

**Contending** **FOR**  
**THE** **Faith**<sup>™</sup>

**Volume XXVI, 1995**

# Contending FOR THE Faith

A publication of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sausley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526  
FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## GOEBEL MUSIC'S MASSIVE EXPOSÉ OF WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATION CENTER'S 'EASY-TO-READ' FRAUD IS WELL RECEIVED

His '*Easy-to-Read OR Easy-to-Mislead?*' Sub-Title Is Right on Target;  
1st 12,500-Copy Edition Moving Right on Out; 2nd Edition Looms Soon

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

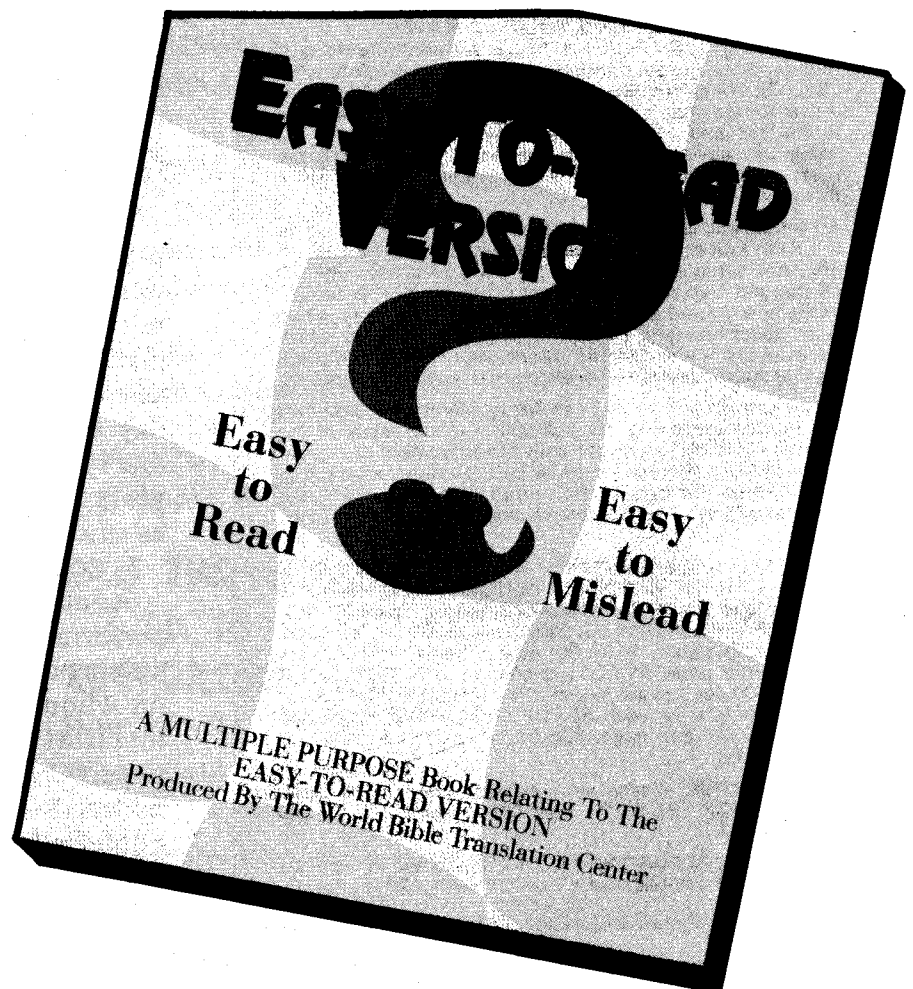
As announced in our October issue of *Contending for the Faith*, the first shipment of brother Goebel Music's massive, 1207-page exposé of the World Bible Translation Center's fraudulent "*Easy-to-Read*" translation of the Bible was received in time to introduce this magnificent new book before the Annual Denton Lectureship the middle of November.

Inasmuch as I personally had to be overseas in missionary work, November 17th through December 19th, I purposely made the announcement in our October issue, so that orders for circulating this necessary exposé might begin coming in as soon as the first shipment arrived. Brother Music gave me one of the first copies of this new book just before I left for Southeast Asia; I, in turn, presented it to the library of Four Seas College, in Singapore.

### DEDICATORY PRESENTATION IS MADE TO THE ROBERT R. TAYLORS

On Monday night, November 14th, after the first lecture, Roy C. Deaver made the dedicatory presentation of brother Music's latest book to the Robert R. Taylors at the Lectureship. Since this was a total surprise to everyone, no one but Dub McClish, the Lectureship Director, knew what was

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 1

January/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor Ira Y. Rice, Jr., 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.

## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

Contending for the Faith was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes and forbids (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence we reserve the right to accept or refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

All setups and layouts of advertisements in Contending for the Faith will be done by Bible Resource Publications. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. You may set up your advertisement as you desire, but in most cases because of the aforesaid reasons, your copy will be reset. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR to Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SET UP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

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## Editorial...

### Transition And Succession

*Time is filled with swift transition,  
Naught of earth unmoved can stand,  
Build your hopes on things eternal,  
Hold to God's unchanging hand!*

What is to happen to *Contending for the Faith* when I, too, must go the way of all the earth? Across the years, numerous readers have asked this question. Never having empathized with or understood those who flinch from such a decision, I, too, have given it long and serious thought—more especially since turning 70 seven years ago.

For a long time, I questioned whether this paper—or any such militant gospel paper—*should* survive the death of its editor—or should it die, too, at my passing? Many have assured me of a continuing need for such a militant publication in the brotherhood—that it *should* continue—but that care must be taken lest it fall into uncertain hands.

#### THANKS, BELLVIEW, FOR SERVING AS PUBLISHER

As announced, the November/1994 issue of *Contending for the Faith* completed our *first quarter-century* of continuous publication. Of these 25 years, during the past 16 of them the Bellview church of Christ, of Pensacola, Florida, has served as publisher. As such, it seemed best to do so as a non-profit enterprise, and mailing privileges were granted by the U.S. Postal Service accordingly.

In many ways, this has worked well. However, it meant that our opportunities for *advertising* were severely limited. It often seemed that it might be better to have a different kind of mailing permit—one allowing us to receive advertising without such postal restrictions. In any case, I am grateful to the Bellview church and its elders for serving as publisher for all these years while I continued to serve with a free hand as editor.

#### GOING BROKE WITH A GOOD CONSCIENCE!

Another service that Vada and I have tried to perform, in addition to the paper itself, is that of a dependable source of religious materials—one on whom brethren could rely for sound gospel literature. So offended were we by some of “our papers” selling questionable books and study materials—especially most of those written and published by the denominations (and even by some of our own false brethren!)—that we sought to do it differently.

One day, years ago, when visiting brother J. A. McNutt in his book store, I asked, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could have a book store handling nothing but what sound, faithful brethren could endorse?"

Glancing at me with his quizzical look, "That would be one way of going broke with a good conscience," he replied.

Maybe so, I thought to myself, but I determined to keep on trying in that direction.

#### BUILDING UP A LARGE SUPPLY

As the years wore on, in addition to the paper itself, *Contending for the Faith* built up rather a large stock of books, Bibles, gospel tracts and religious supplies that we could conscientiously recommend to *anyone*.

Not only did this prove to be successful by way of *mail order*, but when I took our big display to the various lectureships, year after year, we were heartened by the way that faithful brethren flocked to our tables, confident that what we had to offer would be doctrinally-sound, dependable material.

[In younger days—and even through my middle years—what a joy it was to take these displays to lectureships—brotherhood-wide! However, when I turned 70, I realized that, for me, time was running out. No longer did I have the strength and energy to pack, load, unload, display, repack, reload and manage all those heavy boxes without tiring. Finally, reluctantly, when I reached 76, I had to announce that my book-display days were ending—that, physically, I just could not cope with such heavy work any more.]

#### DAVID BROWN OFFERS TO FILL BREACH

One day, **David Brown** approached me, saying, that if I truly was discontinuing to carry my book displays to the lectureships, would I mind if he and brother **Kenneth Cohn**, one of the elders of the church at Spring, Texas, might begin to buy out our stock of books, Bibles, gospel tracts and other such supplies, and continue such a service to the brethren.

That they were even *interested*, I was simply delighted. In discussing the matter, I said that Vada and I still wanted to serve the brethren by *mail-order*; but if they wanted to perform a service similar to what we had been doing, to have at it!

Vada and I worked up a list of *our* suppliers so that David and brother Cohn would know where to order. In fact, we turned over a list of *more than 100 sources* of the type of materials we deemed suitable for brotherhood distribution and consumption.

Starting in early 1994, we helped them get going out of our own stock of materials. They began showing up at the various lectureships that we used to serve. To their encouragement, they found that the same faithful brethren who used to depend on *us* for materials now began doing likewise toward *them*.

#### EDITORIAL SUCCESSION ALSO CONSIDERED

Meanwhile, the Bellview elders and I had been discussing a possible transition and succession not only for the books, Bibles, gospel tracts and other religious supplies, but also for *Contending for the Faith*, as a gospel periodical, as well.

To serve as editor of a militant gospel paper such as *Contending for the Faith* is not an easy assignment. As important as being able to write and edit are, these may not be the first considerations.

One or two whom I had suggested earlier as "possibles," no longer could qualify at all!

For example, the one who earlier almost certainly would have been chosen, evidently, in the interim, concerning faith, had "made shipwreck."

Another whom we had highly esteemed, insisted on having fellowship with those wrongfully out of fellowship with Bellview. To him, this may not have seemed important; but, to us, it made a difference.

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Among the qualifications that we were looking for in an editor, at least a dozen were paramount. Someone was needed who would:

1. Take heed unto *himself* and unto the *doctrine*, continuing in them, that in so doing he might save both himself and his readers [*cf.*, I Timothy 4:16].

2. Someone able to discern between truth and error. Rather than having to study something interminably, he must be able to tell the difference at once, *i.e.*, "rightly dividing the word of truth" must be practically automatic.

3. Not only must he *know* the truth, but he must *love* it more than his own reputation or even life itself.

4. He must be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

5. Though he must not be crass or crude in his defense of the gospel, neither must he wear his feelings on his sleeve. Not only must he be able to *give* criticism, when necessary, but be able to "*take it*," as well.

[NOTE: When I first started writing those three little *Axe on the Root* books—Volumes I, II and III—back in 1965, my wife offered a word



of caution even before I published the first one. I must be sure that I could *take criticism*—even blatant attacks—fair or otherwise, she warned—that there were no lengths to which opposers would not go to defend error and have their own way. There is nothing that they will not dig up, dream up or invent, she said, to bring truth and its defenders to their knees. How right she was. I had to learn the hard way! Just being able to “withstand all the fiery darts of the devil” is a major qualification for anyone who would edit or publish *Contending for the Faith*.]

6. Good judgment or just ordinary “common sense” also is necessary. Not everyone has the ability to see things as they really are.

7. An editor of *Contending for the Faith* must not take foolish, indefensible positions and then try to sustain them against all evidence or reason.

8. When he makes a mistake, he must not be too proud to admit and correct it.

9. If he owes someone an apology, he must be able to say, “I’m sorry.” [If he *does not* owe an apology, he should *not make one!*].

10. If an editor expects all men to “speak well” of him, he is going to be disappointed. It is not going to happen that way.

11. Such an editor must be able to stand for the truth—*alone*, if necessary.

12. If “filthy lucre” is his objective, such an editor is bound to fail. Many of our brethren are notoriously stingy, when it comes to supporting gospel papers. On the other hand, *some* of them will sacrifice right along *with* the editor that truth may prevail.

#### ONCE AGAIN DAVID BROWN VOLUNTEERS

Early in 1994, David Brown telephoned again, saying that he and brother Cohn had been talking, and what did I have in mind for continuing *Contending for the Faith*, as a paper, after my death. I told him that it still had not been decided, but that I would rather just kill it than for it to fall into the wrong hands.

Brother Brown said that he did not know how I felt about *him*—and that both he and brother Cohn would want me to continue as Editor for as long as I was able—but that if I was interested, they would be interested in carrying it on—with him (David Brown) as Editor and both himself and Kenneth Cohn as Publisher—either after my passing or when I reached a condition whereby I no longer was able to serve.

That I definitely was interested goes without saying. When all of the qualities, aforementioned, were being considered, David Brown was *not*

*alone* in possessing them—but he *was* unique in making clear that editing *Contending for the Faith* was something near and dear to his heart—something that he really *wanted*, some day, to do.

Both he and brother Cohn went out of their way to assure me that I should continue to have a free hand, as Editor, for as long as I am able to function. However, that when the time finally comes that I am either dead or no longer able to carry out my editorial duties, David would stand always ready to step in and take over as Editor with brother Cohn backing him financially helping to make it all possible.

During the 1994 *Firm Foundation West Coast Lectureship*, last March, at San Lorenzo, California, I asked several of the preachers present to sit down with brother Brown and me to get their reaction to such a suggested arrangement. Among those consulted were brethren Curtis Cates, Wayne Coats, Garland Elkins, Joe Gilmore, Bobby Liddell, Dub McClish and possibly others. As near as I could tell, all were in general agreement.

#### OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT AT DENTON LECTURES

With the acquiescence and agreement of the Bellview elders, it was finally decided to transfer ownership and management of *Contending for the Faith* to brethren Cohn and Brown, effective January 1, 1995—the date our *second* quarter-of-a-century begins.

When making our announcement official on Sunday night of November 13, 1994, at the *Annual Denton Lectures*, at Denton, Texas, brother Brown recalled cutting his “eye teeth” as a gospel preacher on *Axe on the Root*, Volumes I, II and III. I recalled the Getwell elders of Memphis, Tennessee, inviting him to take my place on the *Spiritual Sword Lectures* for 1981. (Brother Brown took my place and did his part well.)

Since those days, he and I have worked together under many circumstances on various occasions both in the United States and around the world. In 1993, we took part together in lectureships in Singapore and Manila as well as in Taiwan—also in a gospel meeting at Lahore, Pakistan. And we were together last month in further lectureships in Singapore and Manila as well as a visit to Baguio City, in the Philippines, relative to brotherhood problems there.

Always, in whatever situation, I have been impressed with brother Brown’s courage, forthrightness and unswerving loyalty to the truth of

God's word. I appreciate his work for several years as Assistant Director of *Turley Children's Home*, at Tulsa, Oklahoma; as Director of the *Southwest School of Bible Studies*, at Austin, Texas; and now as Director of the *Houston College of the Bible*, at Spring, Texas.

#### TRANSITION, SUCCESSION SHOULD SUCCEED

With the transition of ownership and management of *Contending for the Faith* having taken effect as of January 1, 1995, I take pleasure in naming **David Brown** as *Associate Editor* of this paper. Lord willing, I look forward to several more years in my capacity as Editor; at the same time I shall continue working under the oversight of the elders at Bellview/Pensacola, as their missionary for the cause of Christ both in the Far East and around the world. My own support, as always, will continue to come through Bellview, making it possible to continue editing *Contending for the Faith* free of charge. Those wishing to have a part in my support, of course, will continue to be appreciated.

Owing to recent increases in the cost of paper,

an increase in the subscription price of *Contending for the Faith* necessarily is taking place. No longer will it be possible to make it available for the incredibly low rates as before. As from now, please note, subscription rates are being increased to \$10.00 for *one* year; \$27.00 for *three* years; and \$40.00 for *five* years. Also, when ordered in *clubs of five* subscriptions, the annual rate will be \$40.00 *per year*.

The continued, faithful support of *Contending for the Faith*, both editorially as well as in our various undertakings, will be appreciated. Even though, at 77 years of age, I may not function quite as rapidly as in former days, I still have enough energy to do my work, and still look forward to many years of fruitful service. Now that I am assured of the future of the paper to be in faithful hands when the time of my departure finally comes, admittedly a great burden has been lifted from my mind and heart. Please pray for me.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## *Associate Editorial...*

### **Transition Begins**

With every privilege there is an attendant responsibility. I consider the opportunity to serve as the associate editor of *Contending for the Faith* a great privilege, but one fraught with grave responsibilities. It is a privilege, for which I am very thankful, because it affords me another excellent avenue to teach and defend the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16). Grave, indeed it is, because any form of preaching and defending the truth is serious business (Matthew 12:36; James 3:1,2; II Timothy 2:2; Jude 3).

Preaching and defending the faith is no stranger to me. For 30 years (since my late teens) I have labored to preach and to defend gospel truth. Known to me are the joys and sorrows that naturally attend the life of a Christian—especially those of a gospel preacher (Matthew 5:3-12; II Timothy 3:12). In this life the future can offer no better than I have known already. It could well hold much worse. Whatever the case, I continue to labor and rest in the reality of two great truths, *i.e.*, 1) that God is in control, and 2) that our full, complete, and final reward was never meant to be here, but in heaven (Daniel 2:20-22; 4:17; Romans 13:1; I Corinthians 15:58; II Peter 3:13; II Timothy 4:8; Revelation 2:10).



DAVID P. BROWN

The reality of these truths should transcend and allay all fears to which we are subject (II Corinthians 4:9).

#### NEED FOR DEEPER KNOWLEDGE

Throughout the years I have been keenly and constantly aware of the need for a deeper knowledge of the Bible and a life lived in greater harmony with it. I do not intend for these longings of the heart to decrease; yea, verily it is my goal for them to increase (Matthew 5:6). Found therein is the drive so necessary for spiritual growth and development (Philippians 3:12-16).

I have made my share of mistakes. Because of human frailties, no doubt, I shall make others. While the pains of conscience that follow them are not pleasant, they tell us that we are correctable. Furthermore, they remind us of our need of a merciful Lord, our own need of being merciful toward our fellow man, and the continual need of a penitent heart that is always willing to confess its sins (I John 1:7-10).

One of the greatest and deepest hurts that I have faced has come because I, like others, have placed trust in persons whom I considered to be faithful brethren and friends. Sadly I have learned that such characters pursued their own advancement in the eyes of some men no matter the cost to the Lord's cause or the amount of grief brought by their selfish actions. These hard realities of life on earth have caused a greater appreciation of the wonderful beatitude of the Psalmist, "**Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies**" (Psalms 40:4). Indeed, "**It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man**" (Psalms 118:8,9).

#### CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH IS PART OF CHRISTIANITY

It would be a mistake for the reader to assume that the acknowledgement of mistakes and human frailties would in some way dull or mute a sharp sense of responsibility to expose error and those who love and propagate it. If the great apostle Paul could continue to see his need for spiritual development, yet reprove, rebuke, and exhort those of his day, I think we have in him a good example to follow (Philippians 3:13-17; II Timothy 3:10,11). Truly, to "contend for the faith" is as much a part of Christian living as Bible study and prayer (Galatians 2:4-6; Jude 3).

In view of these sentiments, what shall we say concerning the founder and editor of this unique gospel paper? I doubt that we have anything to say about him that has not been said repeatedly. But, I do have somewhat to say about **Ira Y.**

**Rice, Jr.** Brother Rice epitomizes the rule of logic known as "the law of the excluded middle." One loves him or does not love him; hates him or does not hate him—there is no middle ground.

Some years before this paper made its debut brother Rice wrote and published three volumes of the book, *Axe On The Root*. As I write there is before me my first-edition copy of Volume I, copyright 1966. While yet a student at Harding College in the late 1960's, I thought that brother Rice was correct in his material as well as his assessment of the prevailing winds of the time. Hence, before meeting him, I loved him for his work's sake. Of course, I quickly was made aware that others at Harding College loved just about everybody *but* him.

#### FOUR IMPORTANT POINTS NOTED

We have no problem inviting anyone's honest and objective examination of the material contained in *Axe On The Root*, Volumes I, II, and III, as well as all of the issues of *Contending for the Faith*. At least four important points are readily noted in such an examination: 1) Brother Rice always has examined his subjects in the light of the Bible. 2) The material composing his publications is historically authentic. 3) He is accurate in his documentation. 4) Whenever brother Rice makes a mistake (which is very seldom) he always corrects it. (What else could be done by anyone at any time or place!) Of those who hate brother Rice, it is our conclusion that the primary reason for their hatred and opposition is his documentation and exposure of their error.

Well do we remember an incident that took place very early in the 1970's during the "Open Forum" conducted by the late **Guy N. Woods** during the old Freed-Hardeman College lectures. In one instance a brother criticized brother Rice's manner of dealing with false teaching and teachers. Brother Woods asked the critic whether his criticism pertained to a sin brother Rice had committed, or only a different view of how false teaching and teachers should be exposed and marked. The fellow answered by saying that he disagreed with how brother Rice dealt with false teaching and teachers. To which answer brother Woods quickly and concisely replied in his own inimitable way, saying, that since it was a matter of method and not sin to which the critic referred, he (the critic) should expose false teaching and teachers in his own way, but whatever method he chose he must not neglect the exposure of such teaching and teachers. The truth of the matter is that there is no scriptural way to expose and mark a false teacher whereby the false teacher

will *like* it. Attempting to expose and mark a false teacher so that he will *enjoy* it reminds us of an old adage that reads: "There is more than one way to skin a cat, but there is no way the cat is going to like it." In fact those who have complained about and opposed brother Rice's "skinning methods" have not minded at all what rather ungodly "methods" they have vainly sought to employ in their futile attempts to "nail his hide to the wall." I just hope that we can do nearly as well as he has done.

**PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLDING FAST THE GOOD**

I do know that we fully intend to continue to follow the biblical course of advocating and supporting *only* those persons and things that are authorized by a "rightly divided" Bible (Colosians 3:17; II Timothy 2:15). Thereby, we are "ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1-3). Furthermore, with equal fervor we intend to continue to expose and oppose all persons who teach and practice things not authorized by the scriptures or that are forbidden by them (Romans 16:17,18; II Thessalonians 3:6; II John 8-11). We are keenly aware that we *must* "Prove all things; hold

**fast that which is good"** (I Thessalonians 5:21). We know not how to make "full proof" of our work and do otherwise (II Timothy 4:5).

We trust that those who have set their lives on the same course as that noted above will help us to continue. **HENCE, WE NEED YOU TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS, HELP GET NEW SUBSCRIBERS, AND PURCHASE ADVERTISING SPACE IN THE PAPER. WONT YOU HELP?**

We deeply appreciate those who have steadfastly supported *Contending for the Faith* over the years. Without you we could not exist. The inspired request of the apostle Paul serves well in closing our first associate editorial:

**Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil (II Thessalonians 3:1-3).**

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*



**12th Annual  
SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS LECTURES**

March 17 - 19, 1995

**THEME: "WE WOULD SEE JESUS"**

**Friday, March 17**

7:00 p.m.

8:00 p.m.

"We Would See Jesus."

Jesus and His Preaching

Joe Gilmore, San Jose, CA.

Dub McClish, Denton, TX.

**Saturday, March 18**

9:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

8:00 p.m.

Jesus and His Miracles

Jesus and His Church

Jesus and Trials and Temptation

Jesus and Prayer

Jesus and Authority

Jesus and His Work as Mediator

Jesus and Worship

Tim Ayers, Taylor, TX.

Toney Smith, Dresden, TN

Joe Sponaugle, Hamburg, AR

Richard Massey, Kennedale, TX

Jimmy Young, Mena, AR

Bobby Liddell, Memphis, TN

David Brown, Spring, TX

**Sunday, March 19**

9:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.

Jesus and His Lordship

Jesus and Unity

**LUNCH PROVIDED**

Jesus and His Return

Jesus & the Scheme of Redemption

Bob Berard, Spring, TX

Keith Mosher, Memphis, TN

Terry Phillips, Camden, AR

Garry Stanton, Camden, AR

For more information call (501) 231-5228 or 231-5357

The 1996 Lectures will be "The Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5, 6, 7).

--Garry Stanton, Director--

**Cullendale Church of Christ**

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## A STATEMENT FROM THE PUBLISHERS

**Bible Resource Publications** is pleased to announce that with this issue we will begin publishing the journal, *Contending for the Faith*. The paper was founded by long time gospel preacher and missionary to Singapore, the Far East, and the world, **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** The first issue came off the press in January 1970. With the November 1994 issue *Contending for the Faith* completed twenty-five years of publication. **The Lord willing, as long as he is able, brother Rice will continue in the editor's chair.** We cannot overly emphasize that it is the full intent of the publishers to continue with the same philosophy and policies that have made *Contending for the Faith* unique among gospel papers.

During the past quarter century *Contending for the Faith* has been an integral part of brother Rice's work. For the past sixteen years brother Rice has been overseen by the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. We commend them for their fervent love and support of the gospel as well as their strong opposition to all forms of error.

As a work of the Bellview church *Contending for the Faith* was mailed under a U. S. Postal Non-Profit Mail Permit. As a part of the privately owned business, **Bible Resource Publications**, the paper will accept paid advertisements and be mailed under a U. S. Postal Bulk Rate Mail Permit.

From the beginning the journal has been published each month from January through November. In 1995 we will begin publishing one issue per month January through December.

For some time the individual subscription price for one year has been \$6.00. This price has been kept at a minimum only because it has been subsidized by contributions. Because of a 30% to 40% increase in the cost of paper over the past several months, the increase in mailing costs, the needed enlargement of the paper to accommodate advertising, the added month's publication, and the loss of the aforementioned subsidy, the price of a single subscription for one year will be \$10.00. However, we think that \$10.00 a year is a small amount to pay for the enlightening and exceptional reading material that is *Contending for the Faith*. **Of course you can always save money by subscribing for several years at one time.**

**If you regularly receive the paper, we need you to renew your subscription as well as assist us in getting new subscribers.** As *Contending for the Faith* begins its next quarter century of work for the Lord, the publishers, editor, and staff covet your prayers and support in our efforts to perpetuate this worthy work.

In His Service,

The Publishers

# 'Easy-to-Read' Fraud

(Continued from Page 1)

happening. Thus the actual presentation was not recorded, either on video or audio. We wish all could have seen and/or heard what was said by all participants. It was a history-making moment indeed.

As worded in the dedication printed in the book, it reads as follows:

## Dedication to Mr. & Mrs. Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

*My beloved "Brother Bob" and "Lady Irene,"  
Are one of our Father's greatest "of teams."  
The unity of purpose is seen in their goal,  
To teach, to edify, and to save man's soul.*

*A beautiful couple honoring their beloved Master,  
Knew without Him, their home would be a disaster.  
So, a daughter named Rebecca and a son named Tim,  
Were nourished and cherished in this home for Him.*

*His wife is a true help meet in their labors of love,  
At home and on the road she serves their God above.  
For forty-two years she has honored her sacred place,  
While declaring to the women, the Word of His grace.*

*A workman unashamed is this great man of "the faith,"  
And he will die in His service, completing his race.  
The items studiously flow from his most prolific pen,  
And are read around the world, where he's never been.*

*The sword of this soldier has never been sheathed,  
He knows to whom it belongs, his Commander in Chief.  
The humility of this servant is marvelous to behold,  
His meekness is truly portrayed in the Moses of old.*

*His stance is very powerful and his love so truly great,  
That he often does battle, over "the versions of late."  
The dangers of modern versions are challenged by this man,  
And he knows the subject, and the Word on which he stands.*

*The inward beauty of this union is benevolently told,  
It gloriously radiates to both the young and the old.  
Infrequently in life are we blessed with such a pair,  
Whose eagerness for all of us is the City Foursquare.*

*Because of my love for these magnanimous friends,  
Whose talented outreach, for His glory knows no end,  
I dedicate His volume to this godly, excellent team  
Indeed to my "Brother Bob," and my "Lady Irene."*

### ALMOST THREE YEARS IN THE MAKING

I could wish that all of our readers knew something of how this magnificent book came to be. Certainly, I do not know everything but I do know a lot. Many and many is the morning that I would telephone brother Music at 5 or 5:30 a.m. only to find him

already hard at work on it—often for hours before that!

Knowing how desperately ill he often was, it was hard to understand how he could drive himself day after day doing the research, the organizing, the writing, and finally the proof-reading and editing that such an enormous volume entails. It took him almost three years of steady, hard work before the book was ready for the press.

"To answer the question so many

"We live today in a very affluent (wallowing in wealth) age, and we no longer know the meaning of 'self-denial' (self-sacrifice, self-abnegation, self-restraint, self-deprivation, self-forgetfulness, self-discipline, self-abasement, self-conquest, self-mastery, self-effacement, self-government...). In all things, especially in things spiritual, we must 'pay the price or pay the penalty.' It seems to me that far too many people have dethroned Christ and enthroned self.

"Study the Galatian letter to see how 'crucifixion' is the meaning of 'conversion.' (Note how many times the word is used in this great book.)

- "1. *This may mean* putting His work above your own health, and working whether in or out of pain, ill or well, and taking the chance of not being able to completely heal.
- "2. *This may mean* your days may be 18-22 hours, and it could also mean day and night, at times, until the 'item at hand' is completed.
- "3. *This may mean* standing for the Truth of God against even your dearest ones, the losing of support, and spending all you have to get the job done.
- "4. *This may mean* going against all odds, tackling an elephantine mission, suffering persecution, being challenged on every hand and even that of being taken to court.
- "5. *This may mean* a 'self-denial' like one has never known before, and regardless of pressure, even from the faithful, gluing to your commitment to Him with the realization that to Him and to Him alone belongs your allegiance.
- "6. *This may mean* missing all of the holiday seasons of the year with your children, and greatly loved grandchildren, and praying to God that they understand what 'commitment to Christ' truly means (and these are just 'a few' things of what it means how the work gets done)."

