).

However, there is another sense in which Satan and his agents are able to get into the church where they work to destroy unity, harmony and spiritual growth (1 John 2:19; Acts 20:30). As Satan came before God with his children in Job 1:6, so today he looks for every opportunity to sneak into our assemblies. He often succeeds by entering apostles (Luke 22:3), influential Christians (Acts 5:3; Matthew 12:45), and preachers (II Corinthians 11:15). Of course, the context of the latter passage indicates that these preachers are used by Satan in promulgating denominations, but since the Lord's church is the only church on earth that does not belong to Satan, he will enter the unwary Christian to use him in causing friction and division in the one church that he hates. But, he blesses all other churches and their "clergy." Indications are that we now live in the fulfillment of Revelation 20:7-9, and II Thessalonians 1:8.

These simple facts have been stated to warn brethren to be on guard against Satan's infiltrations; to learn to recognize his presence and influences. Not only is the church failing to grow as it did formerly, but we hear of more bickering, division and split congregations than ever before.

If all members would realize and remember that Satan is the cause of all church problems, this sinful and deplorable condition could quickly be altered. Consider a few of the controversial subjects plaguing the brotherhood today: "The indwelling Spirit", "total commitment", "saved people in all churches", and "the easier way of salvation" (1 John 1:7). All such disunity would be avoided if Christians would study their Bibles together—letting God thus show who is right, if any. (Revelation 11:1). But, Satan accuses some Christians to be unreasonable and un-Christlike in trying to solve church problems. In other walks of life, the same people work together harmoniously who fight heatedly in religious matters.

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THE BODY OF CHRIST

(a Study of I Corinthians 12)

Keith Alarid

In the 12th chapter of his first letter to the church in Corinth, the apostle Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, presents that wonderful allegory of our physical bodies as representative of the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23). In the first 11 verses of this illustrative chapter, Paul gives an exhaustive list of the spiritual gifts that were bestowed upon some of the brethren in Corinth. He is not, however, teaching that we should make sharp distinctions. On the contrary, Paul is showing that although there were different gifts, they were from ONE source and were to serve ONE purpose (vv. 4-7). Notice that from verse 7 through verse 11 Paul reminds us no less that FIVE TIMES that these various gifts come from the same source, and that being the Spirit. He then, in verse 11, points out that these several gifts "worketh the one" because the Spirit divided (allocated) as he saw best.

If we had to select one key verse that best demonstrates the point the Holy Spirit is attempting to convey, it would have to be verse 12. **"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."** It is at this point in the chapter that Paul, through inspiration, begins that beautiful narrative alluding to our physical bodies being representative of the body of Christ. In verses 14-26 he uses the physical body, a thing to which we all can relate, to demonstrate not only the logic of unity within the body of Christ, but also the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY of unity within the body. While this concept could and should be expanded to cover all of Christendom, for the sake of brevity, we shall limit the scope of our study to that of the local congregation.

Paul, most ably through inspiration, reminds us that every member of our physical body is essential. The foot needs the hand. The ear, the eye, the mouth, the nose, and such all perform various specific functions within our bodies. Yet is any one less important than the other? While a person may lose an eye and yet be able to see, he loses depth perception and cannot see as well as he could with both eyes. If we were to lose the hearing in one ear, we would lose the ability to distinguish the direction of sounds as clearly as we once did. (Did you know that if you lost your ability to smell, foods would not taste as good as you remembered?) How essential is EVERY member of our body!

God put our body together "as it pleased him" (v. 18). That his way is best is beyond questioning. Verse 24 tells us that God "tempered" the body together. That same word is translated "united" in other passages (cf., Hebrews 4:2). God did what he did so that there would be no "schism" (division) in the body. He put us together in such a way as to cause each member of our body to be sensitive to every other member of our body. If one member is injured, the entire body is aware of the injury.

In verses 25-27 we can see the whole point of Paul's argument. Just as there should be no division within our physical body, that each member is concerned (aware) of every other, so ought we to be as members of Christ's body. When one of our beloved members in the body of Christ suffers an illness, do we not rush to his aid? What about when that same member suffers some kind of hardship due to these times in which we live? Are we as compassionate?

Do we not catch ourselves saying, "He should have managed his money more wisely. You can't help someone who won't help himself"? What if the next time we cut our own flesh, our heart should say, "I'll stop beating so the cut will stop bleeding"? How long would we exist as a living body? It is the same within the body of Christ.

Paul clearly states in verse 26, **"If one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it...."** Beloved, we simply must grasp the concept the Holy Spirit is trying to teach us in these verses. If we are not sensitive to the needs of our "members", we shall cease to exist as a living body (1 Peter 2:5). Paul reminds us that when one member receives some distinction of honor, we rejoice with him. That is easy! Notice, however, that in the first part of that same verse 26 we are told to suffer with each member when he suffers. That is *not* so easy.

Paul is talking here about "empathy." Webster defines empathy as "intellectual or emotional identification with another." Empathy goes beyond sympathy. We should "hurt" when another member hurts (Hebrews 13:3). We should "rejoice" when another member rejoices (Romans 12:15).

I fear that too many of us have forgotten (or never understood) this concept. We have seen preachers that have forgotten that they are "members" of the body and not the "head" (Ephesians 1:22, 23). We have seen elderships that feel the same way. They fall prey to the mind-set of Diotrephes (III John 9). How many deacons have forgotten the position to which they were appointed (Acts 6:3) and have assumed the role of bishop, a position for which they may not even be qualified to occupy (1 Timothy 3:1-15)? Those who have adopted this attitude need to go back and study again the teaching of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12.

There is to be *unity* within the body. The "lowly" member who is always in the background is oftentimes the real "backbone" of a congregation. This is the concept Paul gives us in 1 Corinthians 12:22: **"Nay, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary...."** It is usually this member who is the first to services so that he can fulfill his obligation to God. It is usually this member who is the first to prepare meals for a family in need. It is this person on whom we call to "babysit" our children when we wish to participate in some activity. It is usually this member about whom we forget when we are planning some sort of church activity. Yet it is this person who genuinely understands the teaching of I Corinthians 12. He is far more concerned with the welfare of others than of himself (Acts 20:35).

It is easy to see how those members who are not in the forefront of church activity may sometimes feel unnecessary. However, Paul points out vividly that it is the individual members that constitute the body of Christ (I Corinthians 3:16, 17; 12:27).

There are different functions (I Corinthians 12:4-6), but no one makes up the whole of the body (I Corinthians 12:27-30). Is the woman who teaches a children's Bible class from her youth to her old age performing any less an important function in the Lord's body than the missionary

who may spend his entire life in East Africa? (Read carefully Romans 16:1-3, 6, 12; 1 Timothy 5:10, and 11 Timothy 1:5). What of the Christian wife who sits quietly on the back row of the auditorium with her young children so as not to disturb others? She and her husband understand that their children need to learn discipline, respect, and reverence during the worship service, and, in some cases, this is a full time job! Oftentimes the entire sermon may be missed. Yet, is she not fulfilling a very important Christian duty insofar as raising the children is concerned (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 12:4; 31:10, 30)?