### PERVASIVENESS OF THE PRESSURE

In the nearly 63 years that I personally have been preaching the gospel of Christ, I do not recall any other individual who could (or would) undertake the task of writing with the single-mindedness of Goebel Music. This alone is part of the glory of this epic tome.

"The pressure upon me seems to be omnipresent (all-present, pervading, far-reaching, rampant, pandemic, global)," he described. "It is painful, piercing, poignant, potent, powerful, at

have asked," he wrote, "the question being: 'How did you research and write...last two books...so many pages...?' Let me reply with a simple basic principle, one from the Master Himself: 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me' (cf. Matthew 16:24-26; Luke 9:23; 14:25-35).



times penetrating, personal, but profitless, as I just cannot let the Truth of God suffer and dishonor Him to whom my allegiance belongs.

"This comes early in the morning, throughout the day and into the night. It comes by way of the phone, the mail, and it comes in person. It comes very often in the words, 'I know you are busy, BUT...for me,' 'I know you do not feel well, BUT WE WANT YOU TO...YOU MUST...' and it comes when the 'DO NOT DISTURB' sign on the door is not heeded. It comes, at times, because people are not 'in my body and do not wear these shoes.' It comes when your schedule is filled to capacity and your time is all taken, and yet there is another book(s), tapes(s), manuscript(s)...in your mail to read, digest and critique.

"I resolved a long time ago to die in His service and to give myself totally to Him. I do not want anything I have named to cease, I just want people to understand and be considerate. Again, as I have often said, I am not complaining, just stating the fact, explaining.

"Anymore, I have to unplug the phone to get my work done, unplug the phone (usually) when my children are here, when I have company, on holidays, and even after 10-11 at night to get rest...I work all by myself, except at 'major' mailings. I DO NOT WANT A SINGLE THING TO STOP. I just ask for understanding, patience and consideration. If I did not write these things, you would not know them. This is the busiest time of my life and it is the fullest of full time work!"

#### KEEPING TRACK FROM OVERSEAS

Before heading for Asia the middle of November, I asked brother Music to keep a careful record of anything and everything anyone might write in response to his exhaustive review of the *Easy-to-Read Version*. When I returned, some 32 days later, I was happy to have many such items in my mail.

For instance, in his *Biblical Notes* for November/December, 1994, Roy Deaver had the following to say, in part,

Dub McClish writes: "While it is primarily an exposé of the *World Bible Translation Center* of Fort Worth, Texas, it also contains powerful material on the doctrine of inspiration (chapters 1-5). Fraud is not too strong a word to describe what the *World Bible Translation Center* administrators have done and are continuing to do in convincing perhaps hundreds of churches and thousands of saints to generously



FEW OF US HAVE ANY IDEA how big a load 12,500 books the size of Goebel Music's "*Easy-To-Read Version—Easy To Read OR Easy To Mislead?*" really is. Each of these books weighs approximately three and one-half pounds. The entire load had 22 skids of books, weighing between 38-39,000 pounds. They had to be delivered in two trucks. The first truck (shown above) had just arrived.



YOU GET SOME NOTION of the size of just one skid of books from the one on the back of the truck waiting to be unloaded. Just imagine the volume of books that 22 skids this size entails.

fund its work. They have falsely advertised such things as the need for some of their versions and the source of their translations, plus much, much more. The men in charge of this work are revealed as rank liberals in their thinking concerning such fundamental matters as the church and fellowship, and therefore in their associations. (Except, of course, when it comes to raising money, they can tolerate sound, conservative brethren!) The long and close

alliance of the WBTC with the Richland Hills Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas is enough to alert the well-informed to its liberalism. I will dare to say that even some who have become enthralled with liberalism will be shocked at the information they will discover as they read. Simply put, they have duped and are duping an unsuspecting and trusting brotherhood. Goebel Music is a tireless, careful researcher and he does not write or say that which



**BECAUSE THEY SENT A TRUCK** that was over 17 feet tall, the wiring from the pole to the house was too low, so they could not back all the way in. This meant that the fork-lift had to take the books to the back instead of just unloading them. In photo, the fork-lift was returning for another load.

he cannot document. This book documents this sad and sordid story beyond refutation.

“This book is admittedly one of monumental proportions in size. More than this, it is monumental in its contents. I caution you not to let its size discourage you from reading it! In fact, it is must reading for every member of the church of Christ.”

This book has 1,207 pages. It is hard-bound, wrapped in a beautiful 3-color jacket. Goebel advises that “For the very best service and the cheapest price, it is highly recommended that this book be purchased in case lots—10 books per case. The reason being that it weighs over 4 lbs. and the price of postage/handling is cut in half. Also, it is the fastest delivery, books are insured, and they can be traced if lost. Too, this eliminates a book mailer, label, stapling, stamping and taping.

The book’s value is \$39.95, but is sold for \$6.00 each. [Plus \$3.00 postage. IYR Jr.] Not one penny goes to brother Music. It is truly a labor of love for the Cause of Christ. In case lots the price is \$60.00 plus \$15.00 for shipping making the total \$75.00. Note that a street address (not a P.O. Box number) is needed for UPS delivery. A phone number expedites delivery at times. Order from: Goebel Music Publications, 5114 Montclair Street, Colleyville, TX 76034-5401. You may also call 1-817-283-3634 to place your order.

Under date of December 4, 1994, in the *Ripley Beacon* from the Ripley Church of Christ, of Ripley, Tennessee, brother Robert R. Taylor, their minister, responded as follows:

**BROTHER MUSIC’S NEW BOOK NOW RELEASED**

The current series in our bulletin is interrupted this week in order to tell

you about a most significant book that came from the press in mid-November. The talented, versatile and scholarly author is Goebel Music who has preached in many gospel meetings here at Ripley and whom we have helped in his writing ministry for a number of years. The title is “*Easy-To-Read Version—Easy To Read or Easy To Mislead?*”

It is a big book—1,207 pages. Yet its size should not be a deterrent in its perusal. Dub McClish wrote on the book cover, “The book you hold in your hand is admittedly one of monumental proportions in size. More than this, it is monumental in its contents. I caution you not to let its size discourage you from reading it! In fact, it is must reading for every member of the church of Christ.” Brother McClish is a great preacher, an able writer and is a successful publisher of many great books. He knows books. He read this material in manuscript form and gives an accurate assessment of this unique volume.

The book is an encyclopedia of helpful material on a multitude of matters. It is an arsenal of ammunition in the battle for the Bible which has become a warfare in our time. Inspiration is at stake in this warfare. In fact, it is the bottom line of the whole conflict between Bible defenders and Bible destroyers. This book will help greatly in fortifying your belief that the Bible is God-breathed. Much of the early part



**ALTHOUGH YOU CANNOT SEE ALL** of the skids—there being so many of them that they had to be placed in different areas—once they were all off-loaded, the driver posed for a photo between two sections of skids. Brother Music had had large loads of books from his *Behold The Pattern* printings earlier; however, “never in my life have I had this many before,” he said.





CONCERNED CHRISTIANS from other places pitched in to help with the labeling, strapping and loading of the great number of orders to the United Parcel Service. *Marvin Weir*, preacher at Rowlett, brought his Toyota pick-up truck to help. In above photo, *Ruth Hanson*, *Marvin Weir* and *Don Walker* (preacher for the church where the Hansons worship at Stephenville, Texas) are shown helping.



BY THE TIME the above photo was taken, the second load of books had arrived. *Alton Fonville* had brought his truck, used to deliver two truck-loads of books to the UPS station. In photo, sister *Hanson* is shown on left, brother *Fonville* is standing in truck, with *Darrell Hanson*, *Marvin Weir* and *Don Walker* on right.

among us have joined that motley crew determined to pervert and corrupt the pure word of the Living Jehovah, Jesus and the Spirit. It is a literary conspiracy that defies apt description. It took a brave soldier of Christ to write this book and oppose such cruel chicanery behind the World Bible Translation product.

Brother Music asked me to read the book in manuscript form, which I did, and write the Foreword. Irene and I were deeply moved that he dedicated the book to us. We did not know of this until the book was released and the first copy presented to us at the Denton Lectures.

Brother Music has been able to raise enough money to handle the largest portion of the printing costs. This book would ordinarily retail for \$39.95. He is selling it at \$6.00 plus shipping charges. In case lots a box of ten will sell for \$60.00 with shipping and handling charges at \$15.00 by UPS. Individually, the postage will run \$3.00 per copy.

They may be ordered from:

Goebel Music Publications  
5114 Montclair Street  
Colleyville, Texas 76034-5401

Any of our members here at Ripley can get them for just \$6.00. I will take care of the UPS shipping charges to me plus the Tennessee sales taxes. When ordering from Goebel, be sure to include a street address for UPS orders.

In the Memphis School of Preaching periodical, *Yokefellow*, for November 29, 1994, Director Curtis A. Cates commented as follows:

**ANOTHER CLASSIC VOLUME FROM THE PEN OF GOEBEL MUSIC**

In another landmark book, brother Goebel Music exposes the *World Bible Translation Center* [president, *Dale Randolph*] and its perverted, so-called *Easy-to-Read Version* of the Bible. The WBTC, located in Fort Worth, Texas, is connected to the liberal Richland Hills church of Christ. Goebel Music's book is entitled *Easy-to-Read Version—Easy to Read or Easy to Mislead?* It is clothbound and numbers 1207 pages, colossal in both content and size.

Having raised many millions of dollars to print their liberal, unscriptural translation [including millions of copies in the Russian and Hindi languages], WBTC is described by *Dub McClish* as having "duped and are duping an unsuspecting and trusting brotherhood... This book documents this sad and sordid story beyond refutation." He described those at WBTC as "rank liberals" relative to the church and

of this monumental book is dedicated to matters touching inspiration.

Have you ever wondered how many English versions we have? This great book lists 133 as a beginning and the date when published. Then a list appears of Children's Bibles, Recovery Bibles, Bibles with a Point of View, Issues-Oriented Bibles, Scriptures for Him and Her... Coverage is given on a short Bible, a Satanic Bible, the *Cotton Patch Version*, the X-Rated Bible, Racially-Slanted Bibles, Bibles for teens, for women, for men, for people who want a jazzed up message. The list

could just go on and on. Nearly all of my preaching life I have been warning people by pen and voice that we have a real problem with Versions. Many thought Taylor was whistling in the dark. Brother Music vindicates what I have written and preached now for decades.

The last major section deals with what some of our own brethren have done in their perverted *Easy-To-Read English Version For the Deaf* and getting these into foreign languages for Russians, people in India [and such like]. It is inexpressibly sad that some

fellowship. Hundreds of pages of the book contain outstanding material on inspiration and versions.

Dedicated appropriately to *Robert and Irene Taylor*, the book retail would be \$39.95. However, the non-profit price is \$6.00 plus \$3.00 postage, made possible by sound congregations and individuals. Better still, order by the case from Goebel Music Publications, 5114 Montclair Street, Colleyville, TX 76034-5401. Brethren, I predict over 50,000 of this book will be printed and distributed, as with *Behold the Pattern*. A great book from a great, beloved scholar!

In a personal letter to brother Music under date of December 12, 1994, brother Cates went on to say,

Dear brother Music:

First, I want to congratulate you on another monumental, landmark volume. What a tremendous work it is, so scholarly and so very thorough. The material is par excellent. It deserves to have the vast circulation of *Behold the Pattern*, and I am pledging myself to help that to be achieved. I trust you saw my article on it in the November, 1994 *Yokefellow*...I hope you have already gotten orders from it.

You are constantly in my prayers. You are a great man of God, and I cherish our close friendship. Thank you so much for what you mean to the School and to me personally. May God bless your health. Please pray for me...

One of the best reviews of brother Music's new book was by W. Terry Varner, of Marietta, West Virginia. Originally delivered at the monthly preachers' meeting on December 5, 1994, at the Hillview Terrace Church of Christ, Moundsville, West Virginia, it reads as follows:

#### REVIEW OF GOEBEL MUSIC'S NEW BOOK

W. Terry Varner

To review the latest book of our beloved brother Goebel Music of Colleyville, Texas will take much longer than the 30 minutes allotted in this meeting. It is a massive tome of gigantic proportion and importance involving a review of the *Easy-To-Read Version* (henceforth, ERV) and the *World Bible Translating Center* (henceforth, WBTC) operated by our brethren. We encourage all present to purchase their copy after the meeting.

#### THE MECHANICS OF THE BOOK

Brother Music's book contains 1,207 pages of text and 24 pages of additional



IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, you can see how brother Weir's Toyota pick-up truck was weighted down by the load of heavy books ready for delivery to the UPS station. In photo, brethren *Fonville, Weir and Walker* (left to right) are seen.



IN ADDITION TO THE CASE ORDERS, orders consisting of one, two, three, four, five, six on up to 50 books had come to hand. For the one-and-two-book orders, jiffy bag mailers were used. For anything over two books, they had to cut cardboard and make boxes. In above photo, volunteer workers are shown processing the orders into the night. By then it was cold with no heat in the building.

introductory materials. The Foreword is written by our good brother Robert Taylor, Jr., who read the book in its entirety and to whom the book is dedicated, along with his precious wife, sister Irene Taylor.

The book is a hardback with dust jacket and the price is \$6.00 plus \$1.50 postage (case price) and an additional \$3.50 if ordered from me. As with brother Music's earlier work, *Behold the Pattern*, he is making no profit from its sale. The book is a labor of love for God, His Word, and the kingdom of God.

The book required better than two years of daily, diligent research. Time and diligent research are absolutes in any writing, but especially in the writing and production of this volume.

Correspondence behind this work is unbelievable, to speak nothing of cost involved to do the necessary research. The failure of many to correspond, who were involved with the ERV and the WBTC or who could have given valuable assistance, required extra time and money to bring this great work into reality. Documentation, which is a must, has been checked and rechecked.

Brother Music's health has not been normal for the past several years and was not good during the time of writing this book. One feels he has wasted his time when he knows the long hours of diligence, dedication and determination by brother Music in writing this work under great physical affliction. To all of us here this morning, we need to understand the Biblical philosophy that



IT TOOK A BIT OF DOING, however, by nightfall, the workers had gotten all of those 22 skids of books unloaded and packed into the multiple purpose building, as shown above. *Alton Fonville's* wife, *Leta*, who had helped on many occasions was ill and by this time he had had to return to be with her. In photo, left to right, are *Don Walker, Ruth* and *Darrell Hanson* and *Marvin Weir* as they took a moment's respite for the picture.

motivates brother Music, not just in the production of this book but in his entire life; *i.e.*, he is committed to do his best to serve God. I Thessalonians 2:2 and 2:4 serve as a Biblical guideline for him (and for each of us), "*bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention...not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*"

#### THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

Brother Music's book is a multiple purpose volume. It is a review of the ERV and a carefully researched study of the "highly questionable" WBTC of Fort Worth, Texas. It deals with the involvement of *Eastern European Missions*, Houston, Texas, Richland Hills Church of Christ, and the work of Bob Hare, Vienna, Austria.

Being a multiple purpose volume, the reader does not need to read the book from Chapter One to the end. He can begin reading anywhere. The work contains 15 chapters. It advocates the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible and the translations where they are accurately translated. A section "Versions and Versionists" is mandatory reading by all. So many do not understand the translation philosophy behind the various translations. Only when we understand these translating principles will we be able to better evaluate translations and versions.

A history of the WBTC is given with careful accuracy, which when read will produce serious questions about the WBTC. While all are interested in seeing



TWO DAYS LATER *Marvin Weir*, along with *Paul* and *Ruth Drum*, returned to help. *Marvin* (above right) would wrap books as well as help with the "office work," and *Paul* and *Ruth Drum* helped by folding, stuffing, stamping and sealing some 1,000-plus letters connected with this mailing.

the Bible is translated, it must be done accurately, clearly and in a dignified and reverent manner. The book reviews carefully the ERV (English New Testament), the ERV in Russian (our good brother from this congregation who makes trips to Russia will want to read carefully this chapter), ERV for the Deaf, and the ERV in various Indian dialects. (We will return to this last section in a moment.)

The three chapters titled "Major

Minuses" (260 pages) are written by men selected by brother Music and assigned their respective articles which all have interacted with the translating principles of the ERV. The following men writing in this section are: Roy J. Hearn, the late Guy N. Woods, Robert Taylor, Jr., Roy Deaver, Wayne Price, Wayne Jackson, J. E. Choate, Tom Bright, Thomas B. Warren and W. Terry Varner. The subjects covered and interacted with the ERV are: Inspiration and II Timothy 3:16, The Virgin Birth, the First-born Son, *Monogenes*, Covenant, Law, Fornication, Music in Worship and II Timothy 2:15. Throughout the other chapters, brother Music has used many other men in discussing and exposing the fallacies of the ERV and the WBTC.

The book raises several serious and various ethical questions concerning the claims and work done by the WBTC. Reuel Lemmons had written his evalua-

tion of the ERV as "One of the finest translations of the Scriptures in the modern age. Written in simple terms that a child can understand, the text is as true to the book as Christians can make it." (*Christian Chronicle*, December 1994, p. 10). This misleading ad has occurred almost monthly and the *Chronicle* will have to make a decision about its future appearance once they have read the book. I cannot imagine the *Chronicle* supporting false claims.



The Preface of the ERV (1980. Third printing revised) makes some staggering claims: "...a serious translation, based directly on the original Greek of the New Testament... Ideas not found in the Greek text are not introduced, and nothing expressed in the Greek text is omitted... both clarity and accuracy." Nothing could be farther from the truth. If they have omitted 1,000s of words they have added 10,000s!! Their translation is based on the "dynamic equivalence" theory which is translating from the "thought" of the text with little regard for the "words" in the text. Verbs are made into nouns; nouns are changed into verbs; singulars have become plurals; plurals have become singulars. Sentences are exploded from one sentence into 30 sentences; *i.e.*, see Ephesians 1:3-14! This misrepresents the Greek text and misleads the reader. By what authority can they explode a sentence into many? The sad results of the translation theory of the WBTC is a translation that is inaccurate, unclear, lacking dignity and reverence. God is mocked and truth is changed, and all of this done without a blinking of an eye. The Greek text behind the ERV is the UBS Third Edition which is basically the unsound Westcott-Hort text.

**EXAMINE BRIEFLY  
ONE CHAPTER**

We cannot spend a lot of time reviewing this book because of our



FOUR DAYS LATER, by which time the other workers had returned home, brother Music was trying to get another 1,000 letters ready to mail. Stuffing, sealing and stamping all these letters by himself is more work than most can imagine for a man who lives and works all by himself most of the time.

time frame. We will briefly look at Chapter XIV, "The Easy-To-Read Version and India." If you listen carefully, the following information will terrify you, shock you and anger your righteous indignation.

Richard E. Walker, a former WBTC employee and a language expert in the India dialect of Telugu, states that the "WBTC's main theory, that the New Testament must be in the language of

the common man (and understandable to everyone), faces its greatest challenge, for Hinduism colors not only the lives of the people in India but their language as well" (p. 1,055). Walker goes on to state that WBTC used non-Christian Hindu people to translate the Bible into Indian language. He raises a valid question: "If he himself [translator, WTV] does not fully understand Christianity, how can he explain it in Hindu terms?" (p. 1,056). Walker makes an astounding admission and claim: "Many of these Indian brethren are just as intelligent, talented, sincere, spiritual and well educated as U.S. counterparts" (p. 1,058). This being so, WHY did the WBTC use non-Christian Indians to translate the Bible into their language with its potential Hindu problems, when we have Indian brethren scholarly enough to do so?

To add even more concern and questions, our Indian brethren using the Telugu dialect are fearful of WBTC's translation! WHY???? A long-time missionary (32 years) to India, J. C. Choate, states he cannot understand using non-Christian Hindus to translate the Bible (p. 1,062). Further, brother Choate believes the brethren in the USA who are supporting the WBTC work in India "may not be aware of the great harm they are doing in helping to bring out such translations" (p. 1,063). Brother Choate claims "the old translations are far better than anything these brethren [WBTC, WTV] have done" (pp. 1,063-1,064). Choate concludes his material with the startling statement concerning the ERV in Telugu: "There



AS THE DAYS WORE ON—and the orders kept flooding in—it was necessary to deliver to not just one, but two, UPS stations to accommodate the mailings. In photo, above, the back of Goebel's father's pick-up truck had to be loaded day after day to take the packages to these two stations.



is no possible way that I could recommend it" (p. 1,064).

Now listen to something unreal and arrogant? The WBTC released news of the version of the Indian Scriptures with the phrase: "God's Word Reaches India!" Remember, J. C. Choate has been a missionary in India for 32 years! But, the "worst" is yet to be heard! Sit tight and hold on!

Two Indian brethren, Joshua and Nehemiah Gootam do not approve of the ERV in Indian dialects done by the WBTC (p. 1,072). Sunny David, another Indian brother of New Delhi, "does not endorse the New Testament (Hindi) ERV" (p. 1,073). This is taken from a letter by Perry R. Cotham, a ripe missionary to India and great gospel preacher.

Sunny David of New Delhi, India, wrote material for brother Music's book. He is willing to travel to the USA and take a lie-detector test to verify the following information concerning Dale Randolph, president of WBTC. Consider:

1. Dale Randolph visited New Delhi, India, and Sunny David met him concerning the Telugu Version being produced by the WBTC.

2. Brother David asked Dale Randolph, while visiting in his hotel room, who the man was in the room on the bed. Dale replied "he was from Andhra Pradesh, a southern state in India, and that he was involved with him in the translation work of the Telugu language" (p. 1,079). Brother Randolph went on to identify the man as a denominational member.

3. Sunny David mentioned the fact that in all the India cities where Dale Randolph visits, when he makes trips

to India, are congregations of the Lord's people. He encouraged him to visit and worship with them.

Randolph's response is shocking, filled with mockery, and arrogant! Hear it and weep—"I like to worship with these people because they are better Christians than the churches of Christ, in fact, I have problems even in the States with some members of the church" (p. 1,079).

This troubles me greatly. Are you not also troubled? Think of the fact that brethren have been duped into supporting a brotherhood work in the WBTC and their very president, Dale Randolph, is too good to worship with brethren, but will worship with denominational people whom he calls "Christian." Brethren, we must ask for an accounting from the WBTC. If we do not, God will ask for an accounting from us at the judgment. We know He will ask of those involved in the WBTC.

Let me shock your mind with the following documented materials. The WBTC has an office in Bangalore, India. It is staffed by eight people. Those in charge are P. Joshua and his wife, Sylvia. These two and the other six are ALL MEMBERS OF DENOMINATIONS!

There is no member of the Lord's church working in the WBTC, a brotherhood project, in Bangalore, India! Shocked? P. Joshua and his wife, Sylvia, are not even members of the same denominations. He is a member of the Brethren church and she is a member of the Evangelical church. They often visit different denominational churches each Sunday! This makes the WBTC in India operated totally by denominations and not by the Lord's

church who pays the funding to support its operations there. We are supporting salaries of denominational people!

Ready to be shocked again? On November 13, 1993, in Pune, India, the WBTC arrived in town to release their new *Marathi New Testament Translation*. Consider the following documented information:

1. Our own brethren in Pune and other parts of India were not informed by the WBTC of the event, but learned it from a religious bookstore.

2. The ceremonies were held at the local YMCA. About 300 attended, brethren not present by invitation.

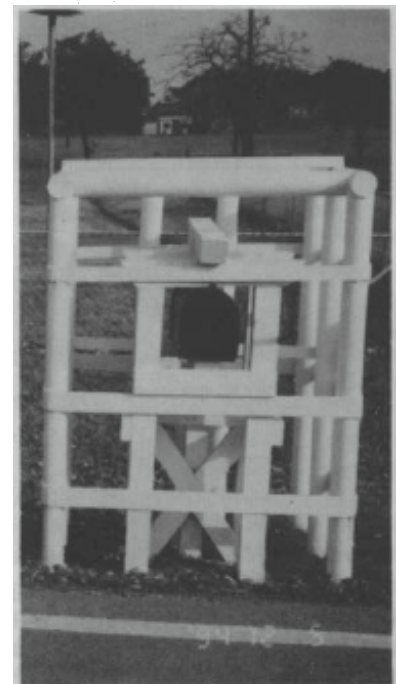
Again, when the Hindi ERV was released in New Delhi, the home of Sunny David, brother David was unaware that it took place on October 12, 1992 in the Christ's Methodist Church and that the Methodist Bishop Param was the guest of honor along with various other denominational heads and members. THE BRETHREN WERE NOT INVITED! A denominational Bishop was "honored"—by WBTC, but not by God! Is WBTC ashamed of these Indian brethren?

The WBTC officially dedicated its India Bible Center on October 8, 1991 in Bangalore, India. Dale Randolph, president of WBTC and Ervin Bishop, vice-president of WBTC, were present. They held a "three-day Bible seminar for preachers and church leaders" (p. 1,117). From this you would assume that the seminar was held for the preachers and church leaders of the Lord's church, but will you be shocked when you read these were not brethren!

FOR MOST OF US, our mail box is not the most dramatic site on our premises; however, with *Goebel Music* there seems to be a conspiracy to prevent him from receiving his mail. "I have had so much trouble with having my mail box destroyed (and I do not know why)," he wrote, "that I had to take action to try and get such stopped. I have had the police out (not just for this book before it arrived, but while researching and writing it),...have met with them at the police station. They now circle the place every so often...I had the post mistress out, the postmaster out...(and I met the standards to have such done)...I told them, if I ever had to buy another new mail box...that I would build one that it would take a Bradley tank to take it down—thus, in this picture, you can see what I designed and built."

Never do we recall having seen such a sturdily constructed mail box assembly as this. There are eight (8) oil-well drill stems around it, three short drill stem pipes on top, three bands of steel welded around those eight drill stem pipes around the box, a welded angle iron on top, a 4x4 sunk into iron sleeves and placed in the ground around the box proper. The drill stem pipes (all eight of them) are approximately 30 to 36 inches into the ground and anchored in 640 pounds of concrete. Brother Music reports that since he built this mail box construction, it has not been knocked down once! Wonder why?

To further protect his mail, he now has the Brinks Security System and also has installed security lights around the house and also the multiple purpose building. So, if you were thinking of ordering his new book and wondered if he would be sure to receive your order, go right ahead. In all probability your order WILL get through! Otherwise you might send it by Bradley tank...



## CONCLUSION

As I stated, time prevents a thorough review of this multiple purpose volume. However, you see its significance and its importance.

Let me offer a few suggestions:

1. Buy, read, sell, and give brother Music's book to others so as to inform them of the inaccurate work involved in the ERVs and warn the brethren concerning the unethical practices of the WBTC. We do not advocate that the WBTC be destroyed, but that they produce accurate translations and handle the money and programs correctly. We do not need denominational people operating works supported by brethren!

2. Write brother Music a note thanking him for his dedication, work and

love for God, His word and His kingdom. Hold up his hands. He would do so for you if the roles were reversed.

3. As elders and preachers let us investigate before we contribute money to brotherhood causes. Then, our stewardship of the Lord's money will be spent more properly. We shall give account to God at judgment.

4. I want to make a prediction—the WBTC will dismiss any serious answers to any letters you send them. I encourage you to send letters and raise questions concerning the ERV and the various foreign translations and that a financial and ethical accounting be given by the WBTC brethren.

[Following this review, there were those present that indicated they had helped WBTC, EEM and Bob Hare

that were going to discuss these matters with their elders and brethren. At least four indicated dropping their support. Brethren need to review the book in preachers' meetings, inform brethren who have for too long been duped into supporting that which supports denominationalism.]

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Any of our readers who have not yet seen brother Music's new book, please order as many cases as needed to put a copy into the hands of EVERY SINGLE FAMILY in your congregation—ten copies to the case. Address all orders to GOEBEL MUSIC PUBLICATIONS, 5114 Montclair Street, Colleyville, Texas 76034-5401.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

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# WOODMONT HILLS Is In The Process Of Losing Her Identity As A Church Of Christ—And Doesn't Even Know It!

Have you ever noticed that some of the most brilliant people God ever let live can make some of the dumbest mistakes? When it comes to the Woodmont Hills church (where Rubel preaches) in Nashville, Tennessee, they quite rapidly are losing their identity as a church of our Lord—and evidently they do not even know it!

When they purchased property over on Woodmont Boulevard before making sure it could be re-zoned for church use, that was one dumb mistake. When they let the Baptists beat them to the purchase of the "anti" property over on Franklin Road, that was another one. When they decided to move into the same property with the First Christian Church, sharing the use of it, on Franklin Road, that was another one. But the dumbest mistake of all is what they are *doing* in that property *right now*!

As brilliant as they are, it seems they should have known without someone having to point it out to them, that even to *start* sharing a place of meeting with the Christian Church was but a step from losing their identity as a church of our Lord entirely. As we often have said, you just can't *warn* some brethren simply because they refuse to *be* warned.

## OFF ON WRONG FOOT

They already were off on the wrong foot back in April, 1994, when they met together for a "post-Easter worship service" with several Nashville denominations, including Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others at the Woodmont Christian Church. They were out of step again in May having fellowship with the Pentecostals. Some of their folks already were getting the idea that it didn't make any difference *what* church you belong to—especially since Rubel says that there are "devout, knowledgeable Christians" in ALL of them!

When they moved in with the First Christian Church on Franklin Road, it seems that the merest tyro should have known that wouldn't work—not if they planned to keep their identity as a church of Christ! It was not until their weekly newsletter, *Love Lines*, for December 7, 1994, appeared that they gave any indication of learning their lesson. On Page 1, it reads as follows:

## WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE BACK!

The most disconcerting and ineffective part of our transition arrangement has been the attempt to have our mid-week activities on Thursday evenings.

It has been difficult at best and simply has not worked at all for some of you.

With the cooperation of the leadership and members at First Christian Church, we have good news to share. We will resume a Wednesday schedule for 1995. As of January 4, "Peak of the Week" will be at 5:30 each Wednesday; Bible classes for all ages will be at 7 p.m.

We quickly discovered that both private and public schools respect Wednesday nights for church-going people. It is a low-homework night, and plays and athletic events are not routinely planned for Wednesdays. Not so with Thursdays! It is a high-homework, pre-test night. It is also a night for junior high and junior varsity ball-games.

A few weeks back, we floated the idea to First Christian of sharing the use of their building on Wednesdays. They very graciously decided that it was in our best interest to be able to resume a Wednesday program and wanted to accommodate our need. The spirit of Christ they have demonstrated in doing this for our sake—and with some degree of inconvenience for themselves—is a model for us to keep in mind and imitate.

As you make plans for the coming

year, put Wednesday nights back on your calendar!

#### IN WHOSE "BEST INTEREST"?

Anyone who thinks the First Christian Church was just being "gracious" and acting in the best interest of the church of Christ by agreeing to share their building on Wednesday nights isn't thinking! They were acting in *their own* best interest! Talk about an opportunity to proselyte church of Christ members! Can't you just see the confusion, going up and down the halls, with "instrumental" folks meeting in *this* room, "non-instrumental" folks in *that*! It finally gets to the point that church of Christ folks won't be able to tell the difference. And if there isn't any difference, why bother with the church of Christ, why not just *join* the Christian Church and be *done* with it! (Or is this what Rubel has had in mind all along!)

As for the Christian Church having "the spirit of Christ" that Rubel wrote about, if they *really* had *His* spirit, they should go out of existence altogether. After all, Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build MY church." He built HIS church—not the CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

How naive can we get!

#### 12TH RESTORATION FORUM SPEECH

In the meantime, since (hopefully) *completing* this article, the transcript of a speech that brother Shelly made November 4, 1994, at the *12th Restoration Forum*, at Abilene Christian University, has come to hand, further bearing out what we are saying.

The title of his speech was "A Call to Biblical Action." Space precludes reviewing his entire speech herewith, though much was said just as erroneous as the part we *shall* consider. However, about halfway through his speech, Rubel gave what he called "a fresh, contemporary paraphrase" of at least a part of Romans 14. Basing his remarks, *not* on God's word, but upon this *paraphrase*, he went on to say—

Because of these appeals from the Word of God, there are three biblical actions that I believe men and women of good will within our two groups [*i.e.*, the churches of Christ and the Christian Church, IYR Jr.] are obligated to take. These three *biblical* actions are deeds of acceptance, reconciliation, and unity.

First, I believe we must *accept one another* as brothers beloved of God. "Accept one another, then," pleaded Paul, "just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God" (Rom.

15:7). We have believed on the same Christ and confessed that faith in the symbolic act of baptism. We have been put into his body, the church, in that same process. Like it or not, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. That brothers differ on the millennium, work of the Holy Spirit, church organization, instrumental music, having a glass of wine, the role of women in church leadership, and a dozen other issues does not change the fact that they are children of God.

Second, I believe we must not only acknowledge one another to be brothers in Christ but *be reconciled to one another*. Without abandoning or compromising the first-order truths of the gospel (*i.e.*, issues that relate directly to the meaning of Christ and his atoning death), we must stop labeling as "apostate" and withholding (or withdrawing) fellowship over second- (*i.e.*, group distinctives such as instrumental versus *a cappella* music). This means that people on both sides of these issues who have judged and condemned each other—whether from a legalistic or superiority posture!—must repent of their past behaviors, be willing to admit their wrong, and consciously undertake a more Christlike treatment of others. We are free to hold and practice our points of view, but we are not free to judge one another any longer.

Third, I believe we must begin to *practice unity* within our long-fractured fellowship. My appeal here is not for organizational unity but for mutual respect and understanding. We can converse, worship, pray, and minister together. We can encourage one another. We can practice hospitality. With our common commitment to congregational autonomy, no one could even *propose* a meaningful form of organizational unity for us to adopt. For people who have watched these Restoration Forums with the fear that we were

trying to create such an organizational unity, let those fears forever cease! I am pleading for nothing more than the sort of unity one Church of Christ (non-instrumental) has with another Church of Christ (non-instrumental), nothing more than what one Independent Christian Church has with another Independent Christian Church. Frankly, the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ has more in common with the Donelson Church of Christ in Nashville than with the Jackson Park Church of Christ in the same city. I mean no disrespect by telling you that than by telling you that the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene has more in common with the Preston Road Church of Christ in Dallas than with the First Christian Church in Nashville. Yet, in terms of actual shared experience, the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ has more in common with First Christian Church in Nashville than with Jackson Park!...

There was more to Rubel's transcribed speech, of course; however, this seems enough for his meaning to be crystal clear. If he and Woodmont Hills feel *that* close to the First Christian Church, why bother with trying to have *separate services* when *both* are *now using the same building*! Why not just *join* them—*organizationally* and in *every way*! This clearly is the direction that Rubel Shelly and Woodmont Hills are headed; why not just get it over and done with!

You watch, numbers from Woodmont Hills ere long will be unable to tell the difference—and they will jump the fence into the Christian Church, whether Rubel follows or not. How long before the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ and the First Christian Church are THE SAME CHURCH—INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND ALL! Also, when *that* happens, will "Jubilee" be far behind?

#### EDITOR LEAVES IN JANUARY FOR FURTHER MISSIONARY WORK IN MAINLAND CHINA, CAMBODIA AND RUSSIA

By the time that most of you will be reading this issue of *Contending for the Faith*, Lord willing, I should be in mainland China at the invitation of a government official there to spend several days as his guest during Chinese New Year, beginning January 28th. I met this man in October when he was in the U.S. on behalf of international trade between our two countries. When he invited me to come, I agreed to do so on condition that he would study the Bible with me while there. He said he would.

(Meanwhile, his own son was baptized into Christ by Don Thornton in November in Hong Kong. We are hoping to win the father and others of his family and friends. This will be my eighth missionary visit into the China mainland, since President Carter recognized

China in 1978.)

David Chew, President of Four Seas College, together with Don and Pien Thornton, will accompany me into China. From there, on February 2nd, brother Chew and I go next to Cambodia for my third missionary effort there. He and I shall be working with Sareth Voun in a gospel meeting at Battambang—Cambodia's second largest city.

From Cambodia, brother Chew returns to his work at Four Seas College, in Singapore, while I fly on into Russia for further gospel work together with Bob Hawkins, Billy Bland, David Jones, Sean Hochdorf, Cliff Lyons and possibly Paul Hooten above the Arctic Circle at Murmansk. This will be my fifth missionary visit into Russia.—The Editor

# EASTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST ANNOUNCES PRIOR LECTURESHIP IN ABILENE, TEXAS

It is no secret that growing numbers of informed, concerned and faithful brethren have about given up on Abilene Christian University as standing meaningfully any longer either for the truth of the gospel or the restoration plea. The Eastside Church of Christ, of Abilene, Texas, is announcing a special lectureship im-

mediately prior to the ACU Lectures, hoping that other concerned brethren will come early to inform themselves what the ruckus is all about.

Starting Friday evening, February 17th, and continuing all day through Saturday and Sunday, the 18th and 19th, on the general theme of "OUR CONCERNS—

WHAT THEY ARE, AND WHY THEY ARE WHAT THEY ARE!" this special lectureship will be held where the Eastside Church meets at 805 Judge Ely Boulevard (behind the Security Bank) in Abilene. Speakers and their topics will be as follows:

## Friday Night, February 17th:

- 7:00-8:00 PM Bill Lockwood,  
"Search for the Ancient Order" (No. I)  
8:00-9:00 PM Lindell Mitchell,  
"Soft on Sin!"

## Saturday, February 18th:

- 9:00-10:00 AM Bill Lockwood,  
"Search for the Ancient Order" (No. II)  
10:00-11:00 AM Bill Towry,  
"Walking by Faith (Jesus Is Lord)"  
11:00-12:00 AM Mac Deaver,  
"The Plague of Agnosticism"  
2:00-3:00 PM Mac Deaver,  
"The Nature of the Church"  
3:00-4:00 PM David Brown,  
"Love's Relationship to Biblical Authority"

- 6:00-7:00 PM Eddie Whitten,  
"Review of 'The Peaceable Kingdom'"  
7:00-8:00 PM David Brown,  
"The Bible Doctrine of Salvation by Grace"

## Sunday, February 19th:

- 9:00-10:00 AM Buster Dobbs,  
"Not Ashamed of the Gospel"  
10:00-11:00 AM Bill Clayton,  
"Who Shall Stand in the Gap?"  
2:00-3:00 PM Roy Deaver,  
"Getting Down to Specifics" (No. I)  
3:00-4:00 PM Buster Dobbs/Roy Deaver,  
Question Session  
6:00-7:00 PM Bill Clayton,  
"Tell Me the Story of Jesus"  
7:00-8:00 PM Roy Deaver,  
"Getting Down to Specifics" (No. II)

# Notes & Quotes...

**Asghar Ali**, Lahore, Pakistan: "Once I wrote in one of my reports that **Rahat** (my wife) proves to be a good preacher pusher and all of us need someone to back us, encourage us and at times push us.

"She is not only a preacher pusher, but also is goal-oriented. If she wants to do something, she would do it come what may.

"During these two months, she wrote three short papers for distribution among others here. My contribution in this connection was only to supply the scriptures. After she was through with writing these papers, I got them photostated and they were ready for distribution. We distributed them here and there but most of them were distributed in the denominational meetings called 'conventions' here.

"We went to two of these conventions, majority of the audience being the pentecostals. In one of the conventions, we went towards the close of the meeting. Our girls were with us.

"When the meeting was over, I approached the speaker of the day (from Malaysia) and wanted to make an appointment with him to have religious discussion with him, but he declined. However, we gave away dozens of papers written by Rahat. My girls watched the foolishness of miraculous healing and speaking in tongues.

"We also gave away the papers written by **Rahat** plus some other literature to a protestant preaching against modern day tongue speaking during these months. Please pray our efforts bring forth fruit...

"We still lack funds for school/church building. On the one hand we are thankful to the brethren who have contributed \$800.00 so far for building fund and Rahat's hearing aid, but on the other hand we are still requesting others to contribute generously to enable us to buy a place for church/school. We still need

\$6,500.00. Please send donations to:

**The Elders,  
Kendrick Road Church of Christ  
P. O. Box 730  
Corinth, MS 38834  
U.S.A.**

"If anyone of you wants to help raise the required funds, his help will be appreciated. One plot that I was interested in is already sold. If we do not get the funds soon, we will lose every opportunity to acquire any place in the area for the said purpose. Please do help us and help us soon.

"I would like to thank you all for your continued support, your encouraging letters, your contributions for the building fund and for Rahat's hearing aid, and your prayers on our behalf."

**Jean Ellis**, Church of Christ, Perry, Georgia: "Please use this money (\$25.00) for 'special mailings.' God bless you."

**Marjorie J. Davis**, Neenah, Wisconsin: "Please send us a set of **Basic Bible Course** for \$4.50... Please give the remaining \$15.50 to the 'special mailings' fund. Enclosed find check for 20.00."

**Horace R. Holmes**, St. Clair Shores, Michigan: "Bellview Church of Christ Elders, Brethren enclosed check (\$25.00) for brother Rice's 'special mailing fund.'"

**Ian & Mabel McPherson**, Tasmania, Australia: "Recently we received an invitation to attend the 'First National 'Last Days' Seminar.' It was sent by a group calling themselves 'Ministry Of End Time Seminars.' It had a box number in Queensland and the contact name was **Pat De La Cruz**. Speakers were **Morrison Lee**, **Keith Moore**, **Argol Drollenger**, **Graeme Rundle**, **Mark Jones**, **Bill Selbourne**, **Rodney Smith** and **Quenton Duffy**.

"These brethren have turned their back on the truth and have turned aside to fables. They

are teaching the same false doctrine as Hymenaeus and Philetus who were marked by Paul the apostle in 2 Timothy 2:16-18, namely, that the resurrection had past already. They believe that all 'end time' prophecies had their fulfillment in AD 70.

"Two years ago I debated brother Duffy on the subject. After the debate, he, **Argol Drollenger** and **Bill Sanders** were withdrawn from by the Pine Street church of Christ in Gympie. These brethren left and formed another church in Gympie Queensland. Since that time they have joined hands with other brethren in Queensland to propagate the error. They have chosen not to leave the brotherhood, but have continually sent out AD 70 material throughout Australia. Paul called this doctrine 'profane and vain babblings' which would 'increase unto more ungodliness' and spread like gangrene (2 Timothy 2:16-17).

"It is so sad for me to see such good brethren go astray. It is my earnest prayer that they will change their ways and return to the old paths.

"By the way, brother **Jules Cseszko** from the Mildura church of Christ has written a good tract on this subject. These can be ordered from **Sunraysia church of Christ, P. O. Box 432 Mildura, Victoria, Australia 3520.**"

**David Jones**, minister, Nesbit, Mississippi, sent us a list of preachers' luncheons to be held at the Wilson World, in Memphis, Tennessee. **Keith Mosher** spoke on November 17th; **David Jones** on December 15th; **Mike Hixson** will speak January 19th; **Matt Amos** on February 16th; and **B. J. Clarke**, on March 16th. Outlines for these respective dates were assigned to **David Jones**, **Larry Powers**, **Billy Bland**, **John Overcash** and **Barry Gridler**.

**Bricia L. Hart**, of St. Marys, West Virginia, let us know that her husband **Ray L. Hart** had passed away. Our sympathies go out to her in her loss. She enclosed \$25.00 and, later, \$50.00 for our "special mailings." Much appreciation.

**Mrs. Bertie Sue Moore**, Brentwood, Tennessee: "Please remove my name from your mailing list."

D. W. & Polly Underhill, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, enclosed \$25.00 toward Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s travel fund to the Far East, saying, "May God bless you and much good done for the Lord through your labor."

Robert B. Moore, of Marlow, Oklahoma, enclosed \$13.00 toward our missionary work, said, "I would like to thank you for all the work in the labor of the kingdom. Please use this money as needed in the service of the Lord... Thank you also for bringing Bibles to Russia."

Wendy Shaw, of Nashville, Tennessee, returned our August issue of Contending for the Faith, marked, "Refused," and saying, "I support Jubilee!"

Mable Best, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, continues to support our work \$15.00 each month as she has for many, many years. In one of her letters she mentioned, "Guess you knew we lost our beloved brother J. T. Marlin. What a loss in the Lord's work!" [NOTE: I could not agree more. He was a great one! IYR Jr.]

Judy & Jim Austin, of Corpus Christi, Texas, enclosed \$100.00 in memory of Mrs. Julian Dunn to be used "for whatever is deemed most necessary for funds at this time." Muchas gracias!

The church of Christ that meets at 79 Jalan Perhentian, off Jalan Ipoh, Sentul, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, sent \$50.00 in memory of sister Ruth Roach, who passed away this year.

Dr. & Mrs. Harl D. Mansur, Jr., M.D., of Wichita Falls, Texas, contributed \$300.00 in support of Ira & Vada Rice's missionary work in Murmansk, Russia.

Georgia Hamer, of Giddings, Texas, sent \$500.00 on the Rice's travel fund to Russia, saying, "Hope this will help... So glad they are hearing the gospel in its purity."

Dean Wilson, of Emmetsburg, Iowa, sent \$200.00 for Russian New Testaments and Bibles, saying, "I am sending this because I know you will obtain only reliable versions."

Grady Fisher, of Bethpage, Tennessee, sent \$50.00—and later \$200.00 more—toward our Far East/World Evangelism Fund. Watch our Newsletters for complete reports.

Nancy A. Fretz, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, contributed \$400.00 toward the Rices' preaching/teaching work in Murmansk, Russia.

Mrs. Gaynell H. Griffin, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, sent \$100.00, saying, "Please apply \$50.00 for the special mailings and \$50.00 for the work in Russia or Singapore."

Harrell & Carrie Davidson, of Obion, Tennessee, sent \$300.00 toward the Rices' travel fund, re: Murmansk, Russia.

L. T. Rettmann, of Voca, Texas, who supports brother Manuel K. Palayo's work in the Philippines on a regular basis, also sent \$500.00 for a "special mailing" of Contending for the Faith to the "various congregations and individuals that need it."

Mrs. Janet Randolph, of Belle Vista, Arkansas, contributed \$650.00 toward Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s travel fund for missionary work.

Billy R. Wiseman, of Tifton, Georgia, ordered five sets of our "Basic Bible Course" and added \$100.00 to his check to be used for "Contending for the Faith." It truly helps.

Mr. & Mrs. Randy Mayo, Greenbrier, Tennessee: "PLEASE REMOVE OUR NAME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST!"

Bessie L. Dawson, of Centerville, Tennessee, enclosed \$25.00 on our "special mailings," saying, "Madison is more interested in prestige than souls... Look at our size."

Vergil & Ima Lee Cretsinger, of Shady Valley, Tennessee, enclosing \$25.00 toward our 'special mailings' work, said, "We enjoy your paper Contending for the Faith very much. The Crandall Church gets a bundle each month. There aren't many brethren who will stand for the truth and will let the members know what is going on in the brotherhood. We appreciate you very much. Keep up the good work."

## EXTRA VAN NEEDED TO HELP TRANSPORT STUDENT PREACHERS FOR HUGHSON CAMPAIGN

A concerted effort to mount a gospel campaign to Hughson, California is being made by Joseph D. Meador and the Southwest School of Bible Studies, of Austin, Texas, Lord willing, this coming May.

The Southwest church of Christ brethren have two vans, which ordinarily would suffice to transport the 16 preacher students, together with their personal effects, for the 11 or 12 days they would be en route to California and back.

Trouble is that one of the vans is old with more than 100,000 miles on it. Southwest has been advised against using that van for so long a journey. To rent another van sufficient to the need would cost the proverbial "arm and a leg."

The thought occurs that some congregation or brother might have a large van to lend to the Southwest brethren for the time needed as a special assistance to the campaign. If so, please get in touch with brother Meador and the Southwest brethren at once and let them know. You can address them Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748-5399 or telephone the

church office (512) 282-2486 or 282-2438.

Don Browne, Jimmy Browne and John Bechmeyer and their families, all of Colorado City, Texas, sent \$140.00 and Mel Jaco, \$150.00, for Russian Bibles. Also, the Cullendale Church of Christ, of Camden, Arkansas, sent \$250.00 to help on the Rices' trip to Russia to teach teachers at Murmansk, above the Arctic Circle.

Elmer & Dixie Bowen, of Harrisburg, Arkansas, members of the Downtown church of Christ, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, enclosed \$25.00 for Four Seas College, in Singapore, saying, "We agree to send \$25.00 per month as long as we possibly can."

Mary L. Clark, of Memphis, Tennessee, sent \$50.00 to help support our work in Murmansk, Russia.

Mr. & Mrs. T. R. Wilhoit, of Fort Worth, Texas, enclosed \$25.00 toward our Murmansk, Russia work, saying, "We are retired teachers surviving on teacher retirement. Wish we could help more... We do pretty good for 85-year young couple... Had our 64th wedding anniversary in September."

One of the last things he did before B. L. Phillips, of Nashville, Tennessee, died was to send \$100.00 toward support of our missionary work in Murmansk, Russia. God reward him according to his works.

# HOUSTON COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE

PRESENTS

## A RELIGIOUS DEBATE

January 16, 17, and 19, 20, 1995

7:00 p.m. Each Evening

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST BUILDING

1327 Spring Cypress Road (FM 2920 at I-45 North, Tomball Ext)  
Spring, TX

DISPUTANTS

From the  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Tom L. Bright

From the  
**BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Bob L. Ross

PROPOSITIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Monday and Tuesday Nights

"THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT SINGING IS THE ONLY MUSIC AUTHORIZED AS AN ELEMENT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP."

Tom L. Bright Affirms  
Bob L. Ross Denies

Thursday and Friday Nights

"THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES AUTHORIZE THE USE OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP TO GOD TODAY"

Bob L. Ross Affirms  
Tom L. Bright Denies

**FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE OR PHONE:**

David P. Brown, Director  
**HOUSTON COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE**  
P.O. Box 39  
Spring, TX 77383  
(713) 353-2707 or 350-5516

Lamar & Francine Thornton, of Montgomery, Alabama, are two of our dearest supporters in the missionary efforts we continue to put forth. It distressed us, in May, to learn of a tragic accident that brother Lamar had suffered.

Enclosing \$100.00 toward our work, sister Francine said, "As I write to you, my husband, Lamar Thornton, is recuperating in Montgomery Rehabilitation Center, from a very traumatic fall from about 20-25 feet from a tree. He landed on concrete and also fell on top of a saw. He broke his pelvis bone in three or four places, his back in two places, including four splintered vertebrae and three crushed discs, crushed right arm, both feet. I don't think he will be able to send any more money for a while, but his faith helps him to believe at some future date he will be able to work again and will resume his contributions. Please pray for him and know we are praying for the work you are doing."

[NOTE: Words cannot express the appre-

ciation and gratitude I feel for such a contribution and letter. As I read it, I remembered what I John 5:4 had to say about "the victory that overcometh... even our faith." God bless these two for continuing to care even in their distress! IYR Jr.]

W. T. Dickson, Sr., of Florence, Alabama, enclosed \$300.00 as a one time contribution for our work in Russia, saying, "It is a pleasure to help those who continue to preach 'sound doctrine.'" Brother Dickson is 80 years old now and still preaches at Five Points Church of Christ, of Five Points, Tennessee, some 30 miles from Florence. How wonderful that he still cares for sound doctrine at such a ripe old age!

Gene Hammock, of Phenix City, Alabama, sent \$75.00 in support of our work and asked to have his mother added to our mailing list.

Louise Hassler, of Ringgold, Georgia, one of our faithful, long-time supporters, enclosed \$25.00, saying, "God has been so good to me my whole 20 years of widowhood. I love you

folks for your works' sake and loving lost souls with all the other problems facing the Lord's church, including this ungodly 'new hermeneutic' false teaching. I appreciate so much the way you keep contending for the faith."

Shelby & Shirley Roberts, of Hollywood, Florida, who had been supporting our contending-for-the-faith work \$10.00 a month, increased their support \$20.00 each month during 1994. It truly helped!

Bethel Watts, of Tallahassee, Florida, wrote, "I just received the August issue of 'Contending For The Faith.' I did not put it down until I had read it from front to back, KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!!!

"Please send me a copy of brother Rice's 'Basic Bible Course.' (Enclosed check for \$4.50. Also am sending check for \$100.00 to assist in your 'special mailings')."

Eleanor Edwards, of Elizabethton, Tennessee, enclosed \$25.00 for our "special mailings," saying, "Sorry it couldn't be more, but you are in my prayers. May God bless."

## NINTH ANNUAL SHENANDOAH LECTURES

### "A HANDBOOK ON BIBLE TRANSLATION"

#### Friday, February 17

- 9:00 9:45 a.m. ....Contrasting Translation Motives and Methods .....Bill Towry  
 10:00 - 10:45 a.m. ....The How and Why of Textual Criticism .....David P. Brown  
 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. .... A History of Restoration Translations .....David B. McElwain  
 1:30 - 2:15 p.m. ....Texts and Manuscripts of the O. T. ....Jim Laws  
 2:30 - 3:13 p.m. ....The NWT: How NOT to Translate the Bible.....Tyler Young  
 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. .... A Review of the NKJV .....J. D. Sweeten  
 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. .... Did Jesus Uphold Thought or word Inspiration?.....Michael Light  
 8:00 - 8:45 p.m. ....Crucial Verses Mistranslated.....Gary Henson

#### Saturday, February 18

- 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. ....Can Elders Decide Versions Used by Churches?.....Darrell Conley  
 10:00 - 10:45 a.m. ....An Evaluation of the Good New Bible (TEV).....Tom Snyder  
 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. ....A Review of the 1901 American Standard Version.....Keith B. Cozort  
 1:30 - 2:15 p.m. .... A Review of Some Roman Catholic Versions.....John Moore  
 2:30 - 3:13 p.m. .... A Review of the NASB.....Denny Petrillo  
 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. .... A Critique of Nida's Dynamic/Functional Equivalence.....Kevin Cauley  
 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. .... How to Use Strong's Helps.....Bob Berard  
 8:00 - 8:45 p.m. .... Preaching Values From New Translations of the N.T. ....Lester Kamp

#### Sunday, February 19

- 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. .... Choosing a Translation Without Being a Scholar ..... Gene Burgett  
 10:30 - 11:15 a.m. .... The Ultimate Translation..... Steve Lloyd  
 1:30 - 2:15 a.m. .... The Right and Wrong Use of a Paraphrase.....Dub McClish  
 2:30 - 3:15 p.m. .... No Translation Without Preservation.....Gary W. Grizzell  
 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. .... A Defense of an Eclectic Text ..... Jackie Stearsman  
 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. ....A Review of the NIV.....Gary W. Summers  
 8:00 - 8:45 p.m.....Bible Translation on the Mission Field..... Bruce Daugherty

#### Monday, February 20

- 9:00 - 9:45 a.m. .... The KJV Debate: a Response.....Weylan Deaver  
 10:00 - 10:45 a.m. .... A Review of the Modern Language Bible..... Tom Blewett  
 1:30 - 2:15 p.m. .... What About Mark 16: 9-20 ..... Robert R. Taylor  
 2:30 - 3:15 p.m. .... The Inerrancy of the Autographs.....Curtis A. Cates  
 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. .... A Review of the RSV .....Kenneth Ratcliff  
 7:00 - 7:45 p.m. .... A Review of the King James Version.....Robert Sweeten  
 8:00 - 8:45 p.m. .... The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration.....Roy C. Deaver

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

A publication of Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383  
FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## LONGTIME, FAITHFUL MEMBER LEARNS WHAT IT MEANS TO CORRECT MADISON ELDERS, PREACHERS, RE: 'JUBILEE'

**Al Thompson Likens 'Jubilee' to 'Watergate.' We All Know What Happened to Richard Nixon. How Long Before Madison Elders, Preachers Either Quit Defending the Indefensible—Or Resign?**

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

When **Caroline Gardner Thompson**, daughter of old-time Nashville gospel preacher **Arthur K. Gardner** (Waverly-Belmont, Una), saw through what was happening at Madison Church of Christ, re: "*Nashville Jubilee*" some three or four years ago, initially she could not persuade her husband, **Al Thompson**, that anything was wrong—but she disconnected from Madison

anyway!

Even before she left, the Madison elders were giving her the "silent treatment;" however, continuing to believe things were basically sound at Madison, brother Al sided with the elders. It was not until he *himself* tried calling some of their errors to their attention that he began seeing what the basic problem was all about. Being on good terms

with the Madison preachers and eldership, he thought he could correct them and still maintain his good relationship. Was *he* ever in for a rude awakening!

Under date of November 8, 1994, from his home in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, just across I-65 from Madison, he finally wrote to the editor, as follows:

11/8/94

Dear Mr. Rice,

Sir, you don't know me, but you know "of" me through my wife **CAROLINE**. One year ago, I would *never* have considered writing to you, because I *then* considered you a troublemaker of the highest order. But now, I write these words to you with great admiration. My hope is that with your talent and resourcefulness, you will be able to make great use of what is contained herein.

I have been a member of the great **MADISON CHURCH OF CHRIST** for 13 years. During that time, I have been involved in many phases of work there. The programs at Madison are extensive, and the "good" that they do extends around the globe. I loved **Ira North**, **Jim Mankin**, and **Steve Flatt**, and they loved me. I had never heard one word said by any of them that I thought was wrong—until recently.

Before I go any farther, let me show you a parallel. I loved **RICHARD NIXON** and *still* do. He was the first politician that really excited me, and for the "good" that he did for this nation, I will always be grateful. But then came **Watergate**. At first, I went into total denial! "**NOT RICHARD NIXON!**" I exclaimed. "**NOT MY HERO! HE WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING**

**LIKE WHAT YOU'RE ACCUSING HIM OF!**" But then, as the evidence mounted, I began to see clearly that the man I had put my faith and trust in had indeed made mistakes—and had done wrong. And, although I still loved him, I quit trying to defend him.