This is the point of Paul's lesson in 1 Corinthians 12. Just as no one function of the members of our physical body is more important than any other and, therefore, cannot stand alone on its own merits, neither can any one member of the Lord's body stand alone on his or her own merits.

We do not want to overlook the fact that each congregation of the Lord's people constitutes an entire body, and yet does not detract or diminish from any other faithful congregation. Each is as complete as the other. Just as my physical body is as complete as yours, severally we constitute THE body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12, 14, 27).

Brother **David Lipscomb** in his commentary on 1 Corinthians points out that when a new congregation of the Lord's people is organized, it is as much a WHOLE body as was the first church in Jerusalem about which we read in Acts 2:41-47. It is a whole body because the body is made up of its many members (1 Corinthians 12:27). Every member is an integral, essential part of the body and must be made to feel a part thereof. It is the obligation of every responsible member of the Lord's church not to neglect or overlook any other individual member. We must not be envious of someone because of his position or the abilities he possesses. Be desirous of, Paul says, "desire earnestly" the gifts or abilities you possess. That is what will make the body whole.

Regardless of the different gifts or abilities an individual may possess, there is one gift that Paul shows we all can possess. That is the "most excellent way" about which he speaks in verse 31 of this passage. We all can possess the "gift of love." When we lay hold of the idea that love is the key to spiritual fullness (1 John 4:7-11), we shall have reached that fullness about which John writes and shall receive the blessings and confidence spoken of in 1 John 4:16-21. We shall then have a perfect understanding of the unity that the inspired apostle was so desirous of and for in 1 Corinthians 12.

—91 April Wind South
Montgomery, Texas 77356

We Are Still Here!

Johnie Scaggs, Jr.

Today is September 13th; the time is 12:00 p.m.; and, by the grace of God, I'm still able to sit at my desk and write this article.

This is the day on which **Edgar C. Whisenant** predicted that the so-called "rapture" would come. It was *supposed* to take place at 11:00 a.m.—and one hour later we are still here!

Thousands of people (according to T.V., radio, and newspaper reports) quit their jobs, sold all their possessions and supposedly were "saved."

How sad, that thousands of people will follow after the words of a false teacher. But, we should not be surprised, after all, Paul warned us of this very thing: "**For the time will**

come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"(11 Timothy 4:3,4)

CITING WHISENANT'S BOOK

I have read Whisenant's book (88 reasons why the rapture could be in 1988), and I found it to be pathetic, confusing and yea, even blasphemous. If it were not for the seriousness of this vital subject, this book would be downright hilarious.

In his book, Whisenant sets forth eight different criteria which he states, "...that this book must meet without exception and without any error of any kind" in order to be true.

In his first criterion, he says that this book must, "agree perfectly and in every detail with every verse in the Bible...." But before Mr. Whisenant even finishes giving his eight criteria, he contradicts what the Bible plainly teaches.

Whisenant misuses the book of Daniel—and then later in the book he misapplies Matthew 24. Furthermore, he states, concerning Matthew 24:36 that, "God in the last years of the church age has let the church know the year and the month... Only the exact day and hour of Jesus' return for his church is unknown."

He further states, concerning Acts 1:7 and 1 Thessalonians 5:1, that, "The times and the seasons were not limitations in the original Greek manuscripts."

Whisenant simply does not understand what the Lord was teaching. The Lord was not referring to the exact day or hour (although they were included), but rather his statement was in reference to time in general. No one knows of that time.

CRITERIA OR SPECULATION?

His other seven criteria are mere speculation on his part and simply do not offer any evidence to support the false doctrine that is taught therein.

Listen to what the Bible says: "**But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father**" (Mark 13:32). Jesus plainly taught his disciples that the *only* person who knew when the end would come was the Father in heaven. He further taught that there were three who did *not* know—men, angels and the Lord himself. Has God revealed something to Mr. Whisenant that he did not reveal to his own Son? I believe not.

It should be noted that when Jesus comes to take the righteous home with him, his precious feet will not even touch this old corrupt world, "**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord**" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). Once the dead in Christ and the righteous ones who are still alive, rise to meet the Lord in the air, then this world shall melt with fervent heat (1 Peter 3:10). Thus this world will be destroyed!

"IF THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND..."

Once this world is destroyed, where will Mr. Whisenant have the Lord set up his kingdom? Not on the earth; it will not be here. If the Jews or Gentiles are to reign with Christ, it will have to be now at the present time while Christ is the King of his kingdom. Only those who obey the gospel of our Lord now can receive the blessings and benefits of his kingdom (11 Thessalonians 1:7, 9).

Don't be fooled by the craftiness and ignorance of such

foolish men who claim to know more than Jesus Christ claimed that he knew. "...If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall in the ditch" (Matthew 15:14b).

The coming of our Lord to judge the world, will be when God decides for it to be and not a day sooner or later. That time may be at *any* time—only God in heaven knows the year, month, week, day and hour. *You* don't know, *I* don't know, and it is proof positive that Mr. Whisenant doesn't know!

As the great song says, "Work, for the night is coming, when man's work is done."
— Post Office Box 57

Black Oak, Arkansas 72414

A Blasphemous Movie

Clarence Lavender

"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

The Bible teaches Jesus Christ was without sin. But, if a certain movie entitled *The Last Temptation of Christ* is correct, then Jesus is a sinner and should repent!

According to a release from the *Associated Press* and printed in the July 13, 1988 edition of the *Roanoke Times*, *The Last Temptation of Christ* was condemned in 1955 as heretical by the Greek Orthodox church. I suppose it was so strongly condemned by them because the author of the book, Nikos Kazantzakis, is of Greek origin. Martin Scorsese has produced a movie from the novel.

Donald E. Wildman, head of American Family Association had an agreement with Universal Studios to view the movie before it was released, due to the fact it was so demeaning and degrading to Christ. Universal Studios kept postponing the *viewing* time, but not the *release* time. Tim Penland, a spokesman for Universal Studios, and a professed "Christian," said, "I feel that Universal simply did not want us to alert the Christian community to the film, and used the agreement period to delay any action with the hope that there would not be enough time to object to the film should it be demeaning to Christ."

IS IT (OR IS IT NOT) DEMEANING TO CHRIST?

Let's see if you, the reader, think the book and the movie script are demeaning to Christ?

The script has Jesus saying to Mary Magdalene: "I've done a lot of wrong things. I'm going to the desert to be cleansed. The worst things I've done are to you. Forgive me."

Again, the script says that Jesus tells a group of poor and sick who ask him to be healed: "Get away. You sicken me. You're selfish and full of hate. God won't help you."

Such liberties with the gospel, and the life of our Lord are blasphemous!