Now comes the parallel. I loved Madison church of Christ very, very much—and **STILL** do. When you first started sounding the alarm with all those pamphlets regarding "**Jubilee**," I went into total denial—just like with Mr. Nixon. "**NOT MADISON!**" I exclaimed. "**NOT STEVE FLATT! NOT DAN DOZIER! NOT THE MIGHTY MADISON ELDERS! THEY WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE WHAT YOU'RE ACCUSING THEM OF!**" But then, as in **Watergate**, the evidence mounted, and I began to see clearly that the people, the organization that I had put my faith and trust in had indeed made mistakes—and had done wrong. And, although, I still loved them, I quit trying to defend them. See the exact parallel between **Watergate** and "**JUBILEE**"?

My wife, **Caroline**, chose to leave Madison almost immediately. I, however, chose to stay for a while and fight for my convictions; to try to reason with **Steve** and **Dan** and the elders. I thought that

(Continued on Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 1

February/1995

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David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## Editorial...

### Let's Help Southwest/Austin Send Their Preacher-Training Students For California Gospel Campaign

By rights, as long ago as the gospel was planted in California, instead of having to receive help, the churches there should be sending missionaries to help others. Tragically, what looked so promising 50 years ago, got side-tracked. Largely through the liberalism first introduced by E. V. Pullias into Pepperdine College (now University), this doctrinal virus now has infected most of the churches not only in California but up and down the West Coast all the way up through Oregon and Washington.

If the truth of the gospel ever is to become strong there again, it means that concerted efforts will have to be made to strengthen those churches who still believe, honor and love it and who are willing to stand for the truth against all error. Such a church, if my estimate is correct, exists at Hughson, California, where one of our editorial staff, Dalton P. Ellis, has his membership.

#### HUGHSON ELDERS INVITE EDITOR TO SPEAK

Because brother Ellis also is a longtime member of our Board of Directors for Four Seas College, in Singapore, I have had occasion to visit him a couple of times these last two or three years. Each time, the elders of the Hughson Church of Christ have invited me to speak; and each time I have been encouraged by the manner in which I was received.

The last time I spoke at Hughson—a strong church of possibly 165 or 175 members—was occasioned by a Four Seas College board meeting last October. While there, the elders agreed how wonderful it would be if a gospel campaign might be arranged by one of our sound, faithful preacher-training schools. I promised brother Ellis that I personally would look into it and see what might be possible.

#### SOUTHWEST/AUSTIN CAN SUPPLY 16 WORKERS

When I telephoned Joseph D. Meador, Director of Southwest School of Bible Studies and Graduate School of Bible, at Austin, Texas, he was more than willing to take on such a responsibility if some of the rest of us might help to work it out. No doubt you saw our appeal in Contending for the Faith last month for an extra van to help transport Southwest's 16 student preachers to and from Hughson for the campaign.

In addition to this extra van, we estimated that approximately \$3,000.00 would be needed to cover

costs of gasoline, meals and motels both going and coming between Austin and Hughson. (Of course, the church at Hughson will gladly provide food and lodging while the workers are there!)

**LET'S HELP SOUTHWEST SEND THESE MEN**

Now we learn that an additional van will not be needed after all. Due to the airlines price war, all 16 can fly—round trip—for only \$3,100.00!

Vada and I are willing to contribute \$100.00 toward this campaign. If as few as 30 more would do likewise, the \$3,100.00 could be forthcoming with no strain. All such contributions (being made to a church) are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to **Southwest Church of Christ**, clearly earmarked for **Hughson [California] Campaign**, and address them to **8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748-5399**.

Just before he was betrayed, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren"** (Luke 22:31-32). This is an opportunity for those of us who are converted to strengthen our Lord's cause in California.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## CORRECTING MADISON

(Continued from Page 1)

perhaps I could say something, ANYTHING that might change their minds. **BOY WAS I WRONG!** Not only would they *NOT* change their minds, but they *DID NOT WISH TO DISCUSS IT!* [NOTE: EVEN WHEN THE CONTROVERSY WAS RAGING AT ITS HIGHEST POINT, NOT ONE SERMON BY STEVE OR DAN—(OR ANY ELDER)—TO REFUTE THE CHARGES. THEY SIMPLY INSTRUCTED US TO NOTIFY THE POST OFFICE OF "UN-WANTED MAIL."]

My theory was simply this: if my car (which is good) has a flat tire, I don't discard the car—but rather I fix what is wrong, restore it to good working order, and continue on with it. And so it is with the church. If it is good, but something goes wrong, you *DONT* discard the church, but you fix what is wrong, restore it to good working order, and continue on with it.

Well, it didn't work that way, I'm afraid, and so I wrote the letters that I now send you copies of. You may or may *NOT* have seen them before, since I don't know what all Caroline sent you. I hope that you will look all this over thoroughly and be able to use it for **GOOD** in some way. Keep in mind, all this information is absolutely *accurate*, coming first-hand from someone (me) who has been on-the-scene through it all.

One final note about the "JUBILEE"—after my final letter of withdrawal to the Madison elders, late one night one of the elders phoned me. He said that he was calling me "on his own," and *not* at the direction of anyone else. And (listen to this) he said, **"I WISH THAT WE COULD ANNOUNCE TO THE WORLD THAT, BECAUSE OF THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE 'JUBILEE', EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY THE MADISON CHURCH OF CHRIST WILL NO LONGER BE AFFILIATED WITH IT!"** I decline to give his name, because I do

not wish to cause him trouble, but if his statement does not reflect *DOUBT*, then I am not standing here! **THAT ANNOUNCEMENT WILL NEVER BE MADE!**

Brother Rice, one area that I believe you are letting Madison get **"OFF-THE-HOOK"** with is this: are you aware that at least once (and sometimes twice) per year, the Madison church of Christ is staging a mammoth theatrical production they refer to as **"SPECTACULARS"** involving various religious stories—such as **MOSES, NOAH'S ARK, JONAH AND THE WHALE**, etc. And they come complete with an out-and-out **CHORUS!** All my life I've heard sermons denouncing choruses in the Lord's church, I would **CRINGE** when Steve Flatt would announce that **"CHORUS PRACTICE WOULD BE AT SUCH-AND-SUCH A TIME!"** These productions are very elaborate and draw up to 15,000 people who come to see them. They would make the Baptists, Methodists, Catholics and anybody else green with envy at the way they are staged and how successful they are. Although the basic idea was to teach stories from God's word in a more effective way, I cannot but stare in disbelief how far this has gone to copy the way our denominational "friends" do things. You really should investigate this if you have not already done so. You can order (by mail) a video tape of the **"1994 SUMMER SPECTACULAR"** from the Madison church if you wish, so you can see exactly what I've told you about... In Jesus Christ, (*Signed*) Al Thompson

There was more to brother Thompson's letter on another subject; however, the foregoing part is germane to the **"Nashville Jubilee"** and specific offences being caused by Madison.

Together with brother Thompson's letter, per foregoing, were three enclosures. The first was a copy of Madison's letter of June 4, 1994, urging "fellow Christians" to attend and talk up "Jubilee," as follows:

June 4, 1994

Dear Fellow Christians:

In just a few weeks, we will be enjoying the sixth **JUBILEE**, an event that the Madison Church has endorsed from the beginning. Next year, in 1995, we are committed to being a co-sponsor of **JUBILEE** with the Green Ridge Church of Christ. We consider **JUBILEE** to be a spiritual feast—and a church rallying point—of major proportions.

It is no surprise that from time to time someone on the program will stir controversy or one of our co-sponsoring congregations may be in the news. Please recognize that this is to be expected in any area-wide endeavor involving a wide range of congregations, speakers, and viewpoints. Madison is in no position to censor or stifle the speakers.

Taken as a whole, **JUBILEE** is thought to be of enormous benefit to individual Christians as well as the cause of Christ in this area. You are urged to attend—to talk it up—and to invite your friends.

In Christian love,

(*Signed*)

The elders and Ministers of the Madison Church of Christ

Tom Balthrop	Glendle Slate
Bill Bennett	Ray Wilson
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Brother Thompson had highlighted certain parts of the foregoing letter and had enclosed a copy of it together with the following letter to the Madison elders:



June 17, 1994

Elders,  
Madison Church of Christ

Dear brethren,

Please accept this letter in response to the letter you sent me regarding "JUBILEE". First, may I say that nobody loves the Madison Church of Christ more than me. I believe that it is the greatest church in the world, and that Steve Flatt will go down in history as being one of the greatest leaders in the Lord's church. I have been a member for 13 years and have not witnessed a single thing I felt was wrong—until now. My conscience is hurting and confused and I simply cannot sit idly by and watch this great church be harmed—and say nothing. Brethren, I believe that a "cancer" is growing at Madison, and its name is *LIBERALISM*. This "cancer did not originate at Madison, but rather we have affixed ourselves to it in the form of our association with Rubel Shelly and the Woodmont Church as it pertains to "JUBILEE". And I'm convinced that you are all aware of it. Please refer now to the enclosed copy of your letter to me to *ITEM 1* that I have highlighted in orange. You acknowledge that "CONTROVERSY INVOLVING ONE OF OUR CO-SPONSORING CONGREGATIONS BEING IN THE NEWS MAY OCCUR FROM TIME TO TIME". My, my—what an understatement! And—(now referring to *ITEM 2* in orange)—you say that "MADISON IS IN NO POSITION TO CENSOR OR STIFLE THE SPEAKERS". That's true, but when people that I (personally) am associating with decide to drink liquor, curse, or do things that are wrong, I can't stop them, either. But I do *NOT* have to continue my association with them. I can withdraw myself from them. The scriptures literally scream at me under those circumstances:

"SHUN THE VERY APPEARANCE OF EVIL".

"WITHDRAW FROM THEM WHO WALK DISORDERLY".

"WALK NOT IN THE PATHS OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS"—and on and on and on. Surely you're aware of the un-Christian, outlandishly liberal statements Rubel Shelly has been making over the past few years, as reported by Frances Meeker in the newspaper, the *Tennessean*. And you can include the great author, Max Lucado, in that same category—having attended a rally recently and addressing the Catholic priests and denominational ministers in the audience as "FATHER" and "REVEREND". And these are only two men, and only two incidents that I have listed. These could be joined by several others, but what's the point? Surely you are aware of the damage these incidents have caused. Many people have left Madison because they feared that we were making a mistake, and getting involved in something that might be wrong. If nothing is wrong, then why did they leave???? My very own *WIFE* left also! Did their hearts hurt for Madison—(as mine now does)—as I reluctantly write these words to you? Surely honest hearts, like yours, must know that something is wrong. If I, a lowly member, can sense it, why can't you, my esteemed and learned overseers? But, still, onward we go—"FULL SPEED AHEAD." Please examine the final item in orange—*ITEM 3*. You urge us to "ATTEND, TALK IT UP, AND INVITE YOUR FRIENDS". If only Madison were involved, I'd love to do exactly that. But it's *NOT* just us, and we've lost control. Innocent though our intentions may be, we are being viewed as being "GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION", AND WE SIMPLY CANNOT, WE MUST NOT LET THIS GO ON!!!! My Bible tells me that if someone is doing something wrong and I bid him Godspeed, I become a partaker in his evil deeds. Well, as you all know, this year it's the Woodmont church—and Shelly's)—time to sponsor the JUBILEE. Are you urging us at Madison to bid him Godspeed? Are you urging us to buy his books and videos—along with MAX LUCADO'S—which are sure to be on sale in the Convention Center lobby—containing their dangerous and questionable philosophies? Wouldn't the surest, the safest course, be to require those two men, and others in question, to stand at the pulpit at Madison and answer the charges being hurled at them before ONE MORE PENNY, ONE MORE OUNCE OF SUPPORT is given to them??? I am afraid, brethren, that we are making a mistake here.

Now I know that my lowly voice and opinions will not matter to you one iota. But, as I said, I love Madison, and I grieve for the terrible things that are being said about us. It hurts me when two different ministers in two distant cities told me—(and I quote)—"STEVE FLATT IS EXACTLY LIKE RUBEL SHELLY: THEY CAN'T BE TOLD APART". That hurts, because I believe it's a black LIE!! Rather than leave, as many others have done, I choose to stand and fight. I have a dream that Madison will once again return to the pure and undefiled church it was 13 years ago when I first found it. Wouldn't it be the *SAFEST* road to take to simply withdraw from that which is causing division?? "LET THERE BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU". Sound familiar? If I have offended anyone with these words, please forgive me. I merely wish to have God's record show where I stood on these vital issues. In Christian love, (*Signed*) Al Thompson.

It seems to me that if I had been the elders or preachers of the Madison church—and one as fiercely loyal as Al Thompson clearly was to Madison had written such a conscientious letter—the least I should have done would be to *answer it as sincerely as it was sent*. Is this what happened? His follow-up letter to Madison of July 13, 1994—almost a *WHOLE MONTH LATER*—speaks for itself. He wrote—

July 13, 1994

Dear Brethren:

On June 17, I sent a letter to you, expressing grave doubts regarding Madison's association with the "Jubilee." I outlined the controversy connected with it and told you that we, Madison, were being viewed as "guilty by association." Now, the 1994 Jubilee has come and gone, and sure enough, *The Tennessean* resurrected the controversy once again for all the world to see. People from denominations, who know I'm a Madison member, have asked me many questions about what they've been reading, and I can detect a sense of "glee" in their attitudes; as if to say, "the Church of Christ is in trouble, and we're glad." This hurts me *very much!*

I thought that surely at least one of you elders would say something to me about the letter I sent you. I thought you'd try to soothe my fears and defend our position and show me where our detractors are wrong.

But all I've received is *silence!*

And every elder I tried to talk to about the matter has seemed reluctant to say anything, as if some kind of "gag order" has been issued. Even when I approached Steve and asked him if he was going to respond to all these charges, he simply said, "Al, there are some things you just don't talk about." Well, I strongly *disagree!*

There are some things you *do* talk about, especially a volatile subject like this, that is threatening to harm the Lord's church. You talk and talk and stand up for your beliefs and defend your good name. That is, unless you know that your position is indefensible. Apparently, we, at Madison, find ourselves in that position. Oh, how this grieves me! And we are determined to maintain our present course *no matter* how much criticism we have to take, *no matter* how many members we lose, and *no matter* how gleeful our detractors become. *Full speed ahead!!*

*And so it is that now, with tears in my eyes, a lump in my throat, and a pain in my heart, I feel compelled to move my membership away from Madison for conscience's sake.* "He that doubteth is damned if he eat"—and I doubt. But I will always love and pray for all of you at Madison. If I have offended anyone with these words, please forgive me. I will always believe that no one is more talented than Nick Boone, no one sweeter than Dan Dozier, and that Steve Flatt is Superman.

In Christ,

(*Signed*)

Al Thompson

And what has taken place in the interim? Rather than rushing all this information to *Contending for the Faith*,

brother Thompson continued to exercise patience—to no avail.

Finally, under date of November 8th, almost four months since the date of his final letter to them, per foregoing, he sent it all to me, appending the following note:

**IRA: SPECIAL NOTE: NEITHER STEVE NOR DAN HAS SPOKEN ONE WORD TO ME SINCE THE ABOVE LETTER. NOT A CARD, NOT A LETTER, NOT A PHONE CALL, NOTHING!**

Had I been at home, I would have responded as quickly as possible; however, by the time all this reached my home in Memphis, I had just left for further missionary work in Southeast Asia. When I got back in late December, it took me several days even to *read* my accumulated mail, much less to *answer* it. However, on December 30, 1994, I did finally reply, as follows:

December 30, 1994

Al Thompson  
1229 Old Dickerson Pike (C-14)  
Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37202

Dear brother Al,

Evidently, your appreciated letter of November 8, 1994, reached my home address just after I had left for extensive missionary work in Southeast Asia. I did not get to see it until my return, December 19th. Having been jet-lagging ever since, I have not felt like writing letters until this morning. However, your letter is one of the first I'll answer, since I got home.

Yes, I have known of you through your wife Caroline for quite some time. She had told me of your intense loyalty to Madison and its leadership. I knew that until you could see for yourself what is happening there, I probably should never hear from you directly. However, as the poet said, "*Hope springs eternal in the dying breast.*" It was almost like hoping *against* hope that we continued sending those huge special mailings of the paper to the Madison members not instructing us otherwise.

As the months wore on—now into the third year, as I recall—one by one disillusioned ones at Madison started letting me know that what *Contending for the Faith* was saying was right "on target." I *knew* that; however, for those at Madison to begin seeing it, too, was something else again. I take no pleasure that

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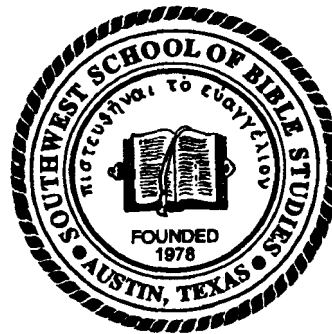
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you now see it, too. However, I do admire your courage and integrity to have written such a letter as the one to me.

Your analogy between Richard Nixon and Madison is so appropriate. Like Nixon, Madison, in the early stages, could have corrected things by acknowledging error, correcting the error and asking for forgiveness. However, by denying their error and attempting to defend it, they now have compounded their situation almost beyond redemption.

You mentioned those "spectaculars" involving various religious stories, complete with chorus. You probably are correct that we should have been paying more attention to these. When I lived in Nashville those seven years, it was easy to check things out. However, since moving away, in 1972, such checking is harder to accomplish. I shall study carefully the information that I already have on them with a view to making mention of them a little later...

As for the enclosures you sent together with your letter, it seems to me that, if I had been Steve Flatt, Dan Dozier or the elders at Madison, I would not have given you the "silent" treatment. What you wrote them clearly deserved an answer. However, the same could be said of what we have been publishing in *Contending for the Faith*, as well. Madison's way may not have been the *right* way to handle it; however, it clearly was *in character*.

Thank you for giving me permission to make use of your letter and the things you sent. I probably will be doing so right away.

Meanwhile, God bless you and Caroline for the difficult decisions you both had to make. They were not easy decisions—but you made them.

God bless you for caring,

(Signed)

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Since mailing the foregoing reply to brother Thompson at year's end, several more weeks have gone by. It seems to us that if this information is to have any effect, we should not wait any longer. Therefore, we are publishing it herewith—and a copy of this issue is being mailed especially to *every family at Madison* that has not asked to be taken off our mailing list.

At this late date, are there not others at Madison who have "doubts" regarding "Jubilee," such as the Thompsons and great numbers of others, that they have not been able to resolve in their own minds and hearts? (According to information that we deem reliable, several hundred members already have left Madison over this issue.) Or have all the rest at Madison, like their elders and preachers, determined to make *no correction at all*, stiffened their necks, uncircumcised their hearts and ears, resisting every scriptural appeal—*FULL SPEED AHEAD!*

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## AN EVENT CALLED "JESUS" (?)

Robin W. Haley

The so-called "*International Soul-Winning Workshop*" was so advertised (as our title indicates) by the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Tulsa. Their ad tells us that this year's workshop will be more than a workshop, but rather "an event." The theme is simply entitled "Jesus." For 20 years now the brethren in Tulsa have been hosting this workshop, whose initial design was indeed commendable, but has fallen to the wayside of doctrinal liberalism and error.

For far too many years the Tulsa Workshop—and more recently her Tennessee sister "Jubilee"—have been little more than clearing houses for compromise with sectarianism and forums for irresponsible and unauthorized "change" within the body of Christ. In an attempt to get this truth across to Tulsa residents, various special mailings of this present journal and other informative materials have been made. Some no doubt have chosen to trash these materials, along with the Biblical reasons for their being sent. But, we are happy to know that these attempts at warning and correcting brethren have not all gone unheeded. This present article serves as yet another plea, for those who may read it, to take heed what they may hear (Mark 4:24) at the Tulsa "workshop."

### NEW SPEAKERS, SAME UNCERTAIN SOUND?

We are told by the flier mailed out recently that there will be "new speakers" at the workshop this year. I for myself have not heard of at least five of the people named on this first mail out. By this, I am wondering if we may conclude that these workshop brethren are perhaps trying to steer clear of the high profile "change agents" that have proved to be somewhat of an embarrassment to certain Tennessee churches. It is interesting to note that the workshop has had a degree of financial difficulties, and their attendance has dropped by at least a few thousand (perhaps as much as 6,000) in recent years.

This is not to say, however, that they have not engaged liberal and compromising men and women for this program. Verily, auditors will no doubt still hear the doctrines of the Holy Spirit's direct leadership (and other forms of a neo-charismatic persuasion); that one cannot tell who is and is not a Christian (the "Jesus has an invisible church" doctrine); Shelly's revamped "faithful Christians in all the denominations" doctrine; Phillips' "we ought to have fellowship with any and all who name the name of Jesus" compromise (as per his book, *Don't Shoot, We May*

*Both Be On The Same Side*). [Recently brother Phillips was known to be on stage at the Mabee Center of Oral Roberts University with **James Robinson**, Baptist turned Pentecostal, and encouraged brethren from Garnett to go out and hear this man; various shades of unrepudiated Boston/Crossroads Discipling ministrations; "and more!" (as their ad says).]

### SOME CANNOT DISCERN TRUTH FROM ERROR

There will be many who will listen to the errors of some of these "workshoppers" and will "love to have it so" (Jeremiah 5:31). There will be many—even thousands—who will be misled due to their naivety (Romans 16:18) and lack of experience of the word of righteousness, being babes (Hebrews 5:13). But what really saddens me is the support and encouragement certain other influential brethren continue to give to this exercise in liberalism. In so doing they make themselves "**partakers of their evil deeds**" (II John 11). I speak of such men as **Howard Norton**, **Stafford North** and **Terry Johnson** (and others from OCUSA and the Oklahoma City area) who continue to compromise the truth and seemingly bid Godspeed to error by their appearance on the workshop.

As recently as Tuesday, January 17,

1995 brother Norton was in Tulsa along with **Duane Eggleston** (liaison between OCUSA and Oklahoma churches) meeting with a number of area preachers (who do *not* support the workshop), trying to justify Norton's participation in this "event." (Whether brother Norton is on this year's program, I do not know. He was last year. There is a great deal of information that needs to be exposed regarding OCUSA. Soon to come.)

#### WHERE DO BLIND LEAD BLIND?

Will those who organize and promote and sponsor the workshop ever come back to the truth of God's word? No, as long as those who are still accepted as "sound" (OCUSA brethren) continue to give them aid in their error by participation and appearance on the workshop. No, not as long as the organizers continue to be misled into thinking that they are "following what [they] believe is the Spirit's leading" and continue to "seek the leading of the Spirit" (as written to me by **Mike Davis**, elder at Garnett church in Tulsa). No, not as long as they "cannot tell nor discern who is or is not a Christian" (as said to me by phone conversation with **Terry Rush**, preacher at Memorial church in Tulsa).

Will this Tulsa gathering continue to be a negative influence on the purity of the Lord's church? Yes, so long as people continue to be duped into believing this workshop to be a good thing. Yes, so long as unfaithful men continue to present false doctrine there. Yes, so long as fence-sitting brethren will not stand up in Tulsa (and throughout the brotherhood) and say, "Enough is enough!" Yes, so long as otherwise sound brethren in Tulsa (and throughout Oklahoma and elsewhere) do not gather their courage and mark, not only the ones teaching error, but also those who appear with them on this program and who fail to expose the error...making believe that these doctrinal matters are merely points upon which to "agree to disagree." Yes, until faithful brethren in Tulsa (and brotherhood-wide) cut off completely their fellowship with Memorial and Garnett Road churches in Tulsa (and those who continue to support them financially) until they repent...if ever.

"Gradual" pulling out (as suggested by some local brethren) will accomplish absolutely nothing. The Bible still says, "**Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God**" (II John 9). This being true, why should those who have not God have fellowship with us? Paul, when writing

to the church in Ephesus, did not say "have some fellowship" nor did he write for them to "have gradual fellowship," but did write, "**and have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them**" (Ephesians 5:11).

This seems to be the bottom line: although brethren are tardy in dealing with this business properly, it is not too

late. Let us all take the strong stand now, draw the line as God has done and expects, tell them who oppose the sound doctrine that this shall not pass, and cease having fellowship and promoting their error—either actively or passively—until such time as they repent and come back to where they need to be. It is possible for the Tulsa Workshop to be a good tool for the Master's

---

## WOULD YOU BRING THIS PREACHER IN TO SPEAK TO YOUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Our young people are a priceless treasure. They are energetic, enthusiastic, inquiring, impressionable, genuine, and loving. They have been reared to love the Lord, to respect His inerrant Word, to believe in the one, exclusive body of Christ, to be baptized for the remission of sins, to engage in pure and authorized worship, to deviate from the truth neither to the right nor to the left.

Would you expose your college age folks (or any other age) to a teacher who ridicules the church of Christ; who said, "My children will not stay with the church I grew up in...an irrelevance"; who says "We do not contribute one whit to our salvation" (grace only doctrine); who says "There is no infallible method for interpreting Scripture," but all are "fallible"; who avers: there is no New Testament pattern, the New Testament church cannot be restored, the Lord's "church is flawed," the church is not the kingdom (which has not been established), the N. T. church cannot be identified, the Spirit works on a person directly (not just through the Word), worship is to be composed of "raucous celebration," "dances," "solos," "choirs," "shouts," etc., Christians are to "bare their souls" to each other and "absolve" each other's sins, one must "have a personal encounter" with God, Luke used "Mark, Q, what, I don't know, scraps" to write his book (Matthew used scraps for the Sermon on the Mount), man cannot understand "God-talk," the law of Moses has not been abrogated, salvation and fellowship are only in the core/bull's eye--the deity of Christ (anything outside of the core is not important, whether it is immodest dress, changes in church organization, or dancing and singing with an instrument in Christian worship, or any other human innovation), the "Church of Christ" is but another denomination? To disagree with these averments and to refuse to fellowship the denominations is sectarian. Would you use a man who spoke, ridiculed the bride of Christ, and sang with the instrument at Christ's Church (Pentecostal) and in a "unity" meeting with Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Christian Church, etc.? If some would still use such a person, just what would he have to do in order for them to refuse any longer to fellowship him? [Anyone questioning the above should write the editors for written documentation].

It is likely unimaginable to you, dear reader, that the above described preacher, Rubel Shelly, is being brought to Memphis by the elders of the Highland Church of Christ, February 3-5, to speak to the Christian Student Center, even in spite of his above listed heretical teachings and objections from some of their own members. Would you not be surprised also if any other congregations [especially those professing soundness] were to show endorsement by advertising it in their bulletins? Whatever happened to such scriptures as "...mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine...and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17,18); "...for he that giveth him [the one that abides not in the doctrine of Christ] Godspeed is a partaker in his evil deed" (II John 9-11); "...for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account" (Heb. 13:17); "...because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thy hand" (Ezek. 3:20; see also 3:4-21; 33:7-16; 13:1-16)?

*Yokefellow*—Curtis A. Cates and Garland Elkins, Co-Editors

use. But it cannot be such so long as the promoters and participants are so doctrinally anemic.

—912 East Teresa  
Sapulpa, Oklahoma 74066

[NOTE: When I called Curtis Cates' attention to the fact that the Tulsa Workshop was calling their general theme "JESUS" this year, he observed that the Bible says we are not to take the Lord's name in vain—and "if this is not a case of taking his name in vain, I'm not standing here." Amen! IYR Jr.]

strong, deeply concerned for keeping God's word pure that souls might be fed only pure food. The word of man was not about to enter in. The elders were strong in God's word. They knew what God expected of them. They were to be his shepherds, taking care of his flock, his children. You could travel hundreds of miles in any direction, and if someone asked where you worshipped God, and you told them Taylor Street in Hobbs, they knew it was the Lord's church. They knew they could come

#### FOR A TIME BRYANT DRIFTED AWAY

As the years wore on, a big change could be seen in the world in general, but Taylor Street stayed strong in the word, the elders were still God's shepherds doing God's will. For a time, brother Bryant himself drifted away. However, in 1948, he was married to **Ruth Fullerton**; and in the fall of 1950, he and Ruth were baptized, added to the church, becoming themselves children of God.

## Saga of the Taylor Street Church of Christ

### Are They Helping Create a New (And Different) So-Called "Church of Christ" Contrary to the Doctrine of Christ?

The advantage with being born into a Christian family and growing old among the churches of Christ is that it provides a long-range perspective one otherwise may not have. An article by the above title, written by brother **John F. Bryant**, of Hobbs, New Mexico, appears to be a case in point. It is much too lengthy for us to print it all; but he has granted us permission to boil it down, presenting the gist of what he had to say.

Already members of the church of our Lord (though John himself had not yet obeyed the gospel), the Bryant family moved from Roswell, New Mexico, in 1936, to Hobbs, where his father had found work. Times were hard—1936 was the middle of the Great Depression. While his father worked outside the home, his mother put up a thousand or more quarts of canned goods—fruit, vegetables, beef and pork. "We did not go hungry," he recalls, "we did not have much money, but as a family, we lived with love for each other; our dad and mother were members of the Lord's church; and we knew about God's love."