The story has Jesus marrying Mary Magdalene. His guardian angel wants to watch while Jesus and Mary engage in sex. According to the script, the guardian angel says to Jesus: "It's me. I wondered if I could watch (the couple engage in sex). I'm lonely too." Jesus laughs and responds: "Yes, yes. Watch."

Brethren, hell will not be too hot for men who write books and produce movies like *The Last Temptation of Christ*!

In another conversation, Jesus tells Mary Magdalene: "Now I know; a woman is God's greatest work. And I worship you. God sleeps between your legs."

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU EXPECT?

It takes a sin-sick mind to write such things about our Savior. But, what else can you expect from a humanist! On an introduction page of the script the following quote from Kazantzakis is given: "It is not God who will save us—it is we who will save God, by battling, by creating, and transmitting matter into spirit." Such is the false philosophy of *Human Manifesto I and II*.

The script says, after Mary Magdalene is killed in the movie, Jesus moves in with Mary and Martha (that should please the 30-million "live-ins" in America), the sisters of Lazarus, and has children with both of them.

Only a brief description at the very end identifies his relationships with Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha as a dream. But, by then, the damage already has been done. The average movie goer gets a lasting, distorted view of Jesus!

One reporter said, "Our Lord was crucified once on a cross. He doesn't deserve to be crucified a second time on celluloid."

Brethren, the worst of perverted minds are spreading this sort of pornography in the minds of society. If the movie is released in September (and it was—IYR Jr.), and you hear of it being shown in local theaters, please call the manager and let him/her know you no longer will patronize the theater.

Please call 1-818-777-1000 and give a negative vote for *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Or write: Chairman Tom Pollock, MCA, Inc., 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, California 91608.

The Bible is right, "...but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Peter 2:22).

— Post Office Box 306

Christiansburg, Virginia 24073

Death Of The Church

Jimmie B. Hill

OBITUARY:

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to pay our last and final respects to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The church of Christ, also known as the church of God, the body of Christ, and the bride of Christ, was established in the city of Jerusalem in about 33 A.D.

The church passed away from its life late in the 20th century at the age of approximately 1,950 years old. The church died for a lack of the will to live by its members. It had been ill for some time with the lack of feeling, emotion, interest, or concern on the part of its membership for the lost and the failure to stand for the truth of God's word. In short, the church of our Lord died from total apathy.

The church is survived by our heavenly Father who gave us all the good things in our lives that we might have a home with him someday, by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who gave his very life that we could have eternal life with him someday, and by all of the faithful Christians who have gone on before us edifying, strengthening the church, teaching and preaching the gospel that the church might have life and glorify the heavenly Father. It also is survived by some of us here today who have tried to do as the apostles and the first century Christians did and spread the gospel throughout the world, throughout our country, or even to our next door neighbors. But it seems that all of this was too little too late.

The gospel moved from Jerusalem to all of Judea and

Samaria and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. This was accomplished in about 30-35 years by such faithful Christians as Peter, Paul, Timothy, Aquila and Priscilla and a host of others who were truly interested and wanted to see the church of our Lord and Savior grow to its fullest potential. And the church of Christ did grow as a result of the work of these people. This work consisted of teaching sinners publicly and from house to house, by scattering abroad preaching the word of God, by going and teaching all nations the good news of Jesus Christ and baptizing them in his name and then teaching further that these new converts might be grounded and settled in the faith. These people knew that in order to bring the church to its full potential it would take a lot of prayer, study, visitation, personal work, and personal evangelism. If only the Lord's church truly believed that in its last few years on the earth, it may have been still alive today.

The church was not an active part in everyone's life but was made available to everyone through the blood of its head and founder Jesus Christ. It is sad to note that even though his blood was shed for everyone, only a small handful took advantage of that precious flow that ran from the pierced side of our Savior.

The church was loved by its faithful members, by those who loved Jesus and tried to do his will and follow his

commandments, by all of those who were indeed lovers of souls. It was hated and despised by the world and by those who didn't believe in its salvation. Those who simply made a pretense at being Christians also were against the church for Jesus made it abundantly clear that those who were not with him were against him.

The church may be gone, but its memory will live on by those faithful few that lived for Christ and the church on earth who now are with the Father in Heaven. Perhaps someday, someone will examine the word of God again and the church of our Lord and Savior will find new life here upon the earth.

NOTE:

Of course, this obituary is fictional and is no way written to belittle those who faithfully are carrying on the fight against Satan in the Army of God. But it is written to make us ALL think and examine ourselves in light of the Bible and our Christian lives. As we do so, let us ask ourselves this question, "If every other Christian worked for God the same way as I do, how long would it be before this obituary could be true?" Brethren, let us think about it and then act accordingly.

Post Office Box 3024
Pago Pago,
American Samoa 96799

Must The Alien Sinner Eat The Lord's Supper?

Jerry Moffitt

You are aware that this question comes up in a study of divorce and remarriage. Those who believe the alien sinner is not subject to Matthew 19:9 often use as an argument the notion that aliens are not amenable or subject to the *whole* New Testament. If they are not subject to the New Testament—the argument goes—then they need not be accountable to Matthew 19:9. But, they usually add, if aliens ARE subject to the whole New Testament, then they must eat the Lord's supper, for the command regarding it is part of the New Testament. However, let us present several lines of reasoning for your consideration.

NO ONE IS DIRECTLY AMENABLE TO EVERYTHING IN THE NEW COVENANT

There are things in the New Testament to which anyone may not be *directly* subject. We are *indirectly* subject to them because we must believe them, accept them, and not be a false teacher regarding them. We are liable to give account regarding things we do not directly obey, and "liable to give account" is one of the definitions of amenability. For example, the Christian man need not be in subjection to his own husband (Ephesians 5:22). The wife is *directly* amenable to that, but every Christian man is *indirectly* amenable to it in the sense that he will be judged by whether he teaches accurately on it. It is in this sense that all men are amenable to the whole New Testament. Parts which directly apply only to women are still parts of scripture to which I am amenable, in the sense I must accept, teach, defend, and not pervert them. So all men and women are subject to the whole New Testament, but of course, as we have seen, not in the exact same way.

But let us explore the "Lord's Supper argument" from the *opposite* direction. We will do that by putting it in question form.

"Is the alien subject to the New Testament?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because some things in the covenant don't apply. For example, he doesn't have to eat the Lord's supper."

"Are there some things in the covenant which do not directly apply to men?"

"Yes, Ephesians 5:22, etc."

"Then why doesn't that prove men are not under the New Testament?"

"Well, uh, _____"

SYLLOGISTIC FORM (THEIR ARGUMENT)

- 1) If the alien is under the New Testament, then he must eat the Lord's supper as an alien.
- 2) The alien does not have to eat the Lord's supper as an alien.
- 3) Therefore the alien is not under the New Testament.