#### SAME LOVE IN HOBBS AS IN ROSWELL

Their first Lord's Day in Hobbs, the Bryant family met with the members of the Taylor Street Church of Christ. As God's children, they found love, fellowship and friendship—the same kind they had enjoyed in Roswell. [In those days (1936) what you could hear in one church of Christ you could hear in 99% of all church of Christ congregations everywhere—the plain, simple, unadulterated, old Jerusalem gospel—nothing more, less or else.]

The Bryants found that the church in Hobbs, as the church in Roswell, was

there and worship "in spirit and in truth." [To have this kind of commitment, you must have elders who know the word of God, know what God wants done and what he wants us to become—obedient children keeping his commandments, servants in his vineyard. To be true servants, one must give all of one's self to God.]

#### WORLD WAR II BEGINS SPIRITUAL CHANGE

As we all know, with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, a spiritual change swept over the nation in general. For the next several years the U.S. was in a state of hustle and bustle. What this did to the church was both good and bad. Some put God in their lives for the first time. Some got so bogged down with other things that they put God on the back burner. Some turned the back burner off and completely forgot about God and his Son Jesus Christ. All they could think of was money, drink, fun, lust—everything that the world had to offer.

Yet, during all that time, the church at Taylor Street remained "steadfast, unmoveable." They still had scriptural elders and ministers that spoke only God's word. They knew what God would do if obeyed; they also knew what he would do if disobeyed. Taylor Street was a haven of rest for great numbers of army boys and transients, ministering God's word to them, trying to keep them on the road of righteousness. Members opened their homes to men and women far, far from home, trying to keep God in their lives, letting them know they cared for their souls. Taylor Street still was strong, still the Lord's church, still had strong elders.

In 1951, John went into the Air Force. By the time he returned, in 1955, Taylor Street was twice as large as before. "There were a lot of new faces," he recalls, "but a lot of my old friends were still there. All of the elders were old friends, brothers that I knew. They were strong in God's word. The church was still the Lord's church."

By then, of course, he had a family to support. He took a job with National Tank Company, working most of the time seven days a week, 16 to 18 hours a day. Working like this, there was no time for God. "I knew it was bad," he rationalized, "but the money was good. I could make my pile and then get a job with less hours."

Even during this time, brother Bryant "went to church every now and then when I was home on Sunday, leaving my duty as a father up to Ruth and the elders at church to see that his [two sons] were getting the pure word of God taught to them. It was—for the elders were keeping the church strong in God's word... My dad and mother were there every time the doors were open. They always had their Bibles open. They followed the minister in his teaching to make sure that what he said came from the scriptures—God's word, not man's."

#### CHURCH DIVIDES OVER "ANTI-ISM"

Brother Bryant worked 19 years for National Tank Company before changing jobs to work for Dresser, Inc., working on a logging truck. "They said we could have days off; but when they came up most of the time someone was sick and we did not get them, so still no time for the church.

"It was about this time (1966), when

I went to work for Dresser, that we had a church split. Taylor Street took care of their widows and we had opened two homes for children. Some of the members did not believe we could do this according to the Bible. Some left. They went down on South Turner Street and started the South Side Church of Christ. It lasted about 20 years, then folded. This was a sad time for all of us.

#### GRADUAL CHANGES IN GIFT BIBLES

"By then (1970), we had seen preachers come and go. Also, we had seen elders and deacons come and go, but Taylor Street was still strong in God's word for we still had strong, scriptural elders who contended for the faith.

"Keith, our eldest son, was baptized about 1970. The elders gave a Bible to all new children of God. They gave Keith an *American Standard* Bible. I knew that it was a good Bible for the elders said it was comparable to the *King James*. That was good, for I studied from the *King James*.

"Gerald, our youngest son, was baptized about 1983, and the Bible they gave him was the *Revised Standard Version*. I did not know anything about it at the time, but I know all about it now. I know that it is not all God's word by a long shot. The RSV has a lot of man's ways of thinking. [This book is not good for God's children. Check it out for yourself, same for the *New International Version*.]"

#### CHANGED BIBLES CONTRADICT

It was about this time that brother Bryant began to hear some of the brothers and sisters talking about things not being just right in the church. He still was working every Sunday, so he was not getting to attend regularly. However, he began hearing some say that the Bibles among the congregation did not teach the same thing—that they contradicted each other and some versions even contradicted themselves! He wondered how this could be, but, like so many in most (perhaps a majority of the) churches did not take time to find out.

"Now," he writes, "I know that people who do not study God's word [for themselves] do not know what God wants them to do. I was one of them."

#### RETURNING TO FAITHFULNESS

In July, 1986, upon retiring from Dresser Atlas, he purchased a grocery store, a filling station, and a garage in Sacramento, New Mexico. Now he *could* have some time off, "but I worked seven days a week as always." He started talking with some of the people, found out some were God's children. They

were members of the Weed Church of Christ in Weed, New Mexico. It was only a mile and a half east of where he lived.

"John," they said, "you are a child of God; you need to start coming and worshipping with us."

He thought about this a week or so, started closing the store earlier on Wednesday and Sunday nights and began attending church services more regularly.

"I started studying with some of the members at the store and at their homes. I found out how much I had been missing. I did not know God at all. I started reading and studying God's word and began to understand what he was telling me that I must do. The more I studied, the more I wanted to know. I was hungry for God's word, so I read and studied every night."

#### RETURN TO TAYLOR STREET CHURCH

Selling his store, in 1987, brother Bryant moved back to his old home at Hobbs, back to his old home congregation, Taylor Street Church of Christ. Although he went to work in a lumber yard at Hobbs, he began working in the church as soon as he moved back, telling them that he would do anything that they wanted him to do—and they had plenty to do!

"I was studying the Bible all the while, trying to make up for lost time. I started working with **Dwight Faulk**, the family minister. He was a dear brother and a good friend. He showed me how to study and learn faster."

Taylor Street started a personal evangelism class in 1989. Brother Bryant studied in this class with **Dwight Faulk**, the teacher. There were members in the class who knew what the Bible said and what God wanted done.

#### THINGS WERE NOT QUITE RIGHT

"At this time," he reveals, "I had started to see that everything was not what it should be in the church. **Curt Sparks** was the minister, and he used only the *NIV* Bible to teach out of. I had been studying the dangers and damnation of the modern versions of all the so-called Bibles. Brother **Curt** also was teaching some of **Rubel Shelly's** and **Max Lucado's** false teaching—but no one did anything about it.

"At this time, they were going to install deacons in the church. My name was put in the pot, but I declined. I did not think I was good in my learning. The elders said that my name had been put in by 15 or 16 brothers and sisters. They said I had been helping to teach class, I was a candidate for a deacon. I

said I would think it over.

"The next Wednesday night I confessed faults, all my sinful ways. It felt so good to be with God again. I did become a deacon.

"In July of 1990, **Dwight** asked me to teach his class. I told him that I did not think I could. The other class members said they would help me if I would take it, for most of them had taught a class. I took the class and it was the best thing that I had ever done. I had to study ten times harder than I ever had before."

#### HOW FAR TAYLOR STREET HAD CHANGED

By this time, brother Bryant was talking to the elders about some of the things that were going on—things contrary to God's word. They said they were on top of it, that it would be okay. He was not long finding out how far on top they were.

"They told us in October that we were going to have an ecumenical service with the Church of God Holiness, the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the Methodist Church on Thanksgiving Sunday in November, 1990.

"The singing was *a cappella*, but we had sectarian preachers in the pulpit talking, preaching, and praying (however they pray). We lost about ten or 15 couples over this service. We already had lost about 50 or 60 members the last four years over the 'Bible' that was being used to preach from. Some who had left, when asked why, said, 'If I want to hear denominational teaching, I can go two blocks down the street to the little Baptist Church and not have to drive 20 blocks to Taylor Street, so I don't go, they teach false doctrine.'"

In 1991, they had this ecumenical service at the Methodist Church, in 1992 at the First Baptist Church. They did not have it in 1993.

#### PERSONAL EVANGELISM CLASS STOPPED

Strange indeed are the solutions *some* elders misapplied to their problems. Brother Bryant was teaching the personal evangelism class. In that class they were studying and teaching *not* to use the false Bibles, teaching others about the false brothers, who they were and the false doctrines that they were teaching. Such false teaching was coming from the pulpit right there at Taylor Street Church of Christ!

Rather than remove the false teaching from the pulpit, "on the first Sunday of 1993, they told us in the personal evangelism class that it [the class] would not be taught any more. They were

changing the classes—also that on the second Sunday of each month on Sunday night we would be breaking up into small groups. We would meet in homes so that we could learn more about each other, and every four months we would change up so that everyone would get to study with each other; but it never did take place—everyone stayed in the same clique.

**TAYLOR STREET ELDERS  
REFUSE WARNINGS**

“Meanwhile, when some of the faithful churches nearby had heard of the 1990 inter-denominational Thanksgiving service, they called, sent letters, or otherwise came by and talked to the Taylor Street elders. They asked them, as brothers, to please don’t do this thing that you are going to do. They told them they were going deep into apostasy and liberalism, departing from the word of God, and to please, please think of what you are doing.

“The elders at Taylor Street told them that what they did at Taylor Street was none of their business, that they would run the congregation as they saw fit, and for them to keep their noses out of Taylor Street Church of Christ.”

**“MINISTER SEARCH GROUP”  
FORMED**

Curt Sparks gave notice in June of

1993 that he would be leaving in August. The elders set up a search committee made up of men and women. They called it “A Minister Search Group.” They interviewed the preachers and their wives and turned into the elders a questionnaire of what they found out and what they recommended. The elders took it from there.

“If the elders had ears to hear what the members said,” brother Bryant states, “they did not let it be known, for of all that came to preach only one had a sermon that told of God’s grace and love and also principle and law. His sermon was about God’s goodness and love for those that obeyed him, and also the severity that God has for those that disobey him. He spoke about heaven and hell, what we must do to go to the first, heaven, and what we did not have to do to go to hell.

“The head elder asked me what I thought about him. I told him that so far this one was the only one that preached God’s word and the only one that used the right Bibles.

“He asked what I meant by ‘right Bibles.’ I said, the *KJV* and *ASV*, not the denominational Bibles, the *NIV* and the *RSV*.

“He told me there was nothing wrong with them. That I did not know what I was talking about, and it did not make

any difference what Bible we use.

**“NEW HERMENEUTIC”  
PREACHER HIRED**

“Well, the elders hired a preacher. **Doug Hall** is his name, and it was not long before we knew his name. He does not teach the gospel of Jesus Christ or the doctrine of God. Doug Hall is of the clan of the new hermeneutic. He teaches the gospel and doctrine of **Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Mike Cope, Andre Resner, Royce Money,** and all the others that have departed... teaching not the word of God, but their own fallacious, dogmatic, satanical and ungodly gospel that they have made up among themselves, using one-fourth the word of God and three-fourths the words of men.

“The head elder’s son knew Doug Hall before he came to Hobbs. He must have sold him to the elders, for they hired him, knowing that some of the members did not want his teachings in Taylor Street—but we got him anyway!

**TAYLOR STREET NO LONGER  
LORD’S CHURCH**

“You can see by now that Taylor Street Church of Christ is no longer the Lord’s church. It is weak, for this preacher is one of the changers. He said we must change the Lord’s church to meet the needs of man. [God made the

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**Sunday, March 19**

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The 1996 Lectures will be “The Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5, 6, 7).

--Garry Stanton, Director--  
**Cullendale Church of Christ**

2707 Mt. Holly Road - Camden, Arkansas 71701



last change when his Son died on the cross and shed his blood to cleanse us of our sins.]

"The elders are going along with this change, and all those that go along with them in this change are going back into bondage, putting back on sin. They are crucifying Christ again.

"They have started clapping their hands during service and having men and women doing sayings and scriptures in unison in the morning service. The elders say this is all right. They sing and that is speaking. What is the difference in singing and speaking? They no longer believe in the five steps of salvation—grace is good enough. They teach that our works do not do one whit for our salvation—grace and faith only.

#### ELDERS COULD NOT BE WARNED

"I went to the elders four or five times about this. The first time they said they would give me about ten minutes; but I told them I needed about three hours. They said to write it down on paper and they would read it and get back with me.

"I gave them a 23-page letter with 11 pages of documents of what has happened to churches that practice the same thing that they are allowing to take place in Taylor Street. I asked them to go to the scriptures with me. They said that they did not need to, for they had not done anything wrong; but if they heard or saw anything wrong they would take care of it. I gave them this letter in June. They talked to me in October.

"They let the preachers read 'gospel' from the *Wineskins* of Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado and Mike Cope. They say to apply this to your lives and praise God with what you learn from it. From these men and their [words] they feed the flock.

#### BRYANT DISCONNECTS FROM TAYLOR STREET

"I resigned my deaconship the first of June, 1994, and I have withdrawn my membership from Taylor Street Church of Christ. I can no longer be a part of their apostasy, liberalism and false doctrine.

"The elders took the deaconship away from one deacon because, in his place of business, he had put out for all to see and read some brotherhood papers and books that gave book, chapter and verse from the Bible—a message that condemned what they were doing. They told him he could not give these out to the members. He told them that as long as it was God's word, he would give it to anyone that wanted it. [Bo Carson, in his place, had *Contending for the*

*Faith, Firm Foundation, Biblical Notes, Hammer and Tongs* and one or two more.] The elders said that the men that wrote these books and papers were not inspired men, what they printed was sinful and would send weak members to hell, if they followed what they said."

#### WHAT ABOUT CHURCH WHERE YOU ARE?

In his article, brother Bryant went on to say, "I could go on and give you a lot more, but all you have to do is look around, and you can see it maybe in (but I hope not) the church where you worship, if not in a church of Christ nearby.

"I pray for my brothers and sisters at Taylor Street and all others that are in trouble. I pray that they wake up and see what they have done and ask God

to forgive them. Let us all keep God's commandments just the way he gave them—his way.

"In Revelation 2:1-5 the church at Ephesus had left their first love and were about to have their lampstand removed unless they repented. Taylor Street has left its first love and now they are placing [their faith] not on the pure word of God but on the words of men. They are deep into apostasy, liberalism, and false doctrine. Like Shelly and Lucado, they have departed the word of God.

"Has their candlestick been removed? Is it still true that 'where two or three are gathered together in my name I will be there also'? How far from God do we get before he departs from us? Is God still with Taylor Street Church of Christ?

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### A FINAL WORD TO TAYLOR STREET

"To some of the members at Taylor Street and former members, the elders now have become modern-day Sadducees, Pharisees and High Priests, knowing God's word but forcing on the members the ungodly gospel of man. Has God so hardened their hearts that now they believe a lie?

"Some elders now think that they are the only ones that know the will of God. The mature brothers and sisters at Taylor Street that still seek the truth and the spirit know whether it is the will of God or the will of men. They must stand up for God's will, keeping

his commandments pure.

"It is with love, and great sadness, that I write this letter; but I must do so. I love my God and his Son, our Lord and Savior, for he first loved us all. I also love all my brothers and sisters in Christ, no matter what they do. Let us study God's word together, and only in the truth and the spirit that it was given—God's way."

—319 West Castle Street  
Hobbs, New Mexico 88240

[NOTE: Brother Bryant enclosed documentation relative to the cancellation of brother Bo Carson from the

deaconship at Taylor Street last July. When we consider that it was for the offense only of distributing such papers as *Contending for the Faith, Firm Foundation, Biblical Notes, Hammer and Tongs*—and that from his own place of business!—one wonders how far from the truth those elders are determined to go.

In the days when my bosom friend *Linwood E. Bishop* used to preach at Taylor Street, it wasn't like that. In those days, from the chiefest elder to the lowliest member, they were concerned for "thus saith the Lord." Why is it different today? IYRJR.]



## Two Writers Are Added To Editorial Staff As *Contending For The Faith* Enters New Phase

*As longtime readers all know it is not often that Contending for the Faith adds writers to our Editorial Staff; however, as the paper enters its second quarter-century, this seems an appropriate time to announce the appointment of two. We are particularly honored that these two have accepted: Curtis A. Cates and Robert F. "Bob" Berard. Both of these brethren are extremely well qualified to serve in their new capacity.*

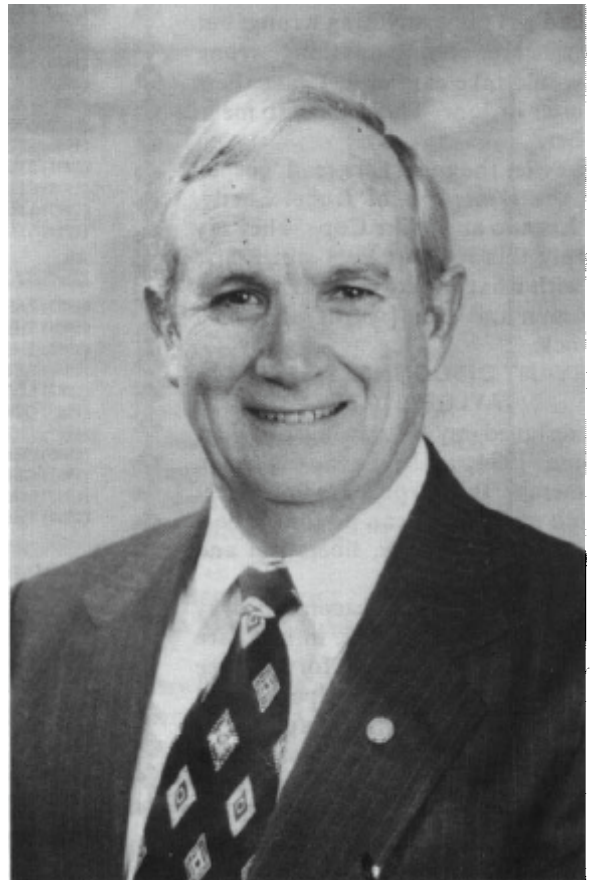
The first time that I recall seeing Curtis A. Cates was in April, 1960, when he was a 19-year-old student at Alabama Christian College. I had initiated and was directing the first of what now are called World Evangelism Workshops. It was conducted by the Pinellas Park church of Christ at Pinellas Park, Florida—and brother Cates was one of a group of young student preachers brought to the Workshop by Furman Kearley, who then was teaching at the college in Montgomery, Alabama.

Brother Cates was born in Phenix City, Alabama, to Curtis C. Cates and his wife Margaret. His father is a gospel preacher of more than 50 years in southern Alabama and Northwest Florida.

Graduated from Alabama Christian High School, Curtis A. Cates distinguished himself academically, earning the A.A. and B.S. degrees from Alabama Christian College (now Faulkner University); the B.S. from Livingston University; the M.S. from Samford University; the M.R.E. and M.Th. from Southern Christian University; the Doctorate in Education from the University of Alabama; as well as doing further graduate study at Abilene Christian University.

On October 29, 1960, brother Cates married Annette Bingham. They have two children, Curtis A. (Andy), Jr., and Daniel F., a 1991 graduate of Memphis School of Preaching. Annette, a college librarian, has written various articles, taught library-orientation to incoming Memphis School of Preaching students, and authored the *Spiritual Sword Fifteen Year Index*.

Brother Cates delivered his first gospel sermon in May, 1958, at the Founder's Day Oratorical Contest of Southern Christian University, and began preaching regularly in January, 1960, in Saville, Alabama. During 35 years of preaching, he has preached full time in Florida, Alabama and Georgia as well as in gospel meetings in many states of the U.S.; Klang, Malaysia; and Murmansk, Russia, where he also taught Bible and Christian evidences. He frequently appears on major lectureships and spoke on the *Second Annual Asian Bible Lectureship*, in December, 1986, in Singapore. He also lectures on Christian evidences,



CURTIS A. CATES

leadership, religious education, and the Book of Job in many places.

For nearly 25 years, Curtis A. Cates has been training gospel preachers. For three years, he was a professor at Faulkner University, later serving as Dean at Columbia Christian College, in Portland, Oregon. For 12 years, he was a professor and Academic Vice-President of Southern Christian University; and, since 1982, has served as Director of Memphis School of Preaching while continuing as an adjunct professor at Southern Christian University.

Brother Cates' years of training gospel preachers and church leaders through extensions of Southern Christian University carried him to teach in 30 cities in ten states. His undergraduate and graduate classes have been attended by more than 1,000 preachers, Bible class teachers, and elders.

Not only is brother Cates on the staff and/or a regular contributor to *Firm Foundation* and *Spiritual Sword*, and is Editor of *Yokefellow*, but he also directs and edits the books of the Memphis School of Preaching lectureship, and is the author of *The Noahic Flood: Science and the World That Was* (printed in Russian and English), *Worship: Heaven's Imperative or Man's Innovations?*, and many other books. Having contributed to countless lectureship books and brotherhood periodicals, he has taught virtually all of the Old and New Testament books, Christian evidences, Hermeneutics, Biblical Archaeology, and Denominational Dogmas, in addition to other college disciplines such as Science, English and Education.

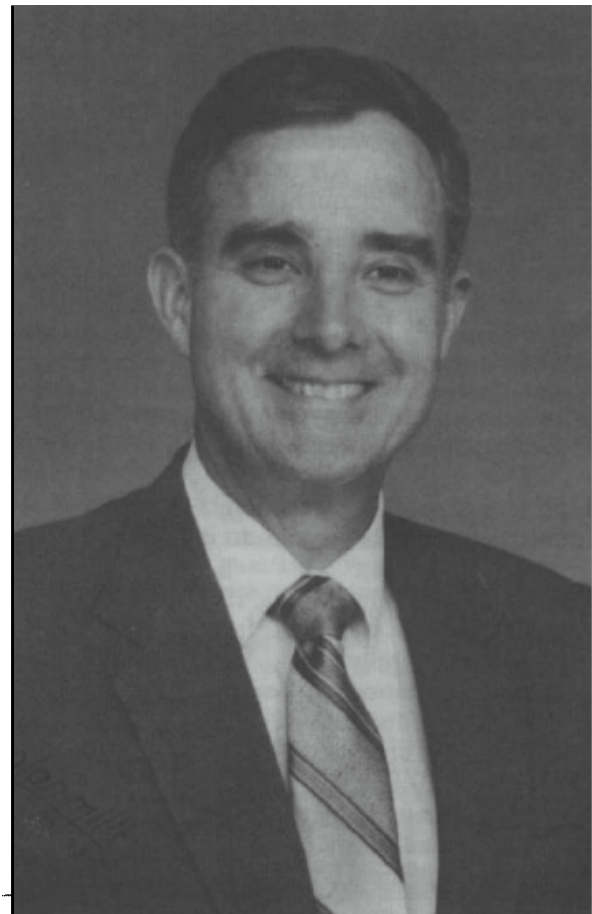
Such a brother now takes his place on the Editorial Staff of *Contending for the Faith*. We are honored to have him.

## ROBERT F. "BOB" BERARD

After leaving a 17-year career as a law enforcement officer, in the early 1980s to work on a full time basis in the kingdom of God, Robert F. "Bob" Berard began his preparation for preaching the gospel in 1980 with study at the Southwest Institute of Bible Studies, a part-time Bible study program offered by the Southwest School of Bible Studies in Austin, Texas.

Upon graduating from that program, brother Berard began local work immediately with the Delwood Church of Christ, in Austin. While at Delwood, he had the opportunity to study Greek and Logic under brother Roy Deaver, who at that time was teaching with the Southwest School.

After preaching five years at Delwood, Bob returned to Southwest as an instructor in Bible, remaining there until 1993. While instructing at the Southwest School, he attended the University of Texas as a part-time student, completing work for the B.A. in New Testament Greek. His earlier college training included a B.S. and an M.S. from Lamar University.



Brother Berard is active in preaching by appointment for various congregations in Texas as well as in gospel meetings, lectureships, and special assignments both in the U.S. and abroad. In addition to either working in or directing numerous door-knocking campaigns in the U.S., England and Jamaica, he has taught in preacher-training programs at the Southern Sumatra Bible College, in Indonesia, and also at Four Seas College, in Singapore. Currently, he is an instructor with the Houston College of the Bible, at Spring, Texas, where he also serves as Assistant Director.

Bob Berard brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Editorial Staff of *Contending for the Faith*. Watch for his articles.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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## VISIT TO MAKATI CENTRAL

Bob Berard

As the four American gospel preachers of our Far East trip went out from our common place of lodging to various Manila area churches on Sunday morning (December 11, 1994), it fell my lot to go to **Makati Central**, the home congregation of brother **Manuel Pelayo** and his wife **Norma**. Though the visit was a brief one it was nevertheless a memorable one for me and I trust a profitable one as is all our faithful work and worship in the kingdom (I Corinthians 15:58; Acts 20:35).

Assembled on this particular Lord's

day were about 40 souls, a good number of whom were young children with an overall even spread of all ages. All seemed very attentive and appeared to have no problem understanding the sermon on salvation by faith despite my unfamiliar Texas accent. There was certainly no problem for any English speaker in understanding the clear voices in the singing portion of the service as the brethren sang loudly and gladly songs which both praised God and edified men. (It is to our shame that the singing in American congrega-

tions is often much muffled by comparison with that of our Asian brethren.)

### FURNISHINGS MADE BY THEMSELVES

The congregation at Makati Central is only about four years old and was planted by brother Pelayo and his family along with four others. This church, like the one in Troas in the first century, meets in a third story room. The meeting place is only about 400 to 500 square feet in size and is pretty well filled when brethren attend as they did on the day of my visit.

Somewhat a unique feature among church meeting houses is this one's member-made pews. Other items such as the pulpit, rostrum, and even the baptistry were made by the brethren's time, effort, and funds. All of these items appeared to be of quality construction and were both attractive and functional. Even the sign outside the rented room declaring it to be the meeting house for the Lord's church in the area is, as we say, "homemade." The sign is made of metal in an iron frame all of which was made and painted by the brethren. Truly these brethren have "done what they could" in providing the necessary place for the saints to assemble and what they could do is considerable (Mark 14:8).

Brother Pelayo explained to me that the one dozen pews were cut from about 15 sheets of plywood. Very obvious is the adherence to the same pattern in the production of these identical pieces of furniture. [What a ready and powerful illustration of the pattern principle taught by the New Testament. How sad so many of our brethren either think there is no pattern

in the Scriptures or that the pattern can't be understood or followed. Happily Paul was not so confused (II Timothy 1:13; 2:2)].

#### PELAYO—A PREACHER WITH INITIATIVE

Brother Pelayo, who does most of the preaching at Makati Central, is a quiet man of 67 years of age. His conversion to Christ in 1967 is a story of a man with considerable initiative. He had found a small newspaper ad offering Bible study help and pursuing same he was taught a portion of the truth. Doing his own study for several months he returned to the gospel preacher about midnight one night determined to be baptized. Though he met with the suggestion that the matter could wait until a more reasonable hour, brother Pelayo insisted on being taken "the same hour of the night" and he was baptized into Christ (Acts 16:33). Since that time brother Pelayo has contributed much to the cause of our Lord and his labors with the Makati Central congregation are notable among them.

While on my visit I had the privilege

of also meeting brother **Sam Roach** who is an American transplanted from the Knight Arnold church in Memphis. Brother Roach is in Manila to use his talents in teaching by signing to the deaf. Unfortunately our visit was very brief and I was unable to learn much of his work thus far. I did find out the sad news that sister Roach passed from this life earlier this year (1994).

Asking brother Pelayo concerning the needs of the church at Makati Central he explained that they were very needful of faithful gospel preachers and good books to help them in their teaching and preaching of the truth. Surely these brethren are doing well with what they have and could do much more were they to have more help. Those interested in sending books or financial aid to the Makati Central church or other churches in the Far East should contact **Ira Y. Rice, Jr., at 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.**

—Houston College of the Bible  
1327 Spring Cypress  
Post Office Box 39  
Spring, Texas 77388-0039

## TRUTH FOR THE WORLD

Rod Rutherford

There are 5.7 billion souls alive today on our planet. If the world lasts another four years, its population will exceed 6 billion and by 2020 will reach 8 billion. It has been estimated that of all the souls which have ever lived on the earth from the creation to the present, over half of them are alive right now. This presents a pressing problem which is also a tremendous opportunity. The problem is how to get the gospel to this vast multitude before they plunge into eternity without hope. The opportunity is that we can reach more people today than any generation has ever been privileged to reach with the gospel since the church began.

How are we going to get the gospel to every creature in our generation as our Lord commanded (Mark 16:15,16)? God, in his gracious providence, has given us the means. He has allowed us to develop the technology to teach every soul on earth within a few years time. Three quarters of the world have access to major political, social, sports, and entertainment events via television. Radio reaches even the most remote areas of earth. The printed page can go where no preacher is welcome or permitted to go. In addition to the revolution in communications technology, we have made incredible advances in transportation in the past 100 years. One can travel by commercial airlines into any nation of the earth within 2 to 3 days. God's people have used the blessings of modern

technology in communication and travel to carry the gospel to others, BUT WE HAVE NOT YET BEGUN TO TOUCH THE HEM OF THE GARMENT in what can be done.

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### EDITOR EN ROUTE TO CHINA, CAMBODIA AND RUSSIA

Although I hope to complete this issue of *Contending for the Faith* and have it ready for the printer prior to departure, by the time most will be reading these words I shall be on a missionary journey to mainland China, Cambodia and Russia, Lord willing. Pray for me.—*The Editor*



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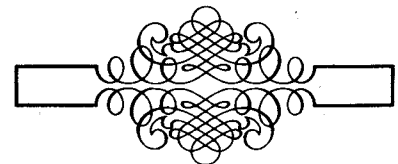
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**Archie H. Graham**, Rogersville, Alabama: "I do not enjoy reading of the apostasy that is being exposed by faithful brethren but I do want to read about the liberalism which is so rampant in the Lord's church.

"Many elders and preachers have succumbed to the diversity and are a great danger to those who are not well enough taught to be aware."

**Jeffrey L. Bell**, Cadiz, Kentucky: "I enjoy very much receiving your publication **Contending for the Faith**."

**Clifford Eastep**, of Southgate, Michigan, renewed his own subscription and four more, sent in five new subscriptions.

**Charlie Andrew Brown**, Tallahassee, Florida: "I attended the 1994 Bellview Lectures in June and picked up some of your magazine **Contending for the Faith**. I was so pleased to read of your exposure (and others') of **Marvin Phillips**. For several years I had looked forward to our trip to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to visit my wife's mom and dad, during the "Tulsa Soul Saving Workshop" in March or April. I thought most of the churches supported the Workshop. In 1992, after attending a **Jeff Walling Pentecostal-Holiness type meeting, hearing the 'Rap Band,' and etc., I learned that even the liberal churches (such as Park Plaza) did not fellowship brother Phillips and Terry Rush as they ran the Workshop... Keep up the good work...**"

**Fuston Tackett**, of Troup, Texas, who contributes \$100.00 each month to help in our work both in the U.S. and around the world, writes: "It seems to me that the greatest hindrance to the church here in Troup is the NIV. Our preacher is a product of West Monroe preachers school and uses the NIV. Also one of our elders is sold on it. They still let me teach the Wednesday night auditorium class, and I use every opportunity I have to point out the errors in the NIV, but I need some help! Please send me a dozen each of brother A. G. Hobbs' [tracts] Volumes I, II, III, IV and V [on the] New International Version. I am enclosing my check for \$27.50 to cover cost of same."

[NOTE: "It is simply tragic that the church in Troup would employ a preacher trained at West Monroe and that he would use the NIV." I replied in part, "The school now is defunct (praise the Lord); however, before going out of business, they trained many in the ways of false doctrine, of which the NIV is a principal source." IYR Jr.]

**Goebel Music**, Colleyville, Texas: "You did a magnificently beautiful job for our beloved Master in CFTF with your promoting/pushing BEHOLD THE PATTERN. I write not these things 'for' Goebel Music, but I write them as what you did truly helped The Cause that some of us love more than life itself and are willing to completely give ourselves to it! Some of our papers did not even carry a 'news' item about the book, and most of them only carried what they did because I bought an 'ad' in such. Had it not been for men like you and **Roy C. Deaver**, the book would never have been so promoted and made known..."

"Now you are doing it with the Master's next book (and it is 100% his!) (**Easy-To-Read OR Easy-To-Mislead?**)..."

"I wrote in my NEWSLETTER... about this book being done just like BTP was—without a cent for anyone! We worked with about seven different companies in trying to get the best possible price for this 1,207 pages of content... I've done various works before, but not a single one that has been so time-consuming, difficult, and expensive (the research, well, no one will ever know as I contacted every major

Bible Society in the world, so many professors, seminaries, colleges, universities... and many I had to call, both in the U.S. and 'across the pond'... at times my phone bill was outlandish, but I kept on keeping on until the work was finished and it just about 'ate me up alive!'. With the value being \$39.95 and the book selling for only \$6.00, surely brethren—some brethren, that is—will understand it not to be for profit. I had to do this as my love for the Lord demanded, commanded, it and the need was so very great when WBTC is considered and the millions of Bibles (?) printed and the millions of dollars they receive must be stopped!

"The \$6.00 surely does not cover the freight bill, so I am trying to get that raised. One thing for sure: 12,500 books (not to speak of the 'overruns') at a minimum of 4 pounds per book, a total of 50,000 pounds being shipped to me is going to cost! If I can raise money for the 1st printing, the freight, and let the printing cost then carry the book—we will have, I just must believe, done a great work for our beloved Lord, our Master. I know you agree. No one on earth will ever know what all has happened nor what all went into the making of this book, yea, even the pressure of it.

"I surely hope we can stop the Chinese version by WBTC, that is, if it is anything like the others—and why wouldn't it be? Your work in China... was the very one that was needed to write about the item by **Cliff Baird**..."

"We don't need quarantined Christians; we need contagious Christians"—**Steve Ellis**, August 7, 1994, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

**Pauline Weatherly**, a senior widow on a fixed income, of Tacoma, Washington, enclosed \$10.00 to be used for our "Bible Fund," saying, "I pray that this will be of some help in teaching others somewhere in the world."

**Lee Harber**, of McKenzie, Tennessee, enclosed \$5.00 for our missionary work. In his covering letter he seemed happy with the Lord's blessings during 1994.

**Mrs. Doris E. Hoggard**, of Ceres, California, sent \$25.00, saying, "God bless you both in the work you are doing. Going into Russia is a Big Step in Europe... I enjoy the newsletters you print about all the work..."

**Sydney & Mary Emma Pepper**, of Athens, Alabama, faithful, monthly contributors to the support of our work, wrote, "We appreciate all the work and effort you and sister Rice have put into preaching the gospel and keep up with the good and bad works of the church. We enjoy **Contending for the Faith** and your **Newsletter**. Our prayers are with you."

**James C. Puckett**, of Midland, Michigan, sent \$200.00 toward our missionary work in Murmansk, Russia.

**The Lord's Church** at Obion, Tennessee, contributes faithfully to the support of our preacher/teacher-training work at Four Seas College, in Singapore.

**Hazel Powell**, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who sends to the support of our missionary work each month, wrote, "Prayers often."

**William E. Pittman**, of Cleveland, Ohio, enclosing \$100.00 to help in our efforts to preach the gospel, said, "I do appreciate your firm uncompromising stand against false doctrine and false prophets. Indeed this is the spirit of Jesus Christ..."

**Mrs. Angela Penrod**, of Beechmont, Kentucky, sends \$10.00 each month for the support of our missionary efforts.

**Franklin & Bertha Brown**, of Dixon, Missouri, enclosed \$35.00, saying, "We continue to be thankful for the evangelistic work in Asia

by you faithful workers and are mindful of our need to assist you. Use the gift where most profitable and we pray for much success."

**The Millard Shivers**, of Richardson, Texas, enclosed \$100.00, saying, "Please use inclosed check for 'Bibles for China'..."

**Zerrial & Nancy Bass**, of Plano, Texas, sent \$100.00 toward the Rices' travel fund to Russia.

**Jean Stidman**, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, enclosed \$200.00, saying, "We would like for you to use this money for Four Seas College [in Singapore]. After reading your letter, I feel good about this work and pray that the money will be used to further the Lord's work."

**Swampy & Ethel Rhodes**, of Duncan, Oklahoma, sent \$50.00 toward support of our missionary work around the world. They also help support brother **Gideon Rodriguez's** work in the Philippines as well as many other worthy efforts.

**Virginia W. Thomson**, of San Mateo, California, enclosed \$100.00 for distribution among **Ray Peter's** work in Latvia, **Four Seas College** in Singapore, **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.'s** work and **Bibles for Russia**.

**Lester & Odie Mae McCoy**, of Beeville, Texas, who had been sending \$25.00 per month for "special mailings," now are sending this amount monthly for preacher/teacher-training at Four Seas College, in Singapore.

**The Irwin Herndons**, of Kingston, Oklahoma, support our missionary work faithfully and regularly in the amount of \$40.00 each month, and have done so for many, many years.

**Walton Harris**, of Monterey, Tennessee, sent \$22.00, saying, "Use enclosed money any way you see fit..."

**Olan & Pharis Hanes**, of Paragould, Arkansas, contributed \$1,000.00 in support of our missionary efforts worldwide.

**Wendell V. Clipp**, who helped our work substantially for a great many years, wrote, "I think that the work that you are doing is extremely important. Facts are I know of no other work that is accomplishing what you are doing." [NOTE: We do not feel worthy of such praise, but appreciate it just the same. Our deepest sympathy goes out to brother Clipp in the loss of his dear wife **Blanche**. She had had a kidney transplant for the previous 22 years! IYR Jr.]

**Lorine P. Qualls**, of White Bluff, Tennessee, enclosed \$50.00 toward the expense of our work in Russia. She and her beloved husband **George** have contributed generously to our missionary work for many years. George was called home on December 15th, last year, at the age of 77. Even so, sister Lorine's support of our work continues—and we are grateful.

**Bill Fernandez**, of Riverside, California, regretted having to cut back some of his support during 1994 due to the recession in California; however, he did send \$2,825.00! [NOTE: Our deep, deep appreciation to this most generous, faithful brother! IYR Jr.]

**Jeanette Walker**, of Farmers Branch, Texas, contributed \$50.00 toward our work in Murmansk, Russia.

**Mr. & Mrs. Elvis Townley**, of Birmingham, Alabama, enclosed \$2,625.00 toward the support of three students at Four Seas College in Singapore. [NOTE: We could use a few more like that! IYR Jr.]

**Sallye Spalding**, of Kerrville, Texas, enclosed \$500.00 for Bibles and gospel tracts. She has been of monumental help to our work across the years!

**Roy & Elizabeth Barfield**, of Rogers, Texas, committed to send \$50.00 each month for one year to our preacher/teacher-training work at Four Seas College of Bible and Missions in Singapore.

**Catherine A. Moore**, of Marlow, Oklahoma, sent \$200.00, saying, "Thank the Lord for you and your good work."

**Mrs. Reid B. Groomes**, of Nashville, Tennessee, wrote, "Please remove my name from your mailing list for 'Contending for the Faith.'"

**Horace & Evelyn Miller**, formerly of Farmersville, Louisiana, have changed their address to Downsville, Louisiana. They have supported our missionary work \$25.00 monthly for many years. "I have had quite a change since I returned from the lectures at Spring, Texas," he wrote. "I barely made it home... entered the hospital and was quite sick... pneumonia, high blood pressure, loss of blood. I am recovering at my daughter's home. Send **Contending for the Faith to Route 1, Box 166, Downsville, Louisiana, 71234-9242.**"

**Norma Jean Nebergall**, of Newton, Kansas, sent \$50.00—half for our missionary work in Russia; the other half for "special mailings."

It is wonderful to us that **Alice Griffiths**, though half a world away, in Tasmania, Australia, continues supporting our missionary efforts and also encourages the church to do the same. "Enclosed is a cheque of \$100.00 for your travel fund to Asia," she wrote. As usual, \$50.00 is from the church here in Cygnet and the other \$50.00 is from my own personal contribution...

"We have just moved into our new home. Please note the new address..."

"I'm still amazed that at your age you are still active evangelizing the world for our Lord... May the Lord continue to keep you safe in traveling to all parts of the world for the cause of his work..."

**Harold & Sarah Smith**, of Lynchburg, Tennessee, enclosed \$25.00 toward our work in Murmansk, Russia, saying, "We pray both of you have a safe and successful trip."

**Russel & Grace Thompson**, of Mesa, Arizona, enclosed their check for \$10.00 to help in our missionary work.

**Mrs. O. C. Heflin**, of Jefferson City, Missouri, enclosed \$50.00 for Four Seas College, in Singapore, saying, "I was glad to receive your letter about the work in Southeast Asia. I sincerely wish I could commit to monthly payments to help you with the Southeast Asian work. You are doing so many good things over there."

"I am sending \$150.00 per month to the **Emerson Church** in Arkansas to help them with a building in Africa. Then, too, at times I have forwarded money to the church in Oklahoma for **Gideon Rodriguez** in Manila. Every two months I receive a bulletin from him and he seems to be a very dedicated and hard-working young man. He told me of the birth of his child and was so very happy about that..."

**Don & Grace Noblin**, of Cardwell, Missouri, enclosed \$20.00, saying, "We appreciate your work."

**Pauline Box**, of Rochester, Illinois, enclosed \$20.00, saying, "I'll look forward to receiving the next issue of **Contending for the Faith**. I hope Brother Rice and all associated with him in the recent trip to the Far East had a successful trip..." [NOTE: We did! IYR Jr.]

**Ralph T. Denham**, minister, Point Pleasant church of Christ, of Hebron, Kentucky, enclosed \$20.00 for our preacher/teacher-training work at Four Seas College, in Singapore.

**Dorothy Bise**, of Lakeland, Florida, who is 88 years old now and says she can hardly write, wrote well enough to send \$10.00 on our "special mailings." Deep appreciation!

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT “DOING CHURCH”

Tom L. Bright

**Jim Woodroof**, who presently preaches for the Muskogee church of Christ in Muskogee, Oklahoma, is one of the leading “change artists” of this decade. He, with others of like ilk, are determined to change the New Testament Church into nothing more than another denomination. This relatively new movement is just a logical extension of the liberalism that has plagued the church for some three decades. It is worthy of mention that Woodroof is author of the infamous *The Church in Transition*, which needs little introduction to most of us.

These liberal crusaders affirm their desire is to change only the methods, attitudes, and similar things. However, closer observation of their writings reveals they have included matters of doctrine and practice under this umbrella of “transition.”

My objections to this liberal agenda were reaffirmed by a bulletin article that was given to me a few days ago. It was recently written by Woodroof. The article dealt specifically with the implementation of his program of change in Muskogee. It shows their problems that they feel are generations old are not being resolved. Let us look closely at his thoughts.

First, he addresses problems arising because the elders had not met the expectations of some of the members. He states the desire of the “leaders of this church” from the outset was to provide “non-authoritarian guidance” so they could experience the maximum growth and freedom in Christ. This points to the liberal argument that elders of the Lord’s church have no authority other than by example. In other words, the congregation sees the “example” of an elder and thus is *persuaded* to follow it. However, this is the extent of

elders’ authority, according to this “non-authoritarian guidance” philosophy.

Relative to this view, I have often asked, “Who or what determines the direction a congregation will go?” Woodroof gives the only logical answer that can be given. He writes:

**Backing away from what they perceived as “authoritarian” leadership left them open, at times, to the charge of providing no leadership at all (the risk leaders take for attempting to give new direction and definition to biblical leadership). This is evident in the way in which the town hall meetings are being conducted.**

This confession is extremely interesting. Their stated goal is to do away with the “human baggage” carried in the past. This is to be achieved by following the *authority by example only* concept for elders. The problem is: IT IS NOT WORKING! Even to the extreme that they have evidently been charged with “providing no leadership at all.”

According to Woodroof, they are delegating and then stepping back, acting as “player-coaches,” running along side the members. The first question is, how do you *delegate* authority that is established **ONLY BY EXAMPLE**? If I work within the realm of authority, I may choose to delegate that authority. But if I am laboring under the *authority by example only*, how can I delegate it? This is incongruity at its height!

Beloved, if a coach has no more “authority” than this movement gives elders, who decides which people will play the game? Are we to assume the players who start the game do so simply because of the exemplary nature

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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## Associate Editorial...

# INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Historically and generally, brethren have held two basic positions regarding the indwelling of the Christian by the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. Basically, the positions are:

1. The Holy Spirit indwells the Christian only through the instruction that is from the word of God.

2. The Holy Spirit indwells the Christian personally in "conjunction" with the instruction that is from the word of God.

As far as I know, the affirmants of either proposition are not advocating, explicitly or implicitly, miracles today. By miracles is meant special works of God that set aside his natural laws. An example of a miracle is Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:14, 39-44). Furthermore, I do not know of anyone who upholds either proposition who thinks that either one deals with God's providential work among men. By providence I mean works of God through his natural laws. Examples of God's providential work would be the book of Esther (4:14), God's answering prayer (Luke 11:3; I Peter 3:12; I John 5:14, 15; James 5:16; I Timothy 2:1-3), his promise to provide for those who abide by the teaching of Matthew 6:33, and the guarantee that if one continues to "ask," "seek," and "knock," he shall receive, find, and be opened unto (Matthew 7:7). As far as I can tell these propositions and others like them have been precisely worded with one purpose in mind, to state two different views regarding the manner or mode of the Holy Spirit's indwelling of a Christian.

## SPIRIT EXERTS POWER ONLY THROUGH THE GOSPEL

Those who have affirmed either position believe that the power of the Holy Spirit to remit sin is brought to bear on a person only through information obtained from the gospel of Christ. As far as I know, the proponents of either position do not teach that God's saving power by-passes man's free will or rational nature (Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 22:17; Luke 8:11; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12). Furthermore, the advocates of the foregoing propositions do not have the Holy Spirit teaching anyone how to live the Christian life independent of the instruction found only in the word of truth (John 8:31, 32; John 17:17).

Both of these propositions cannot be correct. However, in defining and affirming both propositions, advocates of both positions have held that the saving power of the Holy Spirit (the gospel) is located and brought to bear on a person only through the information conveyed by the word of God (Ephesians 6:17;

Hebrews 4:12). As both sides have argued their cases they have routinely upheld the view that the only person the Holy Spirit can save is a person who does only what the gospel authorizes him to do as well as leave undone what the Bible forbids (Colossians 3:17; Galatians 5:19-21). Both sides agree that the same is true regarding the process the Holy Spirit uses to keep one saved. Thus, so far as I know, as each side has argued in support of its respective proposition, no one has explicitly or implicitly taught anything that would cause anyone to violate what God in his word obligates one to do to become and remain a Christian.

### WOODS-NICHOLS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Over twenty years ago in the "Open Forum" during the old Freed-Hardeman College lectures, we well remember the late brethren **Guy N. Woods** and **Gus Nichols** regularly exchanging and pressing their views on the indwelling of the Christian by the Holy Spirit. Brother Woods upheld the first position given per foregoing, while brother Nichols advocated the second. After both had expressed themselves on the subject, brother Woods on more than one occasion ended the discussion by saying that the indwelling positions as they discussed them (and as fundamentally expressed in this article) should never cause a division in the church. Neither view, as herein noted, has anything to do with the false views of Calvinism, Pentecostalism, nor kindred false doctrines concerning the indwelling and influence of the Holy Spirit to and in a person. However, any doctrine that affirms that the Holy Spirit convicts, converts, and sanctifies a person without or contrary to the power that extends from God to man only through the gospel message is a doctrine that sets aside obligatory matters (Mark 16:15,16; Romans 1:16; II Thessalonians 1:8). Such a view is fatal error and must be vigorously opposed, exposed, refuted, and defeated. We trust that brethren will continue diligently to study and discuss both views in the light of what the Bible teaches.

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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## "DOING CHURCH"

(Continued from Page 1)

of the coach? It seems to me those who advocate this concept have their thinking muddled.

The very idea of a "coach" denotes authority. A coach has the authority to make certain decisions — and the whole team must abide by that decision. It may not be the best decision. It may be a decision disagreeable to one of the players, but it is a decision made by the one who has the authority to decide—and all must abide by it!

Likewise, God intended for elders to sometimes

make decisions. Because of human nature, it may be an unwise decision. It may not be the best decision. But a congregation is obligated to abide by that decision (if it is in agreement with the Scriptures). Elders do not have the right to make decisions about what comprises truth. God has already made that decision and has revealed it to us by inspiration.

Woodroof further states, "They, in many ways, had to plow new ground, for the type of leadership they proposed had often not been modeled before them." Now, if this type of leadership had not been OFTEN modeled before them, this suggests that it HAD been modeled previously, though infrequently. We ask: Where, when, and by whom? This view is relatively new among churches of Christ. If and when it is found in the New Testament Church, we know it has been injected in the past few years. It is not from God. Rather, it is from man. But, how do we account for this basic, relatively new doctrine?

It exists because of the basic philosophy of liberalism. When one begins to follow the liberal view of Bible truth (that everything is subjective and relative) to its logical end, this anti-authoritarianism MUST come to the forefront. We must understand this *new-found freedom in Christ* basically argues that we are not under any law (by the way, according to this view, it is the law of God that we are not under any law!). Freedom in Christ is certainly biblical in nature. We reject their *application* of this truth.

For instance, what is meant by the "town hall meetings" mentioned above? What thought comes to your mind by the mention of such? It normally refers to a meeting where politicians meet with their constituents. Not only do the people question them about various ideas, but they express their views about certain things. I suggest that in the liberal mind, it means the elders hear their suggestions, and then frequently strive (by example) to implement what the members want. There can be no problem with elders hearing the ideas, complaints, and suggestions of the members. A wise elder would do so. But when the elders begin to implement every idea that comes along, problems will arise.

### Woodroof's Concern About His Own "Ministry"

He then turns to his own *ministry* as the "present located preacher." His expressed desire was to broaden the base of leadership, increase the level of participation by the members, and "deepen the experiential knowledge of the Word of God."

An interesting sidelight is his mention of "experiential knowledge." According to Webster, *experiential* means "acquired from or pertaining to experience; empirical" (p. 645). The same authority defines *experientialism*, "in philosophy, the theory that experience

### Commentary on Romans

"Justified by Faith"

By Robin W. Haley

—Based upon ASV 1901—

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is the origin and the test of all knowledge" (Webster, p. 645). What does Woodroof mean by his statement? This is especially interesting when we notice, in the phrase "Word of God," he capitalized "word." Normally this means the phrase would refer to the Christ. It is an interesting concept, because it would be in total agreement with the basic concepts of liberalism. However, we have neither the time nor space to pursue this possibility.

Woodroof's dream was to liberate them from the trap into which the church had fallen, an over dependence on a professional clergy. However, this "ministry" also seems to be having the same problems the elders were having. As the local evangelist, he is attempting to step back and act as a "player-coach," so they might have a more "member-oriented ministry." However, he states this "...appears to have left us with little or no ministry at all." I think it is interesting he admits "(this is a risk one takes when attempting to give *new direction and definition* to biblical ministry)" (emphasis mine, tlb).

What is this *new direction and definition* here mentioned? May we suggest it is to change how the church is to "do church." He encourages "all current leaders, co-leaders and, anyone else interested in being a part of this significant transition in the way we "do church is urged to be present." He promised that adequate instruction would be available for those willing to assist "in the new game — this new way of doing church in the future." The author of *The Church in Transition* has an obsession with change, transition, altering, correcting, and modifying the church of the Bible.

He further explains what he means. We read, "...the old forms and structures which may well have been adequate a half century ago are proving inadequate for the stressful, transient present." Now if this were limited to the ways, the methods of doing things, we would have no real complaint. But this is not what is meant by the *change artists* in the church today.

Woodroof mentions certain things that are inadequate for the "stressful, transient present." He allows the possibility of their adequacy 50 years ago. But I want to ask one thing: Is the present (today) any more

"stressful" and "transient" than the "then present" was to good Christians 50 years ago?

My parents lived through the depression and World War II. I wonder if they felt the times were "stressful" and "transient," even in the church. Think of all the problems the church has faced in this century alone. Surely those who

confronted these issues would agree the times were "stressful" and "transient." There never has been a more "stressful" and "transient" time than the first century. Surely Paul felt his times were "stressful" and "transient" (II Corinthians 11:24-28). It is a fact that every person who has ever lived could rightly say every day: We live in changing times. But that the times are more "stressful" and "transient" today than 50 years ago, we do not accept. This is nothing more than liberal claptrap. It is used to make some people "feel good" that they are living in unique times, never faced by mankind before. It is a subtle trick to call attention to what one desires to do or is saying. We do not accept it.

He then asks the members if they would "...provide for them a new role model by which the body of Christ can make its presence known in these crucial times?" I maintain every generation can refer to their day and time as "crucial." The late and lamented **Guy N. Woods** is noted for having said, "We are one generation from apostasy." This is true of every generation. The times are crucial — none will deny. But this could have been said of the church one, two, three, or four generations ago. It will be said one, two, or three generations in the future (provided the Lord delays his coming).

I suggest Woodroof's "crucial times" has reference to his goal of *changing* the church. Indeed, for those who are determined to change the church, the times are crucial. For those opposing this blasphemous philosophy, the times are equally crucial.

He writes of their need for adults for (1) modeling leadership, and (2) modeling ministry. Woodroof then makes an interesting admission. He states the present elders and the present located minister are attempting both of these models, but neither "...have all the answers. We don't know exactly how to get from point A to point B. None of us have [sic] been down this road before." It is new! It is different! It is change!

Christianity is not "forced labor." One follows God because he chooses to do so. Because we are humans, difficulties sometimes arise when we work with other humans within these parameters. But God has set forth how we are to do this in the body of Christ.

None would deny there have been abuses by elders and evangelists in times past. But such abuses do not prove God's plan will not work. Nor do they demonstrate we must necessarily change the "methods" used to accom-

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plish our scriptural goals. In this scenario, it is the "hearts" of man that must be changed.

Regardless of what Shelly, Woodroof, and other liberals advocate, it is still the case that inspiration recognizes a "work" for elders and evangelists that not everyone can fulfill. We can scripturally refer to them as "the office of a bishop" and the "work of an evangelist." There are certain prerequisites that each must possess. "Just any person" cannot scripturally function in these areas.

We agree that elders must be godly examples. But to set this concept above everything else is going too far. Elders should encourage all members to be "ministers," and should be willing "hearers" of the flock they oversee. But this is far from the congregation telling the elders what they want to do and then the elders leading them along by "example" only.

Not every person can "do the work of an evangelist." Undoubtedly, far too many "evangelists" are not doing the work. But there is a place for this work — not everybody can qualify for it. It is the case that all evangelists are ministers, but not all ministers are evangelists. It seems to me that some have forgotten this basic fact.

Woodroof mentions "doing church." Methods, ways of doing things, should never become a sacred cow. Likewise, abuses of methods presently in vogue should not be discarded simply because of these misuses.

The doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11) is a totally different subject. It has been established by Deity. It has been finalized. We have the *once and for all delivered* faith — we cannot, we will not stand idly by and allow it to be changed.

We are determined to withstand the prostitution of the Truth. We will not, without raising our voice, allow it to be sacrificed on the altar of *the need to change* to satisfy the whims of those whose thinking has become convoluted.

Changing methods? This deserves consideration. Changing the truth? Never!

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## **"A SMALL REMNANT"**

**C. F. Shirey**

All across the brotherhood today we see evidence that congregations have left, and are continuing to leave, God's divinely given pattern for the church. Such reminds us, in many ways, of the digression which resulted in the formation of the Christian Church. Sadly, today's departures go even farther than went that digression. Many brethren, who sincerely desire to "**serve God with reverence and godly fear**" (Hebrews 12:28-29) are being fearfully frustrated because the congregations where they are members, where some of them have worshipped and served for years, are being "swallowed-up" by these devastating departures. Such persons, when they have tried valiantly to stem the tide that would restructure the church, but to no avail, cannot remain in these liberal, unsound congregations. In order to please God, they "**come out from among them**" and begin new congregations. Such decision and action demand more than a little courage, and those who display it are to be commended. They are all too few. Those who will verbally bemoan and decry the sad plight of digression are legion. Those who, when they see all efforts to reform are futile, will "come out and be separate" are "a very small remnant." Yet, as has always been the case, the remnant must be looked to for preserving the Lord's Cause (Isaiah 1:9; 17:4-6).

It is laudable when congregations are formed as an alternative to fellowshiping error and wickedness, and with the intention of being the church as God would have it. Do not, however, imagine that such efforts will encounter only "smooth sailing" with no potential for problems. The Devil desires to infiltrate these congregations and drag them back into being no better than what they left. Great care must be exercised to defeat this devilish purpose. To the end that there may be both a desire to keep these new works pleasing to God, and knowledge of some of Satan's devices used to get him an advantage (II Corinthians 2:1), this article is being written. May God, despite the limitations of the writer, use it to help preserve congregations formed by "the small remnant."

As these new congregations begin, there are vital and key things not to be forgotten, dealing with factors which promoted the digressions from which they extricated themselves. Let us consider some of these, remembering "the wise profit from mistakes of history; the foolish are bound to repeat them."

### **In The Matter Of Fellowship**

When people leave a congregation because of its digression from truth, the ones leaving are to have no fellowship with those left unless the digression is corrected by repentance on the part of the digressors. All members of the new congregations need to see this. "**What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?**" (II Corinthians 6:14). Going back to participate in activities of that congregation which still holds to its idols is inconsistent and wrong. Friends and



relatives who remain in liberal churches should be constantly warned and efforts made to pull **“them out of the fire; hating even the garments spotted by the flesh”** (Jude 23). It makes no sense to leave a corrupt congregation to begin a new one, then go right on fellowshiping the old corrupt one. Neither does it make any sense to fellowship other congregations that continue to fellowship and promote the same corruptions as did the congregation you left. Preachers who sanction liberal congregations by refusing to speak out plainly and openly against their digressions cannot help a congregation that has been formed in opposition to unsoundness. It doesn't make sense to use such preachers for meetings, lectureships, and such like. This is a time when some real choices must be made. We need to get on the right side of the fence, and quit trying to straddle it. Preachers who will not do this should not be used by congregations that desire to please God.