COUNTER MODEL

- 1) If the Christian man is under the New Testament, then he must be silent in the church (I Corinthians 14:34).
- 2) The man need not be silent in the church.
- 3) Therefore, the Christian man is not under the New Testament.

In both cases the syllogisms are valid, a form called by logicians "modus tollens;" but in both the first premise is unsound. The first premises are unsound, for all Christians are not amenable to all passages in the exact same way. Some things we are directly to obey, while we are amenable to other things in the sense that we uphold, support, defend, and not pervert them. But let us approach the question from still another angle.

SEQUENCE

Some commands are directly given, but they must be obeyed in sequence. They should not be obeyed out of

sequence, even though the command is truly given and actually received. For example, notice this principle proved in a very common passage—Acts 2:38. The text says, “**And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.**” Now was the command to be baptized given to those Jews there? Certainly, unless you would boldly deny what Peter expressly commanded. Could the Jews obey it? No, for they needed first to repent. Well, had they not already repented? No, for why would the Holy Spirit tell them to repent if they had already repented? So it is clear that Peter gave and the Jews received a command which had to be obeyed, but obeyed *in the proper sequence*. Many commands are given which must be obeyed *in sequence*. Does the alien have the command to eat the Lord’s supper? Not to eat as an

alien, he doesn’t, for that would get the command out of sequence. He is commanded to eat it as a Christian, not as an alien, but he still receives the command while he is an alien. He—as in the case of Acts 2:38—must obey it in the proper sequence.

We see the same thing almost everywhere we turn. Jesus condemns the Pharisees and lawyers for rejecting baptism, though they had not first believed and repented (Luke 7:30). Why did he condemn them when they were not yet qualified to be baptized? Because they were guilty of disobedience to the *whole* sequence. They were to obey baptism in the proper order, and they failed to do it. Think about it! Think on it!

—Post Office Box 126
Sayre, Oklahoma 73662

“The Sin Of Being Neutral”

B. C. Carr

If there ever was a time for men to be taking a stand for truth and right it is now. The church is facing troublesome times in its battle against sin in the face of a new liberalism and softness toward doctrinal error. We see efforts of brethren on every side trying to take a neutral stand. They think they can win the struggle for right by failing to take a stand. Evidently, they feel that by being quiet the devil will go away. Not so.

Recently, in a forum discussion, I received a question, supposedly from an elder, wanting to know if elders should occupy a neutral position on such things as which version and the marriage and divorce dilemma. This shows the soft thinking of those who are trying to walk on both sides of the fence concerning truth and error. I believe this to be sinful. It is time for those who want to be on the Lord’s side to take a stand for truth. Read Exodus 33:26.

THE SIN OF BALAAM

You will recall that the prophet Balaam tried to be neutral but failed. Balak wanted him to place a curse against God’s people. Balaam knew, and confessed, that he must speak that which the Lord had put in his mouth. (Numbers 23:12) At the same time he seemingly wanted to please Balak. Balak’s doctrine is stated in Numbers 23:25, “**And Balak said unto Balaam, neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.**”

Strange as it may seem, this is the philosophy espoused by many preachers and church members today. They want to straddle the fence or walk on top of it so as to appease all parties. This cannot be done. We are either for the Lord or against him. (Matthew 12:30)

Let it be understood we are not talking about personal disputes where there is a possibility of both parties being in the wrong. Instead, we are thinking of doctrinal matters. For instance, one preacher said that he was not a premillennialist, but neither was he “anti-premillennial.” Another has said, he was not advocating instrumental music, but that he was not “anti-instrumental music.” There are many who would disclaim false doctrine in their own preaching, but they will embrace those in fellowship who teach and practice false doctrines. Brethren, let’s get off the fence.

THE SIN OF PILATE

When Jesus was brought before Pilate, this Roman Governor knew that our Lord had done nothing worthy of death. He knew that for envy the Jews had delivered him, but the mob cried, “**Let him be crucified.**” In an attempt to appear neutral (and perhaps trying to soothe a guilty conscience) Pilate took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “**I am innocent of the blood of this just person.**”

Brother, tell me, was Pilate really innocent? We have for a long time accused this man of being guilty of moral cowardice. This was one of the sins that crucified Jesus. When we allow the Word of God to be trampled under foot today and show contempt for the blood of the covenant are we any less guilty? It’s time for us to get off the fence and take a stand for the truth.

THE SIN OF MEROZ

In Judges 5:23 we read, “**Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.**” God’s people were in a battle for their lives. God was mightily concerned but where were those of Meroz? They were still abiding in their sheepfolds. They were content to remain idle and let others do the fighting, but God was displeased. He ordered a curse be placed against them.

What was their sin? The same as many of our brethren today. They wanted to remain neutral. They wanted others to do their fighting.

There are those even now who will not join in the battle against error in the church. They look upon themselves as being lovers of peace. They even become critical of those who are known as “fighters” or “brotherhood watchdogs.” Some of these are trying to do a balancing act on the fence of neutrality. If the truth prevails on some issue and error is exposed to the point that it is unpopular, they will fall off on the side of the majority and proudly claim “We have won the victory”—yes, and “we killed a bear, but papa shot it.”

—510 Easton Drive
Lakeland, Florida 33803

Notes & Quotes...

We keep on seeing supposed-to-be churches of Christ making use of the Dr. James C. Dobson "Focus on the Family" films and

materials. Often these are described as "Christian." Since when is a non-Christian a Christian? Dobson is NOT a Christian. He is

an unconverted member of the NAZARENES and always has been since all this has been happening! If we wouldn't invite a non-Christian into our pulpits (and most of us would not for biblical reasons), how can we consistently present his films? Verily, the legs of the lame are not equal!
Shan Jackson, Palacios, Texas: "Our elders

Bellview church of Christ calls your attention to—

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

THEME — "FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS"

FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING
1807 SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE
LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33803

Director: B. C. Carr
Phone: (813) 683-4043

Monday—January 16

- 9:00 "Attacks Upon The Home"
Winford Claiborne - Henderson, Tennessee
- 9:45 "Preaching For Our Times"
V. P. Black - Mobile, Alabama
- 10:45 "Tolerating Error"
Gene Stilwell - Sarasota, Florida
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Sin Of Gambling"
Wilford Heflin - Tampa, Florida
- 2:30 "Personal Godliness In Each Christian"
Willis Pack - Lake Placid, Florida
- 3:30 Open Forum
J. Noel Merideth - Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
- 4:30 Break
- 7:00 "Keeping The Church Saved"
Robert Williams - Lakeland, Florida
- 7:45 "Is There A Bible For Our Time"
Robert Taylor, Jr. - Ripley, Tennessee

Wednesday—January 18

- 9:00 "Attacks Upon The Home"
Winford Claiborne - Henderson, Tennessee
- 9:45 "Preaching For Our Times"
V. P. Black - Mobile, Alabama
- 10:45 "Elders And Church Discipline"
Dale Spung - Sebring, Florida
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Fulfilling The Great Commission"
Bill Goldman - Staten Island, New York
- 2:30 "Dangers Within Church Growth Movement"
Winfred Clark - Athens, Alabama
- 3:30 Open Forum
J. Noel Merideth - Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
- 4:30 Break
- 7:00 "Dare To Be Different"
Charlie James - Winter Haven, Florida
- 7:45 "Errors Of The Boston Movement"
Demar Elam - Madison, Alabama

Tuesday—January 17

- 9:00 "Attacks Upon The Home"
Winford Claiborne - Henderson, Tennessee
- 9:45 "Preaching For Our Times"
V. P. Black - Mobile, Alabama
- 10:45 "Mobilizing The Local Church For Evangelizing"
Bob Spurlin - Orlando, Florida
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "The Importance Of Relevancy"
Demar Elam - Madison, Alabama
- 2:30 "Is Everything We Do Worship?"
Robert Taylor, Jr. - Ripley, Tennessee
- 3:30 Open Forum
J. Noel Merideth - Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
- 4:30 Break
- 7:00 "Does Might Make Right?"
Adrian Harper - Jacksonville, Florida
- 7:45 "Silence Can Be Sinful"
Winford Claiborne - Henderson, Tennessee

Thursday—January 19

- 9:00 "From House To House"
Buford Carroll - Pinellas Park, Florida
- 9:45 "Elders Doing Their Work"
Glenn Lee - West Palm Beach, Florida
- 10:45 "Determining The Bounds Of Fellowship"
William Cantrell - Huntsville, Alabama
- 11:30 Lunch
- 1:30 "Problems With Preachers Today"
James Medlin - Jacksonville, Florida
- 2:30 "Trusting In The Providence Of God"
George DeHoff - Murfreesboro, Tennessee
- 3:30 Open Forum
J. Noel Merideth - Lawrenceburg, Tennessee
- 4:30 Break
- 7:00 "Who Is On The Lord's Side?"
Charles Orr - Orlando, Florida
- 7:45 "If I Had One More Sermon To Preach"
Winfred Clark - Athens, Alabama

have informed us that we will begin a new mission effort this month. The Northside church of Christ in New Braunfels, Texas, with **Weylen Deaver** as preacher, is a small but sound congregation which we will be helping on a regular basis. Along with this work we will continue our mission efforts in the Rio Grande Valley, Colombia, South America, and the Far East. We also have a loving interest in the work in Northern Ireland. Please pray that all these efforts will bear much fruit for the Master's use.

Curtis Cates, director of Memphis School of Preaching, of Memphis, Tennessee, preached in a gospel meeting with the Pearl Street church of Christ, August 28-31, in Denton, Texas.

If you're ever going to see a rainbow, you've got to stand a little rain.

DIFFERENCES RESOLVED

This past Thursday evening the elders of the Cadiz congregation met with the men of the Joiner's Chapel church of Christ along with brother **Guy N. Woods** serving as moderator. We met at the Cadiz building to resolve the differences between the two congregations. After a discussion of the matters concerning **Richard Crutchfield**, **Jackie Finley** and **John Loveless** leaving the Cadiz congregation and going to the Joiner's Chapel congregation, we were able to resolve the differences between the two congregations. Richard and Jackie made apologies for what they had said. John was not present as he works the night shift.

The two congregations are now in full fellowship and all differences have been resolved.

We are thankful to brother Guy N. Woods who was willing to come and use his Biblical knowledge and influence to help resolve the difficulties.

Let us all work in the service of the Lord and the two congregations work hand in hand to spread the gospel in this area.

These matters are now dead, forgiven and should be forgotten. When we forgive, we are not to use that which was forgiven against someone in the future. Thus consider it a dead issue, not to be discussed.—**The Elders, Cadiz Church of Christ, Cadiz, Kentucky**, Bulletin for August 14, 1988.

Walter Wagner, who preaches to the Slater-Marietta church of Christ, of Slater, South Carolina, not only *defends* the truth of the gospel but does what he can to *extend* it, too.

"I know all too well about heresy in the brotherhood," he wrote recently. "The world is becoming our standard and not God's word. For example, on just the subject of marriage and divorce—on the *Today Show* they said that in our public schools from grade one to grade eight only 9.5 percent of the children live in a family where both parents are the biological parents. Except for a very few where one parent has died, the homes are made up of single parents or those with their second to third partner. It is very hard to knock on doors in this kind of world without making concessions. But for the sake of our souls we must stand fast, as you stated.

"I do not know when the Lord will return, however, he has stated that it will be a time of great falling away (II Thessalonians 2:3). Yes, we are now in a great apostasy so at least the *conditions* are right. We remain here by God's grace.

"This also is why I decided to try to take tours to the Bible lands, because the church in many places is no different from the world we are trying to convert. As you know, in Romans 1:20 it says that man is without excuse if he does not seek God. Just the evidence of God's creation, or this world, proves there is a God in heaven. No one can travel that land, with a proper guide, and not see that God used the land to teach. You

cannot stand beside Mt. Gerazim and Ebal without seeing blessings and curses...

"Since mankind, in or out of the church, is failing to follow his word, I am trying to use God's creation, as stated in Romans 1:20, to show them that they are without excuse. To look around them and see the examples of old (I Corinthians 10:6, 11) and then seek God the right way through his word...

Shan Jackson, evangelist, Palacios, Texas: "I had an opportunity to speak to a group of area preachers the other day on 'Issues Facing the Church'; and I took full advantage. For the most part the church in this area is sound; but some strange winds keep blowing from time to time.

"As I mentioned to them, the only issue etc., facing the church today is man's disregard for the authority of God's word. Liberalism, humanism, all flourish in soil fertilized by man's attempts to disregard God's authority. "...time is running out on opportunity to speak out against the issues. Soon sound men will be forced out of the prestigious (so called) pulpits and into the smaller and less influential ones. Which just goes to show that nothing is new under God's sun..."

"Pray for us as we do for you. Keep the faith that has made us free. My brother, you are not alone..."

Danny Bennett, Madison, Alabama: "The church is faced with an unprecedented hostile take-over attempt. The primary objective is to secure an institution in which to 'launder' evil practices and philosophy through the following methods:

"1. By placing erroneous teachings and teachers in appealing packages to attract an unwary and vulnerable youth market as well as the spiritually ignorant Christian and non-Christian alike;

"2. By promoting the *New International Version* of the Bible with its perverted translations while ridiculing the *King James Version* which most closely reflects the true meanings found in the original manuscripts;

"3. By obliterating any distinguishing characteristics of the church of Christ as the church prophesied about in the Old Testament, established by Jesus and identified in the New Testament, which offers the only means of salvation.

"There is no excuse for the present condition of the church, especially, since we are at liberty to use any means available to combat Satan, including waging economic warfare. James gets to the heart of the matter very quickly in James 4:7: '**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**' We should all take another look at II Corinthians 5:10.