Liberal, unsound congregations often extend fellowship to people on terms of what these persons did to become members of human denominations, though in so doing they did not comply with conditions required of God for salvation and fellowship with him (I John 1:1-4). People living in adulterous marriages, homosexual relations, and all kinds of “works of the flesh,” are extended fellowship in liberal churches, no questions raised. When new congregations are formed, to escape such liberalism, how will these newly formed groups treat such matters? Will they “screen” applicants for membership, or will they practice “open fellowship” with no questions asked? How much sense does it make to leave a congregation where such liberal fellowship is practiced, form a new congregation, and then begin practicing the same things objected to in the one left? You'd be surprised how some “reason” (?) on these things! To please God we must not only **“come out,”** but we must also **“be separate and touch not the unclean thing”** (II Corinthians. 6:17-18).

### In The Matter of Organization

Scripturally qualified elders are needed in every congregation of the Lord's church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:6-11). Before such can be had, however, there must be within the congregation men who meet the qualifications given by God for elders. Elders **must** be certain things (I Timothy 3:2-7). When men who comply with God's standard are properly selected and appointed elders and deacons, the result is a congregation that is scripturally organized. When a congregation selects and appoints men to be elders who do not qualify to be such by God's standard, the result is a congregation that is unscripturally organized. A congregation that does not have men scripturally qualified to be elders and deacons must, if it intends to please God, remain scripturally unorganized until such time as it has men qualified for these important positions.

When men devoid of the God-given qualities to be possessed by elders and deacons are appointed by a congregation to these offices, that congregation thereby opens wide the flood gate through which all kinds of liberalism and unsoundness will come rushing. Was it not from among the elders that the seeds of

apostasy were sown, germinated, grew, and reached fruition in the church initially (Acts 20:29-31)? Grievous wolves will always enter in among and destroy the flock entrusted to unqualified shepherds. The preaching done in pulpits, the teaching in classes, and the quality of life maintained in the daily conduct of members of a congregation will reflect the kind of oversight being given by elders. Therefore, congregations that have been formed to escape liberalism and unsoundness must never get in such a hurry to have elders that they settle for men who in that position will carry them back into the same things from whence they fled.

### The Matter Of A Rooted And Grounded Membership

Within churches there will always be babes in Christ. These need a good atmosphere where “their desire for the sincere milk of the word” may be satisfied (I Peter 2:1-5). Within congregations formed by those who have come out of liberal churches will be found persons who haven't been fed properly. Where they have been previously, not only have the elders, preachers, and classroom teachers not taught them well, they have usually mistaught them. Many have been led to believe there is no wrong committed by forsaking the assembly, drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, dancing, and the like. They may also have been led to believe that there are Christians in denominations, and that conservative churches of Christ are “out of touch” with contemporary needs and promote a “narrow set of traditions that are neither biblical nor Christ-like.”

Obviously then, there will be a crying need within these congregations. i.e., formed by people coming out of liberalism and error, for preaching and teaching that exposes the errors just mentioned and a host of others akin to them. When this is done, it may be seen that there are some who have come along with the newly formed congregation “just for the ride.” These had no intention of “hewing the line” in reference to attending assembly worship, and certainly did not ever intend to stand against “works of the flesh” and human innovations. If such persons are put into classes as teachers, given assignments to be responsible for getting teachers, selecting those who will do the pulpit preaching, lead in the acts of worship, make decisions about benevolent work, and such, the newly formed congregation will quickly, and definitely, become no better than the ones out of which they were formed. The church can never be what God would have it be unless and until it is made up of members who are thoroughly converted, well-informed, and totally committed to Christ, who show the new creature image by respect for, and compliance with the Bible (Acts 2:41-42; Hebrew 10:25; Matthew 6:33; Ephesians 5:7-16), and who will settle for no one in the eldership that will not demand, and provide for, sound teaching in the pulpit and classes, and will lead the church to practice Bible discipline upon all who walk disorderly.

If a congregation is committed to strictly “walking in the old paths,” there are many who not only will “shy away” from it, but will also be critical and subtly resistant to its efforts. This should be expected, for

**"...strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"** (Matthew 7:14). Newly formed efforts often attract considerable numbers who have little, if any, real conviction. When the new begins to wear off, many of these will go back and "walk no more" with those who are convicted and committed to truth and righteous-

ness. Let us remember when such occurs that **"except the Lord of hosts had left us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah"** (Isaiah 1:9).

— 3200 Tryon Road  
Longview, Texas 75601

## VAN DYKE'S WARPED INVITATION

David W. Hester

The Florence, Alabama area has seen the left wing of the church invade and divide churches in recent years. As of the present, there are three congregations that have resulted from men preaching error and drawing away disciples after them. In fact, in September 1993 Magnolia Church of Christ, one of those churches, had a joint worship service with North Wood United Methodist Church. **Joe Van Dyke**, the preacher at Magnolia, down-played doctrinal differences and said all churches should unite in spite of their differences. Since that time, much more has taken place.

**Rubel Shelly** came to College church (another of the apostate congregations) and delivered a series of lessons in October 1993. Van Dyke has preached at several denominations, calling the preachers and the members "brethren." In June of last year, he headed the "March for Jesus," which saw several denominations going in together. Before that event took place, Van Dyke delivered a sermon at Faith Tabernacle in the spring. What he said on that occasion at the close reveals much of the thinking of the new left in the church.

Throughout the service, the instrument was used. In fact, only one song was sung without the instrument (if you don't count Van Dyke's impromptu song during his message). Van Dyke declared they were standing "on holy ground," and that this event had "been a dream of mine for a few years."

When he came to the end of his sermon, Van Dyke addressed a question which has dogged him since the meeting with the

Methodists. The question, first posed in our local paper by an anti preacher, had to do with joint worship services. What if toward the end of the service a man, convicted of sin, were to ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" One preacher answers as Peter did in Acts 2:38, while the other preacher gives a different answer. One preacher says baptism is immersion, while the other disagrees. What then? This is a good question, no matter who asks it.

Van Dyke, in addressing the issue, proceeded to list a number of preachers from denominations who were present. He then said: "Don't you think that if somebody needs to respond this evening that we can all get together down here at the front and work something out that needs to be done?" The audience erupted in

cheers, yells, and much applause. He then said: "I just believe that these hypothetical cases won't stand up when put to the test. We can work it out, brothers, we can work it out. If you need prayer, we can pray. If you want baptism, we can baptize. If you want whatever it is you need tonight, there's some preacher here that can minister to you in the name of Jesus."

Now let's stop and reflect upon what this brother has said: "We can work it out." Think about the day of Pentecost for a moment. When those people said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do," how did Peter respond? According to Van Dyke, Peter should have said: "Well, we've got the Pharisees in the audience; we've got the Sadducees present; we've got the scribes and lawyers; we've also got the apostles. Don't you think that

Ad Appearing in the Florence Alabama Times Daily , November 19, 1994

**Shoals Area  
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This year's community celebration of Thanksgiving  
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**Ministers leading the assembly include:**  
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**Sid Fulford - Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ**  
**Milton Glor - Grace Episcopal Church**  
**Robert Turner - New Birth Ministries**  
**Garry Mahan - Magnolia Church of Christ**

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we can all get together on Solomon's porch and work something out that needs to be done?" How ludicrous!

You know as well as I do, how Peter responded. **"Repent ye, and be baptized...for the remission of sins"** (Acts 2:38). Those people had no doubt as to the mode of baptism, or its purpose. But, Van Dyke would say, "If you want-whatever it is tonight-there's some preacher here that can minister to you." In other words, if you want to be immersed, we can immerse you. If you want to be sprinkled, we can oblige. If you want your baby baptized, we'll accommodate you. Where in the world did Van Dyke get this kind of invitation?

But, consider what Van Dyke said at the close: "We've got people coming to lead us in a time of response, and so I'm just going to issue the invitation. If you want to go where God wants you to go—be what God wants you to be—do what God wants you to do—without concern for who you are but concern only for who he is and where he wants you to go, if there's something missing in your life right now that you think a response in this assembly could supply, then (at that point, the music started-DH) we invite you to come right now. All of these ministers will be down here to receive you. If there's some spiritual need in your life, won't you come right now while we have some music together."



Participating in a Community Thanksgiving Assembly, sponsored by Shoals Area Ministerial Association, are (from left), Garry Mahan, Sid Fulford, Steve Pierce, Robert Turner, John Lott and Joe Van Dyke.

## Thanksgiving assembly planned

FLORENCE — The Shoals Area Ministerial Association invites the public to a Community Thanksgiving Assembly at 10 a.m. Thursday at Magnolia Church of Christ, 111 S. Court St.

Ministers leading the assembly will include: John Lott, Parkway Church of God, Florence; Sid Fulford, Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ,

Florence; Milton Gior, Grace Episcopal Church, Sheffield; Robert Turner, New Birth Ministries, Florence, and Garry Mahan, Magnolia Church of Christ.

The Thanksgiving Proclamation, signed by the President of the United States, will be read by Steve Pierce, president of the Florence City Council.

The host minister is Joe VanDyke.

Article Appearing in FlorenceAL Times Daily on November 19, 1994

At which point, the music reached a crescendo and continued.

Brethren, this is the culmination of what the new left in the church wants to take place. We've seen similar events take place across the country; in fact, this happened before Shelly had his joint meeting with the Christian church!

We in the Florence area are doing what we can to stem the tide of apostasy. What are you doing for the kingdom? This is the time for all brethren to rise up as one and stand for what is right. Let us all resolve that we will preach and teach the truth, warn brethren about error, and issue the Lord's invitation without modification.

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## WHAT ABOUT HAND CLAPPING AS A PART OF WORSHIP?

Lester Kamp

A preacher for one of the largest congregations of the church in Texas was recently asked for "the authority to make a practice of clapping hands (*sic* in worship)?" To this question the preacher responded,

"The same authority which accommodates song leaders, paid preachers, church buildings, bathrooms and kitchens in church buildings, announcements, ushers, greeters, attendance cards, and a host of other items...also accommodates clapping

hands. Of course, clapping can get out of hand (no pun intended), but then so can announcements; and they often do. Still we should not become so legalistic about either or any of these cultural accommodations.

"...Clapping is also a way for the worshipper to participate in the service. The move toward non-participatory worship services has been subtle but sure. No one asks questions about 'where do you get the authority to sleep in church?'"

"Still there is biblical precedent. You might want to check out these scriptures: Psalms 47:1 and II Kings 11:12.

"Personally, I don't have a strong feeling about whether we clap or not. I do have strong feelings about making laws where the Bible does not make laws. Personal pref-

erence is one thing; but let's recognize it as just that...personal preference."

First of all, it should be obvious from the questioner's words and those of the preacher that the subject being discussed is the worship of the New Testament church. The concern over hand clapping is not about whether this is appropriate at a play, sports event, presidential speech, etc., but whether God approves of such as a part of worship. As the questioner seeks "authority" for the practice, the preacher waves his wand of accommodation and "justifies" the practice of hand clapping in worship because it is "cultural" and a matter of personal preferences and cites a couple of Scriptures to give it the appearance of legitimacy.

Since the practice of clapping hands in

the worship assembly seems to be growing in popularity within the churches of Christ and since the preacher's words quoted above have been circulated widely throughout the brotherhood through the bulletin in which they appeared, I would like to respond to several of these statements made in defense of hand clapping.

The preacher is obviously either confused on how an act of worship is authorized by God and/or on what worship is. He lists for us matters authorized by "generic" commands where the specifics are not given and then throws in an act offered as worship of which the New Testament says nothing. He has compared "apples with oranges" (i.e., things which are totally different from each other). Because his reasoning is flawed, his conclusions are false. Hand clapping as a part of worship cannot be justifiably placed within the same category of things as "church buildings, bathrooms and kitchens in church buildings, announcements,...." These things are all authorized by the "generic" commands to assemble (Hebrews 10:25), to have fellowship (Acts 2:42), and to do all things in the assembly of the church in a decent and orderly fashion (I Corinthians 14:40). There is NO authority in the New Testament for hand clapping as part of worship.

He next suggests that "we should not become so legalistic about either or any of these cultural accommodations." Anytime someone wants to go beyond the authority of God's Word and objections are raised, then the one who objects is called a legalist. Insisting on Bible authority for what we do is not legalism; it is faithfulness (John 8:31, 32; I Peter 4:11). There is no shame in looking to the Bible only for our authority in religious matters (II Timothy 3:16, 17). Cultural accommodation? Hand clapping predates our culture by many centuries. Hand clapping was a popular practice in the culture of the first century, and yet there is not one hint of authority for its inclusion in the worship of the Lord's church in all of the New Testament. The very idea—"cultural accommodation!" It's an accommodation all right, but not cultural. It's an accommodation of a practice which is completely without New Testament authority.

The preacher suggests that hand clapping merely means "we strongly agree with your point." In Paul's inspired instructions to the church at Corinth, he indicates that

when we understand and agree with the contents of a prayer, it is proper to say "Amen" (I Corinthians 14:16). There is no authority for hand clapping when we strongly agree with a prayer, sermon, or song. Hand clapping has no place in our worship because it is without the authority of God's Word. What would be wrong with simply saying "Amen?" Nothing.

Certainly the Lord intended that we participate in worship. Those acts of worship which God has authorized require our participation. We do not worship vicariously. We may be led in prayer, but all of us in the assembly should be praying. Someone may preach, but his preaching merely guides us in our study of the Bible. We certainly are to participate in singing, giving, and the observing of the Lord's Supper. With all of these authorized ways of participating in the worship, why should we seek another way which God has not authorized?

Then the preacher cites "biblical precedent." But notice where he goes for this precedent. He goes to the Old Testament. The question is not whether hand clapping occurred under the law of Moses, but whether there is authority under the law of Christ for such to be done in the worship of the New Testament church. Doesn't the preacher know that the Old Testament was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross by Jesus' death (Colossians 2:14)? Surely he does. Then, why does he flee to the Old Testament for his "biblical precedent?" The reason is that there is simply no precedent nor authority for hand clapping in worship in all of the New Testament. Absolutely none. Is the preacher willing to bring over from the Old Testament all other practices found therein under the umbrella of such biblical precedence? Is he ready to accept the burning of incense, animal sacrifices, priestly robes, and the like? Surely not! Then why be content with biblical precedent for hand clapping in the Old Testament? In fact, if Psalm 47:1 is used as Biblical precedent (authority) for hand clapping, then the context would also justify shouting and instrumental music in worship. Would this same preacher also approve of these? If not, why not?

Then the preacher refers to "strong feelings" and "personal preference." The answer to this question is not a matter of feelings or preferences. It is a matter of truth! According to Jesus, acceptable wor-

ship is to be offered to God according to the truth (John 4:24), not according to feelings and preferences. My opposition to hand clapping is not on the basis of my feelings or preferences but because of the absence of any New Testament authority for such a practice.

The preacher is concerned about making a law where the Bible does not make one. But it is equally wrong to allow what God has prohibited by his word. Hand clapping is prohibited by God's word because it is nowhere authorized. Where is the authority for it? There is **no New Testament authority for this practice!**

It is extremely interesting to me to notice how parallel the arguments which were offered in defense of hand clapping are to those offered over the years in defense of using instrumental music in the worship of the New Testament church. **J. Carroll Stark** also noted the similarities of the two practices in worship in his debate with **Joe Warlick** in 1903. He argued at that time that "worship, the emotion of the soul, may produce singing, shouting, praising, leaping, dancing, hand clapping or thanksgiving, and such expressions are not to be suppressed by man made rules" (Woodson, **Standing for Their Faith**, p. 90).

We need to "**learn not to go beyond the things which are written**" (I Corinthians 4:6).

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**SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 1995**

- 9:30-10:20 A.M. "Has the Lord's Church [the church of Christ] Been Restored?" ..... (Eddie Whitten)
- 10:30-11:30 A.M. "Shall We Walk in the Old Paths?" ..... (Steve Ellis)
- 6:00- 7:00 A.M. "The Bible Only Makes Christians Only and Only Christians" ..... (Thomas B. Warren)

**MONDAY, MARCH 27, 1995**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Declaring War on the Pattern of the Lord's Church" ..... (Winfred Clark)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The Truth About the Truth" ..... (Thomas B. Warren)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "She Took the Fruit Thereof, and Did Eat" ..... (Racine Wilder)
- (Women's Class)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Truth—How Should It Impact My Life and Yours?" ..... (Lindsey Warren)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M.
  - Class 1: "Morals—God's Unchanging Law on Honesty, Gambling" ..... (Billy Bland)
  - Class 2: "The New Hermeneutic Heresy—Where do They Plan to Take Us?" ..... (James Rogers)
  - Class 3: "False Teachings on Baptism" ..... (Ted Knight)
  - Class 4: "Safeguarding Young People Against Liberalism" ..... (John Curtis)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Innovations in Worship—Drama, Holy Wow, Celebration" ..... (J.K. Gossett)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M.
  - Class 1: "Influence of 'New Conservatism' [Modernism] on the Church" ..... (Keith A. Mosher, Sr.)
  - Class 2: "Is the church of Christ a Denomination?" ..... (Wade Webster)
  - Class 3: "She Became His Wife; and He Loved Her" ..... (Maggie Colley)
  - (Women's Class)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Declaring War on the Identity of the Lord's Church" ..... (Terry Hightower)
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" ..... (Garland Elkins)
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30- 8:30 P.M. "The Liberal Agenda: What Is It?" ..... (Tom Holland)

**TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1995**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Declaring War on the Exclusiveness of the Lord's Church" ..... (Roy J. Hearn)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The Truth About the Truth" ..... (Thomas B. Warren)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Every Wise Woman Buildeth Her House" ..... (Lois Duncan)
- (Women's Class)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Truth—Does It Change with Culture?" ..... (Arnold Sexton)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M.
  - Class 1: "Morals—God's Unchanging Law on Alcohol and other Drugs" ..... (Adolphus Walker)
  - Class 2: "The Core Gospel Heresy" ..... (David B. Jones)
  - Class 3: "False Teachings on Love" ..... (Terry Joe Kee)
  - Class 4: "Safeguarding a Congregation Against Liberalism and Apostasy" ..... (Paul Sain)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Innovations in Worship—Frequency of Lord's Supper, Absolving Sins, etc." ..... (David Pharr)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M.
  - Class 1: "Influence of Pseudo-Science on the Church" ..... (T. J. Clarke)
  - Class 2: "Is the Easy to Read Version a Tool of Liberals?" ..... (Robert R. Taylor, Jr.)
  - Class 3: "And He Said unto the Woman, Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee" ..... (Dorothy Mosher)
  - (Women's Class)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Declaring War on the Organization of the Lord's Church" ..... (Jim Laws)
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" ..... (Garland Elkins)
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION

- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30- 8:30 P.M. "Shall We Restructure the Church?" ..... (Bobby Duncan)

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1995**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Declaring War on the Fellowship of the Lord's Church" ..... (Dub McClish)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The Truth About the Truth" ..... (Thomas B. Warren)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Give Unto Thy Handmaid a Man-Child, Then I Will Give Him Unto Thee" ..... (Irene Taylor)
- (Women's Class)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Truth—Are the Scriptures Verbally Inspired, or Collections of Scraps?" ..... (Roy Sharp)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M.
  - Class 1: "Morals—God's Unchanging Law on the Sanctity of Human Life" ..... (Warner Kirby)
  - Class 2: "The Denial of Eternal Punishment Heresy" ..... (Ronnie Hayes)
  - Class 3: "False Teachings on the Abrogation of the Law of Moses" ..... (Richard Gibbs)
  - Class 4: "The Mouths of False Witnesses Must be Stopped" ..... (Joe Cox)
- 11:50-1:10 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Innovations in Worship—Contemporary and Instrumental Music" ..... (Bobby Liddell)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M.
  - Class 1: "Influence of Denominationalism on the Lord's Church" ..... (Lee Davis)
  - Class 2: "Is the Community Church Movement According to the Pattern?" ..... (Wayne Coats)
  - Class 3: "The Woman Left Her Water Pot" ..... (Annette Cates)
  - (Women's Class)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Declaring War on the Designations/Names of the Lord's Church" ..... (Joe Gilmore)
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" ..... (Garland Elkins)
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30- 8:30 P.M. "Change Agents in the Church" ..... (Gary Colley)

**THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 1995**

- 9:00- 9:50 A.M. "Declaring War on the Preaching of the Lord's Church" ..... (Wayne Coats)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The Truth About the Truth" ..... (Thomas B. Warren)
- 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Go Thy Way, From Henceforth Sin No More" ..... (Corinne Elkins)
- (Women's Class)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Truth—Is It Sectarian to defend the Truth?" ..... (Jack Wilhelm)
- 11:00-11:50 A.M.
  - Class 1: "Morals—God's Unchanging Laws on Adultery and Homosexuality" ..... (James Hudley)
  - Class 2: "The Outrageous Scandalous Grace Only Heresy" ..... (Sidney White)
  - Class 3: "False Teachings that Christians Are Not Under Law and Rules" ..... (Stanley Ryan)
  - Class 4: "The Cowardice and Perfidy of Those Maintaining Silence in the Midst of an Apostasy" ..... (Harrell Davidson)
- 11:50- 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M. "Innovations in Worship—Women in Leadership Roles" ..... (Rod Rutherford)
- 1:10- 2:00 P.M.
  - Class 1: "Influence of Materialism on the Lord's Church" ..... (Gilbert Tripp)
  - Class 2: "What is the Future of the Lord's Church?" ..... (J. A. McNutt)
  - Class 3: "This Woman Was Full of Good Works" ..... (Carol Mangrum)
  - (Women's Class)
- 2:10- 3:00 P.M. "Declaring War on the Mission of the Lord's Church" ..... (Ira Y. Rice, Jr.)
- 3:10- 4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" ..... (Garland Elkins)
- 4:00- 7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
- 7:00- 7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30- 8:30 P.M. "The Price of Truth: Eternal Vigilance" ..... (Robert R. Taylor, Jr.)



Tom Holland



James Hudley



David Jones



Terry Joe Kee



Warner W. Kirby



Ted Knight



Jim Laws



Bobby Liddell



Carol Mangrum



Dub McClish



J. A. McNutt



Dorothy Mosher



Keith Mosher



David Pharr



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Stanley Ryan



Paul Sain



Arnold Sexton



Roy Sharp



Irene Taylor



Robert R. Taylor



Gilbert Tripp



Lindsey Warren



Thomas Warren



Adolphus Walker



Wade Webster



Sidney White



Eddie Whitten



Racine Wilder



Jack Wilhelm



## WHAT IS ALL THIS TALK ABOUT THE "UNCHURCHED?"

Tyler Young

A word that has been used and overused by many of our brethren is the term "unchurched." The word is frequently used in the preaching and writing of numerous liberal brethren. I am not suggesting that anyone who uses the term "unchurched" is automatically to be considered a false teacher. However, in my observations, I have noticed that the word is used almost exclusively by those among us who are known for teaching or fellowshiping error or, at best, by those who are emitting "uncertain sounds" in their teaching.

I have heard from pulpits and read a great deal in bulletins, periodicals, and books about how we need to focus on teaching the "unchurched" folks the word of God. We are told that the "unchurched" need the gospel. Discussion is made regarding how best to reach the "unchurched," and how we should be concentrating our efforts toward the "unchurched." By this it is meant that we should be focusing our evangelistic energies toward those who are not a part of any church—those not already associated with any particular religious group. These are the "unchurched" souls about whom these brethren are saying we ought to be so concerned. With that point, surely no one would disagree. Those who are not members of a religious body certainly need heaven's soul-saving truth, and no one would deny that we ought to endeavor to teach them the gospel. However, in light of this increasing effort to emphasize reaching the "unchurched," what is noticeably absent is any discussion of teaching the gospel to the "churched"—those already caught up in denominationalism. In light of this growing trend, we want to ask the question: "What about those around us who have been misled into denominational error? Where is the interest and discussion of strategies and programs designed to reach them?" It is apparent that according to the thinking of a good number of brethren we ought not to be as concerned with the "churched" as with the "unchurched." At least one significant reason for this may very well be that **in the mind of many of our brethren, we need not worry so much about those in the denominations because they already have some knowledge of and belief in God, the Bible, and the Christ and, therefore, they may very well be saved.**

Let it be noted that this is not to say that anyone who uses the term "unchurched" is to be charged with holding that we should have no concern for our denominational friends, or that those associated with other religious groups may be in a spiritually safe condition. However, the frequent use of the term and the obvious shift in emphasis toward the "unchurched" seems to reflect, at least in part, a disturbing tendency characteristic of a growing segment of the church: the tendency to think that those affiliated with denomina-

tional churches may be on the road to heaven after all. More and more seekers of the church are becoming increasingly comfortable with the thought that devout, sincere persons in denominational churches may be "Christians." "After all," the thinking goes, "they accept that Jesus is the Son of God, and even if they believe differently than we do, in the end faith in Christ is all that truly matters!"

Thus, with this mindset, emphasis is shifted toward the "unchurched"—those whom, we are told, do not "know" Jesus (as though our denominational friends do "know" him). Again, this preoccupation with emphasizing the "unchurched" is not simply because they may be better prospects, free from prejudice and unindoctrinated with error, but because somehow it is supposed that they need the gospel more than our already-religious neighbors. The "unchurched," in other words, are the ones whom we know for certain are really lost! The implication is that there is not as great a need to teach denominational people "our doctrine" or persuade them to believe "what we believe" as there is to teach those who know nothing about the Son of God because **many do not believe that the "churched"—those in the denominations—are really lost!** A number of things need to be said in this connection.

We need to understand that many of our own people do not realize or do not want to accept the truth that **THOSE CAUGHT UP IN DENOMINATIONALISM ARE JUST AS LOST AND NEED THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL JUST AS MUCH AS THOSE WHO ARE "UNCHURCHED"** (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 7:21-23; Galatians 1:6-9). Salvation is not found merely in having some knowledge of and belief in Christ. Being a sincere, devout member of some religious group that claims to believe in the Bible and the Savior does not make one a Christian. There is only one faith and one body. When a man meets the conditions of salvation and is obedient to the faith revealed in the New Testament, he is added by the Lord to the one church outside of which there is no salvation (Acts 2:37-47; Ephesians 4:1-4; 5:23-27). If a man does not meet the conditions of salvation, then he remains lost in sin outside of the Lord's church.

As plain as the Bible makes this, there is nonetheless an increasing number of brethren who are hesitant to regard all of those outside of the church of Christ as lost in sin. Some who have been members of the church for years do not understand this fundamental Bible truth and they have been rich soil for the false teachers who have been telling us that we are arrogant for daring to think "we're the only ones going to heaven" (as some have rather caustically put it). Thus, they speak of targeting the "unchurched" and little if anything is said about the "churched."

Why not simply talk about it as the Lord did and as all brethren once did, reaching **the lost** with the gospel, reaching those **in the world**, which includes **all** of those outside of Christ's church? Why not? Because

trying to help other people see that they are in error and are not really saved when they may think they are is considered to be far too arrogant a course of action for liberal brethren. Because trying to persuade those of some other faith ("**which is not another**"—Galatians 1:7) that there is only one way and one church is just too narrow. Because in the minds of those who have drifted from the truth, the only ones really in danger are those who do not believe in Jesus. In the light of this widely accepted, unscriptural and dangerous sort of thinking, it needs to be stressed that the lost in need of the gospel includes both the "churched" and the "unchurched."

Now it might be alleged by some that the emphasis on the "unchurched" to the neglect of any mention of denominational people is simply because the former are better prospects: the "unchurched" are likely to be free from the influence of false doctrine and are generally more open-minded toward the truth. This, however, still does not make concentrating only on the "unchurched" an appropriate course. Admittedly, from one point of view, our denominational friends may generally be unfertile soil because they often have been deeply indoctrinated with error which they find difficult to leave behind. We realize that those who remain in false religions do so because they do not want the truth—they are comfortable with believing a lie and, therefore, refuse to be converted (Matthew 13:13–15:2; II Thessalonians 2:10-12; cf. II Timothy 4:3). No one is advocating that we fail to use wisdom and cast precious pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).

However, there is a sense in which our religious neighbors may be our best prospects. Presumably, they already believe that God exists and that Jesus is his Son, and they generally have some degree of respect for the Bible and interest in spiritual things. All of this common ground can prove to be extremely helpful in

teaching them the truth. There may be numerous people in denominational churches who have been led astray (Romans 16:18) and may very well want someone to help direct them to the truth (Jude 22-23). In fact, some of the strongest, most faithful and dedicated members of the kingdom of God in modern times have been men and women who were converted out of denominationalism; they were already "churched" but they needed and wanted the truth. The "Restorers" were "churched" before learning the truth and their efforts centered in large degree on the "churched." Down through the years there have been reports of multitudes of people leaving denominational churches and gladly embracing the truth following debates or similar efforts directed toward exposing error and converting the lost—"churched" or otherwise.

Of course, much of that was back in the days when there was much more conviction for truth, debates were common, and more brethren understood that our denominational friends were lost in error and needed saving as much as the "unchurched!" Lamentably, that is not the case anymore.