"... **Keep the faith and remain firm for though our days be short, we know someday that 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'**"



(NOTE: Many of our readers, when they get down toward the close of each year, either through bonuses, gifts, disposal of property, or however, find that they have "extra" funds to give to the Lord if they only would. How much better to do so purposely rather than to just hold on to it and then have to give it to the government—via income taxes!

since our Far East/World Evangelism Fund fell behind in 1987, we still are running several months in arrears as 1988 is drawing to a close. A substantial contribution from you before the end of December is tax-deductible and would help catch us up. Please make such payable to *Bellview church of Christ*, clearly earmarked "*Far East/World Evangelism Fund*" and mail it % *The Elders, 4850 Sauffley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506*. See what you can do, either way. IYR Jr.)



MANY AGREE TO OISTRIBUTE BUNDLES OF CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH TO SIGN UP LARGER READERSHIP

As we mention often, the best way we have of increasing the circulation of *Contending for the Faith* is for our readers to introduce the paper to others and sign them up as new subscribers.

Among those who have written in agreeing to distribute sample bundles where they are, **James W. Huggins**, of Alachua, Florida, wrote, saying, "I would like very much to receive the bundle of back issues to use here toward gaining subscriptions." **Willis S. Langford**, of San Diego, California, wrote, "Yes, please send me some back issues. I'll place them in the hands of members here." **Bernice Cox**, of Corpus Christi, Texas, said, "Yes, I would like to receive a bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* to be distributed at the Weber Road church and other places." **Joseph H. Terry**, of Jupiter, Florida, responded: "I appreciate your letter and offer for the bundle of back issues of *Contending for the Faith*. Showed your letter to one of the elders, and he agreed it is a good idea... I will do my best to sign up new readers." **R. C. Gardner**, of Nampa, Idaho, said, "If you would like to send a bundle of back issues, I would pass them out." **Minnie Lee Medley**, of Palmetto, Florida: "I worship with a small group and would appreciate a bundle of back issues free of charge for distribution. Thank you so much."

David W. Rout, of Batesville, Arkansas: "I am very interested in receiving back issues to distribute and also subscription blanks. Standing and fighting for the truth of the gospel is so important in these days and times. May God bless all of you in your so very important work." **C. A. Hess**, of Lakeside, California: "Yes, I could use a bundle." **Gary Colley**, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee: "Many thanks... for... the good thoughts concerning the need to be on guard with the defense of the Truth. It is a peculiar thing and almost unnerving to see movements in so many directions presently by our brethren, but it is good to know that when we hold to the Truth, if and when the others come back, we will still be in the same place... Concerning a bundle of *Contending for the Faith*, we... would be happy for you to send one and we will try to sign up some new readers." **Robert W. Gray**, of Hazel Green, Alabama: "Yes, more attention should be directed to the faithful to inform them of heresies that they may not be drawn away. Please forward the bundle of back issues that I may help by distributing and the subscription blanks, as several have expressed interest in reading and keeping up to date." **Vernie D. Whitsett**, of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee: "Additional sample back issues would be helpful and appreciated. Please send." **Bill Jackson**, of Austin, Texas: "Yes, send me a bundle, with subscription blanks, and I will do all I can to gain a good group for you. Considering the time, the issues are all the more critical... Send the bundle along." **H. Truman Boyd**, of Montgomery, Alabama: "Please send a bundle."

[NOTE: No doubt there are literally hundreds—maybe thousands—of our readers who would like to have a part in our GREAT SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE during 1988. If so, please send for a sample bundle of back issues—FREE OF CHARGE—so you can introduce the paper to others, and we'll send subscription coupons with them, so you can sign up as many as possible as new readers. Please address your requests to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.—Editor]

C. McKinney, of Bayfield, Colorado, enclosed \$100.00, together with three subscriptions, saying, "Use part of the money enclosed for the subscriptions and use the rest of the money as needed."

Gale Scott, Tyler, Texas: "I don't want to miss any issues."

THE MARLIN HOFFMAN MEMORIAL FUND MOVED TO THE SOUTHWEST SCHOOL OF BIBLE STUDIES

Brethren **Bill Daugherty** and **Frank Harrell** are trustees for the HOFFMAN MEMORIAL FUND. Brother Daugherty, who serves as one of the elders of the Fifth and Grape Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas, gave the following background of brother Hoffman and, in part, why the fund was placed under the oversight of the Southwest elders.

The Marlin Hoffman Memorial Fund was established at the death of Brother Hoffman. Brother Hoffman was a dedicated Christian who chose to work with dedicated minds toward the memorization of the holy scriptures. As an example, one of his pupils is Johnny Ramsey. Brother Hoffman was not directly associated with Abilene Christian University. He did his teaching in a room in the University church of Christ building. He taught brother Harrell's son and my son. Both of these young men loved and appreciated Marlin. They contribute so much of their training to him.... We wanted to move it to a non-profit organization that had good and honest men to

utilize it to its maximum. ...It is our prayer that this small amount of funds will be of some assistance to you as you labor in the training of young men for the defense of the gospel.

It is with much appreciation that we accept this fund. At the same time, we realize the tremendous responsibility incumbent upon us to keep the Southwest church and Southwest School of Bible Studies in the strait and narrow way (Matthew 7:13).

It is good to know of the Fifth and Grape congregation's stalwart stand for the truth and we commend them for their desire to do only that which is authorized by the Bible (Colossians 3:17).

We invite others to help in the training of Gospel preachers by contributing to the Hoffman Memorial Fund or establishing a like fund in memory of their loved ones.

—**David P. Brown, Director**
Southwest School of Bible Studies
(For the elders)

Mrs. Avis E. Pirtle, of Canon City, Colorado, enclosed \$50.00 to help out, saying, "Your father used to preach it and say, 'Do you believe it? You'd better believe it!' I mean it was truth. I really miss hearing the pure, unadulterated word of God preached."

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If the elders do not keep growing spiritually, they are not likely to keep their congregation growing spiritually.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Weldon Langfield, of Bakersfield, California, ordered 25 copies of our issue for May, 1988, for distribution there.

Mike Markum, Cement, Oklahoma: "Due to the growing influence of the group 'Acappella' among our young people here in Oklahoma and elsewhere, I felt the need to send you some articles concerning their group and also an article concerning **Jeff Walling** with whom the group has appeared and with many times, apparently adopting the same view as himself.

"When the group was known to be appearing in Chickasha, Oklahoma, on October 4th, 1987, many of us were excited, until we found out that they were not coming to the Lord's church at all, but to the Parkview Christian Church. Several of us, at least four or more, wrote letters to them asking of their intentions at the Christian Church. As of yet, after three or four months or more, only one who wrote received a reply back. I will try to enclose the reply, if possible. We, as you are, are concerned about the trend in the Lord's church to compromise and blend in with the denominations. We feel the Lord's church should be separate and distinguished from all denominations, that salvation is only in the Lord's church, and that no salvation can be found in any denomination whatsoever. I hope you will publish these articles for the sake of our young people, and for all those who do not stand for compromise but believe firmly that we must worship God in spirit and in truth!"

[NOTE: We are gathering material for special treatment of "Acappella" soon. IYR Jr.]

Dub McClish, evangelist, Pearl Street church of Christ, Denton, Texas: "We had a fine meeting with brother **Curtle Cates**... His preaching was true to the book, energetic and timely. All who attended profited from his outstanding lessons. We are indebted to him for his good work with us..."

"Curtis not only is an excellent gospel preacher who loves God's word and who would rather die than pervert it; he is one of

the busiest and hardest-working men among us. He directs the great **Memphis School of Preaching**, conducted by the Knight Arnold Road congregation in Memphis, Tennessee, and this certainly is a full-time job. In addition, he plans and directs the MSOP Lectures each spring, which involves publication of a book of the lectures, on which he does all of the proofreading and other necessary publication work. He also preaches in several gospel meetings and speaks on several lecture programs (including ADL) each year. How thankful we are for Curtis and Annette because of their dedication to the truth and their great influence for good!"

Burford C. Holt, who preaches at Elkmont, Alabama, ordered "THE ONE BOOK," by **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.**, saying, "If someone has not removed some of my books, I have a copy of everything Foy ever published. He was one of the greatest minds I ever encountered and I loved him very much. I still remember a sermon I heard him preach when I lived in Corpus Christi. Others, too, but I believe that was the greatest sermon I have ever heard from the lips of mortal man—possibly because I was a young preacher and needed it so much—Every Word is True."

Ralph W. Bealy, who preaches in Balboa, Republic of Panama, subscribed, saying, "The work goes good here except for the fact that many of the natives are very hungry. We are doing all we can to feed them as we can."

FREE BUNDLES FOR DISTRIBUTION

Among those who recently have taken us up on our offer to send **FREE OF CHARGE** bundles of back issues of *Contending for the Faith* for distribution in a drive for new subscriptions are **Walter Wegner**, of Slater, South Carolina; **Mrs. Don Browne**, of Colorado City, Texas; and **Mrs. D. E. Carpenter**, of Dexter, Missouri. Sister Carpenter also asked us to send a bundle to their son-in-law, brother **Jerry Jacques**, of Bourbon, Missouri.

Others interested in helping build up our circulation in this way, please address your request to **Ire Y. Rice, Jr., 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.**

Dave Collier, of Highlands, Texas, in ordering Bound Volumes 7, 17 and 18 "to up-date our set [of *Contending for the Faith*]", said, "We enjoy those works and use them often."

Valerie Mitchell, Franklin, Louisiana: "If brethren can go overseas, why not visit a mission field here in the United States? We are thankful to God for our minister and his wife because of their sacrifice not in words but in action."

MADISONVILLE, KENTUCKY'S SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE ENTERS 2ND YEAR OF SERVICE

"It is almost impossible to believe," Director **Joseph Meador** wrote, "that THE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE is beginning its second year of service under the eldership of the Madisonville church of Christ.

"Since our beginning in September of last year we have seen a steady growth in our student enrollment, now representing men and women from four states. In addition, THE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE has continued to grow and to expand in both its teaching faculty and curriculum."

Starting on Tuesday, September 6, the school's fall quarter for 1988 will continue through November 15, on Christian Doctrine, from 6:30 to 8:30 every Tuesday night. The course on Homiletics (Preaching) will meet at the same time on Thursdays, from September 8 through November 17.

The purpose of the course in Christian Doctrine is to study, formulate and present in systematic form the fundamental truth of the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. The method of study is both exegetical and systematic, and the main text and final authority is the Bible itself. Being the fourth in a series of five classes, the following doctrines will be examined: The Divine Origin of Christianity; the Nature of Man; the Doctrine of Baptism; The Work of the Holy Spirit; and such like.

The course in Homiletics emphasizes the exposition of the Word of God. This course introduces the student to the basic elements of public communication as well as to some of the essential ingredients of sermon research and development. In essence this course seeks to develop within the student a functional methodology of gathering and organizing Biblical material into effective sermon structure in addition to stressing the various types of sermons which need to be preached.

Tuition in this school is free. For further information and an admissions packet, including a catalog, you may write or call **THE SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE, 1035 North Main Street, Madisonville, Kentucky 42431. Phone: (502) 821-3544.**

Names & Pieces Withheld By Request: "My husband and I left _____ church of Christ about June 15 (I ordered five subscriptions for them) because of MAJOR PROBLEMS. We are finding NIV everywhere we go. _____ church (less than a mile from our home) has the NIV in all the pews with the song books. _____ church uses NIV and does not have Sunday school. They are opening their new \$3-million building Sunday (8/14) one half block from _____ church.

"We want to place membership at _____ church, but the minister used the NIV Sunday morning. Tonight an elder and wife from _____ visited. They did not know of any variance in NIV. He teaches a class and uses it.

"Brother _____ (retired minister) goes to church there and I thought it would be where we could place membership.

"Would you also send a 'bundle' that I can give to them? I've loaned some of mine out and not gotten them back. Plus rush two 'NIV Packets', one bundle, and two 'Crossroads Packets.' God bless you in your good work." (\$30.00 enclosed.)

James C. Copeland, of Jasper, Florida, renewed for six years.

Ronnie L. Hurst, of Guin, Alabama, renewed for three years, added \$7.00 to "use the rest as you see fit," and said, "Keep up the good fight of faith." **Tommy Mays**, of Walls, Mississippi, also renewed for three years, added \$2.00 to help out. **Walter King**, of Loveland, Colorado, renewed, added a new one. **Don Epperly**, of Springfield, Missouri, ordered the "NIV Packet" together with renewal. **Kenneth Badgett**, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, renewed

his and one more. **Loyd Celsor**, of Hartsville, Tennessee, renewed his own, sent one new subscription. So did **Douglas E. Miller**, of Springfield, Ohio. **Wm. F. Wilson**, of Milan, Tennessee, renewed for three years, sent a three-year subscription for a friend. **Buford Olson**, of Hamilton, Texas, added \$12.00 "extra", when renewing for another three years, saying, "Use the remainder anywhere it is needed." **W. T. McLemore**, of Wills Point, Texas, renewed for three years and ordered our "NIV Packet." **Julius Coleman**, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed three subscriptions for three years each, added an "extra" \$11.00 to "use in whatever way you want to," saying, "We enjoy the paper and don't want to be without it." **David Evans**, of Rossville, Georgia, sent three new subscriptions. **Jesse Whitlock**, of Ardmore, Oklahoma, sent three new ones. **Carl Siebenthal**, of Visalia, California, sent four new subscriptions from the Central congregation there. **Dottie M. Greer**, of Johnson City, Tennessee, renewed for three years, added an "extra" \$17.00 for us to "use as you see fit." **Bob Stafford**, of Granby, Missouri, contributed \$2.00 extra, along with his three-year renewal. **Bob Berard**, of Austin, Texas, renewed for five years, sent one new. **Deuel White**, of Algood, Tennessee, renewed three.

Aaron Nicholas, our strong, regular, monthly supporter of many years, of Stamps, Arkansas, now 82, does not get around much any more—but he keeps on helping! Enclosing a check for \$50.00 recently, he said, "Contending for the Faith is the only paper that I know of that lives up to its name. It is the greatest. I have every issue from 1973. I have passed the four score and one but I'm still contending for the faith and will until I die."

"I was delighted to see brother **Goebel Musick's** letter in *Contending for the Faith*. It shows his courageous faith and love for truth. It expresses his concern as to what is going on down in his part of the world. No one can make a mistake as to who he is talking about where they belong or what they are up to."

"It is a shame and a disgrace what is going on in the church. But the worst thing of all is the church, the elders and the preachers are endorsing these false teachers and their doctrine. The devil is raging..."

Loyd L. Smith, of Allen, Texas, is still going strong (well, not too strong) at 80. He reports brother **J. S. Winston** as having spoken for more than an hour at the Dallas' preacher luncheon, saying, "for the first time in a long time the fellows didn't seem to be in a hurry, so he talked over time. But it was worth it."

"The church in Allen has splintered," and now we have, in addition to Jupiter Road, the first regular church, THE ALLEN CHURCH OF CHRIST. This is a faction that has pulled off because **Paul Billingsley** (son of Dan) and **Jerry Cooke**, also son of a preacher, couldn't run the old congregation. And, in spite of the fact that they have obviously split the Lord's body in Allen, most of the neighboring churches are accepting them. **Bob Burgess** is their preacher. The first time I met him he told me he was the 'new' preacher for that group. I told him I was sorry. He bristled considerably... but I am still sorry..."

(NOTE: Brethren, how long will it be before those who cease divisions end offenses contrary to the doctrine will be marked and avoided, NOT fellowshipped?

I wish every member of the body of Christ would read brother **Smith's** marvelous book, *Preachers of Yesteryear*. As I recall it sells for \$19.95 and costs \$1.25 to mail. Brother **Smith's** address is P. O. Box 384, Allan, Texas 75002. IYR Jr.)

Kelly Dean Smith, of Fairfield, Illinois, in ordering some books recently, added an extra \$9.00 saying, "Use the rest as it is needed to contend for the faith."

Fred & Margaret Bogle, of Orlando, Florida, two of our strongest supporters for many years, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary December 27, 1987, at the Rio Pinar Country Club, of Orlando.

Bethel Watts, elder, ordered 40 copies each of our March/1984 and our June/1988 issues for distribution at the Timerland church of Christ, of Tallahassee, Florida.

SETS OF "NIV PACKET" RUNNING OUT

Such a "run" on available sets of our "NIV Packet" has been made these past few months that one or two of the issues are almost exhausted. The same material, however, has been published by brother **A. G. Hobbs**, in tract form. Therefore, as from now, those ordering the "NIV Packet" may find one or more of brother **Hobbs'** tracts supplying the same information included, instead of our original issues of *Contending for the Faith* on the subject. In any case, please continue sending \$3.50 per packet with each order, and we'll continue getting them out while the supply lasts. All such orders should be addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, Post Office Box 26247, Birmingham, Alabama 35226**.

Among those who recently have ordered such "NIV Packets," are **Jim Davidson**, of Alum Creek, West Virginia (one packet); **Foy Simpson**, of Idaho Falls, Idaho (two packets—also one of our "Crossroads Packet"); **Rickey L. Johnson**, of Edmond, Oklahoma (one packet).

Keith A. Bradley, of the Burbank church of Christ, Houston, Texas, enclosed an advertisement from the Conroe Church of Christ (formerly Frazier Street Church of Christ), of Conroe, Texas.

"When I received this advertisement I recognized the name of the speaker, **Roy Osborne**. But I did not have a favorable recollection of that name," brother **Bradley** wrote. "I found a mention of him in the recent bound volumes I received. He was sympathetic to **Pat Boone** during his departure from the Lord's church."

"Do you have any additional up-to-date information regarding this preacher? Also, it is my understanding that the **Oak Ridge North Church of Christ** helped in sponsoring this meeting."

"It is well known in the Houston area of the departure of the Frazier Street congregation over the past several years. I did not know if you were aware of this fact or not."

(NOTE: Just why any gospel preacher and/or his overseeing elders would deliberately

invite a false teacher and heretic to speak never has been clear to me. **Roy Osborne** does NOT believe in the non-denominational character of the churches of Christ. He was (and still is) an INTER-denominationalist since long before **Rubel Shelly** ever made shipwreck of his faith in this regard.

When the *Brotherhood Way* congregation "dedicated" its building in San Francisco, while **Osborne** was preaching there, instead of inviting faithful brethren to help in the ceremonies, **Osborne** invited the DENOMINATIONAL PREACHERS from up end down that inter-denominational street to sit on the platform together with him. Not long thereafter, he was sent to southern Oregon ostensibly to conduct a gospel meeting. It was not until his return that the brethren learned he held it for the CHRISTIAN CHURCH, not the churches of Christ! The last information we had available, he still was preaching and practicing his inter-denominational ways. If this is the kind of preacher the Conroe Church of Christ wants to invite, so be it; however, the BIBLE teaches just the opposite. See Romans 16:17-18; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14; Titus 3:10; and II John 9-11. IYR Jr.)

John Henson, preacher to the Gnat Hill church of Christ, of Manchester, Tennessee, enclosed nine new subscriptions with his own renewal, saying,

"This fine response from the Gnat Hill congregation indicates how important they feel it is to 'earnestly contend for the faith.' These fine Christians realize that the cross of Christ is under attack from Satan on every side. They also believe that with the work we can all do together to defend that blood-stained rugged cross, that God and his precious Son will be victorious over all attackers in the end. The word that must be stressed in that statement is WORK; because it will take all the efforts all of us can muster to defend the gospel from the extremists that stand intent upon its downfall..."

"It has been a great blessing and privilege for me to be your co-laborer in this work..."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

When a man becomes an elder, he will not automatically serve as an elder for life. Both I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 set forth what an elder "must be." When a man no longer is what God's word says he "must be" to be an elder, it "must be" that he can no longer serve. Think it over.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Stanley D. Crews, of Lecanto, Florida, recently moved there from North Carolina. In order for the community to have an opportunity to meet and hear him, Lecanto slated a gospel meeting, with Crews doing the preaching, November 8 through 13.

Harold & Zella Foutz, of Texarkana, Texas, enclosed \$50.00, saying, "Enclosed a check that may help some. We think your work with *Contending for the Faith* is what the world needs. So many things are creeping into the church that need to be exposed. We are in our 80's and hope to do more later, if possible."

Contending for the Faith

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