We continue to behold before our eyes the increasing apostasy in the brotherhood. Alarming trends among many of our people indicate further drifting away from the truth, and terminology used by those in the liberal camp often betrays deep-seated unscriptural concepts. In light of the unbiblical thinking which is currently widespread among us regarding the condition of those in denominationalism, beware of an undue preoccupation with the "unchurched." May God help us to do all that is within our power to do and to use every opportunity and every right means to do the work he has given us to do: save lost souls—*churched or unchurched!*

—9003 Brookside Avenue  
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## PROPHECIES OR GUESSES — WHICH?

Dan Goddard

**"Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour"** (Jeremiah 23:30). Jeremiah said much in this chapter about false prophets and dreamers. Though this was spoken directly concerning existing conditions in Israel at that time, it without doubt reveals God's attitude toward all such hypocrites and trouble-makers for all time.

In what way did these false prophets steal God's word from Israel?

Jeremiah answers this question in verse 21, **"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied"** (Jeremiah 23:21). Therefore, anyone who speaks a thing in the name of the Lord, which he has not clearly and unmistakably received, is a thief, a religious "guesser."

These religious guessers have descended to the present day. Mr. Miller of the Adventist persuasion "guessed" the world would come to an end in 1843-1844, but it still stands. Christ said he would come the second time. What does the scripture say on this point? **"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only"** (Matthew 24:36). Verse 27 tells us Jesus is

here speaking of **"the coming of the Son of man."** So Mr. Miller was simply "guessing" and so are all the rest, who flatly contradict the Scriptures in setting a date for Christ's second return.

The late **Judge Rutherford** and his followers set 1914 for the Lord's return and the end of the world—just another plain case of "guessing."

**"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD"** (Jeremiah 23:28). We have a lot of "wise-acres" who dream the answers to many prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelations. These fellows are dead certain

they know the answer.

There is one outstanding characteristic about these false teachers—they wholly ignore plain passages that even a child can understand but are able to tell us in “minute detail” the “secret things” that “belong unto the Lord our God” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Their rule is, interpret the “plain passages” by “the secret things that belong unto the Lord our God.” Whereas, every safe Bible teacher will accept every plain passage, and leave all difficult, uncertain ones to the “secret things.”

Mark it down—when anyone launches out into this “guessing” and speculating business, there is no end to what he will do. It is high time the churches of Christ everywhere “...mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Romans 16:17).

Why not follow this teaching, for it will not adhere to any guessing: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for

**the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women” (Acts 8:5,12). To this add the words of Christ: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15,16).**

Without doubt those on Pentecost, in the city of Samaria, and at Corinth were saved. The same thing that saved them will save all who comply with the same things today. This is an infallibly safe course. In “obeying” the gospel, they become members of “the church”—the church of Christ (see Acts 2:47; Romans 16:16). If you, my sinner friend, will do these things you will be a Christian, and if you thereafter “live soberly, righteously, and

godly, in this present world,” you need not worry one minute about the millennium, the remnant of the Jews, the second coming of Christ or any of the other false and destructive doctrines being taught in the land today concerning them. All will be well with your soul in that land that is fairer than day.

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# MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Ron Cosby

How long has it been since you heard a public discussion on the use of mechanical instruments of music in Christian worship? Between the 16th and 20th of January, 1995, Tom Bright of Houston, Texas, met Bob L. Ross of Pasadena, Texas in a religious discussion on this very topic.

Many, if not most, preachers in the church of Christ have heard of Bob L. Ross. Actually, he has debated several gospel preachers on numerous issues. Bob can stand on the polemic platform with preachers of the church on a variety of subjects because he rarely quotes the Bible; he simply reads portions of what our brethren have written (most of which is out of context). Knowing of Ross' maneuvers, Bright predicted in his first affirmative that Ross would teach "Church History 101, 201 and 301." Bright further pointed out that Ross' Church History course would, according to Ross' thinking, "cure everything from sore eyes to sore toes to the national debt." Even after denying he would do so, Ross fulfilled this prophecy by quoting preachers of old and preachers of today, by quoting preachers of Texas and preachers of California. Observed by one and all was Ross' rarity of Bible quotes.

Bright presented his "Campbell Soup" chart, saying that Ross hates the church so much that he probably avoids buying Campbell soup in the market. This evoked laughter even from Ross. Before the second night of the debate, those present could see the validity of Bright's observation.

Time and again, Ross misquoted Bright, misstating his position. Bright calmly and clearly, yet with vigor, set the record straight. One misrepresentation by Ross, however, did evoke a stern correction from Bright. Though knowing otherwise, Ross left the impression that Bright had asserted that the Holy Spirit inspires the composition of psalms *in modern times*. Bright wasted little time showing Mr. Ross' brazen chicanery. Another misrepresenta-

tion by Ross was when he charged Goebel Music with making so much money from his books that he did not have time to talk to Ross on the phone. While holding up Goebel's books, David Brown, Mr. Bright's moderator, informed the audience that Goebel devotes his time to writing, *without any remuneration from book sales*. Ross's dastardly slight became an opportunity of admiration.

Much of the debate centered around the meaning of "psalms," "making melody" and "in the heart" of Ephesians 5:19. Though Ross had no proof, he wanted the audience to believe that "psalms" were limited to "the psalms of David," and that such being so, Christians are commanded to use mechanical instruments in Christian worship. Bright proved from I Corinthians 14:26 that "psalms" could not be restricted to the Psalms of David, showing that the Holy Spirit inspired song writers (of the first century) to compose some of the psalms that were used in worship. Ross' sophistry failed.

Furthermore, Ross wanted us to take his word for it that "making melody" meant "playing a mechanical instrument of music." If so, then God has commanded *each and every* worshipper to play; this rejoinder proved devastating to Ross' position.

However, the various exchanges on the meaning of "in the heart" were the most damaging of all to Bright's opponent. Bright clearly demonstrated that the action of "making melody" called for in Ephesians 5:19 was action confined to the heart. The biblical phrase "in the *kardia*" (in the heart) always means that the activity of the verb is conceived as finding expression in the heart. In Ephesians 5, "making melody" (the action of the verb) finds expression in the

heart. Though Bright presented, in chart form, five passages to prove his definition, every New Testament (20) and every Old Testament (40) passage with this phrase carries the same concept. Time restrained him from showing all sixty verses.

Ross tried to counter with Psalms 98:4-6 and Psalms 138:1, showing that actions of worship must be from the heart. Clearly, as one has said, "God heareth the heart without the mouth, but never heareth the mouth acceptably without the heart" (*Treas.*, Walter Marshall, Psalms 119:58, p. 261). Nevertheless, to do something in the heart *does not* indicate therefore that it is also accomplished without (I Samuel 1:13; Psalms 40:10). It was in this vein that Bright turned Ross' proof texts against him, showing they, as well as Ephesians 5:19, reveal an inward action *and* an outward action. Take note of Psalms 138:1. "I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee." "[W]ith my whole heart" is the inward action, and "before the gods" is the outward. Enough said!

What did Ross present? Quotes from our brethren. In his first affirmative, he flashed on the screen almost thirty charts filled with quotes from preachers. At one point, Bright simply held his copies of Mr. Ross' charts in the air and pointed out what they were. He also, and this had to hurt, disclosed Ross' failure to give Biblical arguments for his practice. Someone might say, "Wait a minute! Mr. Ross presented some other things." Indeed, but when you spend 70% of your time, like Ross, showing charts which tell us what other men have to say, that is about all you have said.

The Spring church of Christ showed a great deal of interest in the debate, though you would think that more of the area congregations would have attended. Millions of religious people live in the Houston area. Where were they? Is there no curiosity? Is there no desire to know? Is there no desire to study the issue? Whoever languished, and for whatever reason, the Spring congregation and her assistants succeeded.

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## Fellowship With Denominations(?)

Jim Olive

[*EDITORIAL NOTE: Under the general heading of "Contemporary Concerns" the Freed-Hardeman University Lectureship this February featured brother Jim Olive, of the Jackson Park Church of Christ, of Nashville, Tennessee, on the specific theme of "Fellowship With Denominations(?)" That part of the auditorium was so packed that it was impossible for everyone to get a seat unless he was willing to sit in the aisles, which also were packed to overflowing.*

*Contending for the Faith has reviewed the audio-recording of everything that brother Olive had to say upon that occasion. It is much too lengthy for us to include it all; however, deeming this to be probably the most significant speech of the 1995 Lectures, we wish to bring as much of it as we have room for to the attention of our readers.—The Editor]*

I do not delight in the fact that it is necessary for us to discuss some of the things that we are going to be talking about today, brother Olive said early on. The topic assigned is "Fellowship With Denominations(?)" with a question mark, indicating, are we as members of the churches of Christ to be involved in open fellowship with denominations—particularly in the area of worship?

It seems that the term "Change Agents" has been used a number of times this week already. If you have not read brother William Woodson's book, entitled, *Change Agents and Churches of Christ*, I suggest that you do that in order to get a firm grasp of what we are talking about. Brother Jack Wilhelm has a new booklet, *Thoughts on Contemporary and Traditional Concepts*, that has been reprinted from the *Gospel Advocate* before it has ever actually been printed in the *Gospel Advocate*, I

think. The first installment was in the January issue; the second one in the February issue—or will be—I'm not sure whether it's out yet or not.

### MANY AREAS ARE INFECTED

The topic before us is one of concern to those of us in the Nashville area and other areas of our country as well, where there are congregations such as the *Community Church* in Hendersonville that advertise in their bulletin a New Year's Eve concert at *First Baptist Church*, in Hendersonville, encouraging their members to attend, making the tickets available in their church office, and when there are examples after examples (some have been mentioned in the Open Forum already) of the situation in Florence, Alabama, recorded in the *Times-Daily* of September 25th, 1993—the bold headline: "Historic Event—Church of Christ, Methodist Church, Hold Joint Meeting." The

article began, "A joint celebration of worship by Magnolia Church of Christ and Northwood United Methodist last Sunday night, is considered a historic occasion, say ministers Joe VanDyke, Church of Christ, and Stanley Clark, Methodist." The Abilene, Texas *Reporter-News* of January 15th, 1994, carried the announcement that the Abilene Association of Congregations would be sponsoring a community-wide worship service the following night at the *First Baptist Church*. The speaker was to be Mike Cope from *Highland Church of Christ*. Max Lucado made it to *Christ United Methodist*, in Memphis, in April, and also to *Two Rivers Baptist*, in Nashville, and, since this was written, to Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro for "The Young Messiah Tour Concert," featuring a number of "contemporary Christian" artists, advertised on the local

(Continued on Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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## Editorial...

### Return To Singing With Our Hearts Unto The Lord As In Days Of Yore Is Sorely Needed Among The Churches

As a child growing up in middle and western Oklahoma, although not realizing it at the time, I was exposed to some of the greatest gospel singing that I can ever recall. Both my father **Ira Y. Rice, Sr.**, and his older brother **John M. Rice** were great singers as well as singing school teachers even before they had been converted from the Baptist Church. As such, they were bosom friends with the likes of Virgil O. and Frank Stamps; in fact, many of those they trained went on to sing with the leading "Stamps Quartets"—the No. 1 quartet singers of their day.

When I moved to the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, at age 20, in January, 1938, it was at one of those thrilling monthly Sunday afternoon gospel "singings" that I first became introduced to the 19 churches of that area. Old brother **J. D. Tant** was still alive—in fact led his favorite song (*Hold to God's Unchanging Hand*) that afternoon at Combes, Texas. I was pointed out to him from across the auditorium as the eldest son of his favorite song leader, my father having led the singing in many of his gospel meetings during some 15 summers in those days. He got up, clumped to the rostrum with that heavy cane of his, introducing me, as such. I felt honored indeed!

#### DRIVING LONG DISTANCES TO GOSPEL SINGINGS

It was nothing in those days for whole carloads of us—young folks and older folks alike—to pile into cars and head out for a Sunday-afternoon "singing" somewhere in "the valley." It might be 40, 50, 60 up to 75 miles; but we'd try to get there in time for "dinner on the ground"—then sing our hearts out all afternoon until time to rush home for Lord's Day evening worship services.

As the years wore on, slowly, slowly we drifted away from such heart-warming experiences; but, my, how spiritually edifying and uplifting they were back in the '20s, '30s and early '40s!

Within the past 12 months two of the most delightful such songfests have taken place in western Tennessee—one at Tiptonville, where **Jerry W. Joseph** now preaches; the other at a country church (Glendale, near Newbern) where **Kevin L. Baird**, another great singer, is the preacher.

#### TODD WALKER HELPS MAKE BOTH MEMORABLE

One thing that both of these "all night singings"

had in common that helped make both of them so thrilling and memorable was the song leadership of brother **Todd Walker**, of Paducah, Kentucky. Not that he was the *only* song leader on either occasion—but his part served as a catalyst, bringing out the best both in the congregational singing and also stimulating the other song leaders to excel themselves in getting the best singing out of their audiences. Starting to sing at 8 p.m., the packed crowds sang until 10 p.m., paused 20 minutes for refreshments, then sang at least until midnight and beyond!

By special invitation, my wife Vada and I drove the more than 100 miles (one way) to participate in both of these events. So impressed were we that I asked brother Walker to help work up a list of such “singings” (at least through the Tennessee and Kentucky areas) so that we might announce them widely through the pages of *Contending for the Faith*. When he mentioned this at Glendale, the response was such that now I am wondering how many such gospel singings there really *are*—brotherhood-wide!

#### SCORES OF SINGINGS CALLED TO OUR ATTENTION

Among the scores of “singings” called to our attention thus far, **Bardwell Church of Christ**, of Route 2, Bardwell, Kentucky 42023 has one the last Friday night of the year.

The annual singing of the **Gardner Church of Christ**, was scheduled for 7:00-9:00, Friday evening, December 30th, 1994. The building is located about one mile west of Martin, Tennessee, on Highway 431 (the old Union City Highway).

The **Haywood County Quarterly Singing** was announced for Sunday, at 2:00 p.m., January 22, 1995, at 1458 E. Main, by the **Brownsville Church of Christ**, of Brownsville, Tennessee (**Kevin Williams**, minister).

In addition to their annual all-night singing, the **Tiptonville Church of Christ** has a monthly singing night the last Wednesday of each month. Their address: 515 Church Street, Tiptonville, Tennessee.

The **Lakeview Church of Christ**, of Samburg, Tennessee, dedicated their 2:30 Sunday afternoon singing, August 21, to brother **Raymon Wallace**.

The **Highway 22 Church of Christ**, in Tiptonville, sang at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, August 28th.

The **15th Annual Gospel Singing** of the **Glendale Church of Christ** (Newbern, Tennessee) was held from 8:00 p.m. until—...the night of July 15th.

The **Ridgely Church of Christ** had their annual singing and preaching till midnight, starting at 8:00 the Friday night of October 21.

In January, the **Riverdale Church of Christ**, of

## Fellowship

(Continued from Page 1)

“contemporary Christian” radio station as “best selling author and radio pastor Max Lucado.”

I suppose one of the events that has received as much attention as any is the “worship service” on April the 10th of last year, at *Woodmont Christian Church*, where **Dr. Rubel Shelly** was the speaker; and then that same month he was at *Christ Church Pentecostal* on April the 13th and again on May the 29th. The tapes of those various assemblies have been fairly widely circulated. They are available from the host congregations. And I would suggest that any person that has any question about those sit down and listen to the tapes and listen to the terminology that is used, listen to the words that are used, listen to what took place, and then decide for yourself. Don't take someone else's word about it.

#### MUST BE WILLING TO STAND

My purpose is not to dedicate my life to trying to keep up with every mistake that everybody is making. You don't stay at a congregation for 24 years

doing that kind of preaching. But if we are to stand for that which is right, and if we are to preach the truth, we must be willing to take a stand when people see families that are being torn asunder, children that are being estranged from their parents, families that are in turmoil and strife, because of these contemporary-type concerns that brother **Wilhelm** writes about in this tract and that we are addressing in this assembly this afternoon.

Now I would say we have an open forum that follows this presentation. I think I'm going to be leaving right afterwards, but I'm sure the floor would be open to anybody that would have anything that they would like to say pertaining to these issues. Our purpose is not to “roast” any particular individual.

Here's what's been happening, in my view, over the last few years in the middle Tennessee area. I believe that the “change agents” have been in effect every so often sending up a trial balloon, and, depending on what reaction there is to that, then later there is another trial balloon, and then there's another one. There are a few organiza-

tions or organisms or institutions through which this is sometimes done. Some of them are print; some of them are other gatherings.

#### WHAT HAPPENS IN DIVERSITY?

Now what happens when a group consisting of United Methodist and Southern Methodist (who, incidentally, don't fellowship each other; that's why there is a Southern Methodist Church), and the Presbyterian Church U.S. and the Presbyterian Church in America (who don't fellowship each other), and a Baptist group and a Methodist group and a Christian Church group AND a congregation identified with churches of Christ gather together to worship, and the Order of Worship says “*the reason we come together is to worship and praise God; what binds us together is greater than the issues that stand between us. We also come to recognize the diversity and celebrate that our separate gifts enhance our individual ministries?*”

Following this particular service, the *Woodmont Hills Bulletin*, of April 13th, 1994, carried this statement: “*All these people were together to affirm the common elements of orthodox Christian*

Murfreesboro, Tennessee, sang January 6th; **Midway Church of Christ**, Highway 49, between Charlotte and Ashland City, Tennessee, sang January 13th; **Birdwell Chapel Church of Christ**, of Portland, Tennessee, January 20th; and the **Jasper Church of Christ**, of Jasper, Tennessee, January 27th.

Five churches had singings during February: **Woodson Chapel Church of Christ**, of Nashville, Tennessee, February 3rd; **Fairlane Church of Christ**, of Shelbyville, Tennessee, February 10th; **Bellevue Church of Christ**, of Nashville, Tennessee, February 17th; **West Branch Church of Christ**, of Harrison, Tennessee, same date; and **East Ridge Church of Christ**, of East Ridge, Tennessee, February 24th.

**SPRING BREAKS OUT WITH SIX SINGINGS IN MARCH**

March began with a singing, March 3rd, at **Blackman Church of Christ**, at Murfreesboro, Tennessee; at **Meads Chapel Church of Christ**, March 10th, at Nashville, Tennessee; at **Highland Heights Church of Christ**, March 17th, at Lebanon, Tennessee; also at **Main Street Church of Christ**, same date, at Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee; at **Concord Road Church of Christ**, March 24th, at Brentwood, Tennessee; and at **Radnor Church of Christ**, March 31st, at Nashville, Tennessee.

Eleven more singings are announced for April:

**Clearview Church of Christ**, April 7, in Sumner County, Tennessee; **Halls Chapel Church of Christ**, same date, in Maury County, Tennessee; **Point Mallard Parkway Church of Christ**, same date, Decatur, Alabama; **Red Bank Church of Christ**, April 14th, Chattanooga, Tennessee; **Burns Springs Church of Christ**, same date, Columbia, Tennessee; **Jackson Park Church of Christ**, April 21, at Nashville, Tennessee; **Spencer Hill Church of Christ**, same date, in Maury County, Tennessee; **Morrison Church of Christ**, April 28th, of Morrison, Tennessee; **Beech Hill Church of Christ**, same date, of Maury County, Tennessee; **Lantana Church of Christ**, same date, of Crossville, Tennessee; and at **Gadsden Church of Christ**, same date, at Gadsden, Alabama.

**SCHEDULES ARE PACKED FOR MAY & JUNE**

**Gilroy Church of Christ**, leads off May 5th, at Antioch, Tennessee, with **Hohenwald Church of Christ**, same date, at Hohenwald, Tennessee; **Vesta Church of Christ**, May 12th, at Lebanon, Tennessee; **Gatlinburg Church of Christ**, Saturday, May 13th, at Gatlinburg, Tennessee; **Arrington Church of Christ**, May 19th, on Nolensville Road, Nashville, Tennessee; **Beech Creek Church of Christ**, same date, in Wayne County, Tennessee; **Trenton Church of Christ**, same date, at Trenton, Georgia; and **Old Jefferson Church of**

*faith to which we are committed. In spite of doctrines and traditions that divide us, we are able to join with Presbyterians, Methodists, Disciples of Christ and Baptists to affirm the resurrection of Jesus Christ and its meaning. The evening was a small but significant step in tearing down old walls of prejudice and misunderstanding. Thank God for such a night.* (End of quote.)

Now the question has to be asked, What are brethren who meet for worship with denominations like we have just described having to do, what are their actions suggesting about their beliefs? In the book, we have suggested several: 1) They have laid down their objections to instrumental music in worship; that's obvious when you hear "*The Brass Ensemble*" at the beginning of the tape. Secondly, they have laid down their objections to denominationalism because of the acceptance of the denominations present and participating. They have laid down their objection to accepting unscriptural ways of claiming to become a Christian.

**OUTPOURING OF GRACE**

Now let us just stop at that point to elaborate just a bit. After this event and

after we had addressed this one time in our bulletin, and there had been some mention of it in the newspaper, a lady called me and was quite distraught. I must say that I have received a tremendous outpouring of grace from some of these people. They have discovered grace, and when you experience it, it's not very much different from what you might experience from somebody from the other side who might attack you.

But we had a discussion about is it possible for an unimmersed person to be a Christian? And she had never really thought about that. And I said, "Well, if you are talking about two Methodist groups and two Presbyterian groups, you are talking about people who have never been immersed. Now, is it possible for a person to be a Christian without being immersed? And, if it is not, then how can you address them as 'brothers' and 'sisters' and identify them as Christians?"

**YOUNG CHRISTIANS IMPACTED NEGATIVELY**

Fourthly, they are impacting harmfully many young Christians who, though individually responsible, are encouraged to compromise with de-

nominalism. Many students, for example, in the Nashville area were greatly affected, in my view, negatively by this experience because they thought that this is something wonderful, isn't it wonderful that we no longer have these differences with our religious neighbors!

They extend the name "Christian" to include denominations which do not practice immersion, which accept infant baptism, embrace and exemplify creeds and confessions of faith and other false beliefs and practices.

**THE "RESTORATION WAY"?**

Sixthly, they have departed from the faith and practices of churches of Christ and have signalled that they cherish the fellowship of denominations more than the fellowship of churches of Christ. [Now, let me elaborate on that just a bit because just before this...] I see that brother Morrison, the Managing Editor of *Wineskins* is here; and he and I had lunch the month before this event transpired; and we talked about whether or not, I think the term that was used, if this is the "restoration way"? Well, it's strange to me that when **Alexander Campbell** came to Nashville and preached at First Baptist Church, when



Christ, May 26th, at Smyrna, Tennessee.

Science Hill Church of Christ, sings June 2, at Murfreesboro, Tennessee; the great Diana Singing, June 9-10, at Diana, Tennessee; Christiana Shed, June 16th, at Christiana, Tennessee; Rivergate Church of Christ, same date, at Nashville, Tennessee; Burnett's Chapel Church of Christ, June 23rd, at Lavergne, Tennessee; Civic Center, same date, Huntsville, Tennessee; VanLeer Church of Christ, June 30th, VanLeer, Tennessee; Riverside Church of Christ, same date, Lewis County, Tennessee.

#### JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER NOT A WHIT BEHIND

11th Street Church of Christ, will sing July 7th, in Nashville, Tennessee; Herren's Chapel Church of Christ, July 14th, at Baxter, Tennessee; Charlotte Street Church of Christ, starting at 6 p.m., Saturday, July 15th, Dickson, Tennessee; Ivy Point Church of Christ, July 21, Goodlettsville, Tennessee; Springs Ridge Church of Christ, same date, Lewis County, Tennessee; Chapel Avenue Church of Christ, July 28th, Nashville, Tennessee; Hermitage Church of Christ, August 4th, Hermitage, Tennessee; Leepers Fork Church of Christ, same date, Franklin, Tennessee; Bridgeport Church of Christ, August 11th, Bridgeport, Alabama; Highland Church of Christ, same date, Columbia, Tennessee; Scottsboro Church of

Christ, August 18th, Scottsboro, Tennessee; Grinders Creek Church of Christ, same date, Lewis County, Tennessee; Charlotte Avenue Church of Christ, August 25th, Nashville, Tennessee.

Central Pike Church of Christ begins the Fall schedule, September 1, at Hermitage, Tennessee; Diana Singing comes in for two more days, September 8-9, at Diana, Tennessee; Cornersville Church of Christ, September 15, at Cornersville, Tennessee; Fairfield Church of Christ, same date, at Centerville, Tennessee; Carthage Church of Christ, September 22nd, Carthage, Tennessee; Hill Town Church of Christ, same date, Maury County, Tennessee; East Ridge Church of Christ, same date, East Ridge, Tennessee; Philippi Church of Christ, September 29th, of Smithville, Tennessee.

#### 22 MORE SINGINGS FINISH 1995

Although we are deeply conscious that scores—possibly 100s—of additional singings are not included in this list, at least we are informed of the following for the final quarter of 1995:

River Road Church of Christ, of Nashville, Tennessee, has one slated for October 6th; Midway Church of Christ, of Highway 53, Manchester, Tennessee, October 13th; South Nashville Singing, of Nashville, Tennessee,

he got through preaching there were only five Baptists left. And when the church reorganized, they wrote into their charter that never again could a person of Alexander Campbell's background ever occupy the pulpit. It's sort of the "creed in the deed" thing. None of us would ever be allowed to preach at First Baptist Church in Nashville. Well, I get from the result that he did not compromise with them or encourage them or build them up where they were...

Now to elaborate a little bit on this point about caring for the fellowship of those in denominations more than fellowship of brethren in churches of Christ, I want to read just a little bit from a speech made at Abilene Christian University at the 12th Annual Restoration Forum by brother Rubel Shelly. It is "A Call to Biblical Action." It's too long for me to read all of it, but I want to...after he has read Romans, the 14th chapter, he makes these statements:

"Because of these appeals from the word of God, there are three Biblical actions that I believe men and women of goodwill within our two groups are

obligated to take..." [Now he is speaking to people from Christian Churches and churches of Christ. These three Biblical actions are deeds of acceptance, reconciliation and unity—those are the three points. JO]

#### SHELLY'S THREE POINTS

"Point No. 1—I believe we must accept one another as brothers beloved of God. Accept one another, pleaded Paul, just as Christ accepted you in order to bring praise to God, Romans 15 and verse 7. We have believed on the same Christ and confessed that faith in the symbolic act of baptism. We have been put into his 'one body,' the church, in that same process. Like it or not, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. That brothers differ from the millennium, work of the Holy Spirit, church organization, instrumental music, having a glass of wine, the role of women in church leadership, and a dozen other issues does not change the fact that they are children of God.

"Secondly, I believe we must not only acknowledge one another to be brothers in Christ, but be reconciled to one another without abandoning or compromising the first-order truths of

the gospel..." [Now, you probably didn't know that there are first-order truths, second-order truths, and third-order truths of the gospel. Now, the reason you may not know that is because it isn't in the New Testament, but you've got to understand the terminology here. JO] "...The first-order truths are issues that relate directly to the meaning of Christ and his atoning death. We must stop labeling as apostate and withholding or withdrawing fellowship over second-, i.e. discipleship issues such as drinking wine, versus teetotaling, and third-order, i.e., group distinctives such as instrumental versus acappella music. This means that people on both sides of these issues who have judged and condemned each other whether from a legalistic or superiority posture must repent of their past behaviors, be willing to admit they are wrong and consciously undertake a more Christ-like treatment of others. We are free to hold and practice our points of view, but we are not free to judge one another any longer.

"Third, I believe we must begin to practice unity within our long-fractured fellowship. My appeal here is not for



October 20th; **Florence Church of Christ**, on Old Nashville Highway, Murfreesboro, Tennessee; October 27th; also **Crieve Hall Church of Christ**, of Nashville, Tennessee, same date.

On November 3rd, **Mars Hill Church of Christ**, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee; November 10th, **Eastside Church of Christ**, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee; November 17th, **Baxter Church of Christ**, Baxter, Tennessee; same date, **Bethel Church of Christ**, Joelton, Tennessee; same date, **Fort Oglethorpe Church of Christ**, of Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; Thanksgiving Eve, November 23rd, **Stewarts Creek Church of Christ**, Smyrna, Tennessee; same date, **Western Hills Church of Christ**, 6705 Charlotte Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee; and November 24th, **James Avenue Church of Christ**, Nashville, Tennessee.

Then, as always, December closes with a whole spate of gospel singings. December 1st, **East Main Street Church of Christ**, of Manchester, Tennessee; December 2nd (Saturday), **Sevierville Church of Christ**, of Sevierville, Tennessee; December 8th, **New Spring Creek Church of Christ**, of Bon Aqua, Tennessee; December 15th, **2nd Street Church of Christ**, of Pulaski, Tennessee; December 29th, **Waverly Church of Christ**,

of Waverly, Tennessee; December 31, **Herren's Chapel Church of Christ**, of Baxter, Tennessee; same date, **Grant Church of Christ**, of Grant, Alabama; same date, **Farmington Church of Christ**, of Farmington, Tennessee; and, same date, **Pulaski Street Church of Christ**, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee.

#### OTHERS' HELP SOUGHT TO FILL OUT LIST

Although the foregoing list of gospel singings turned in by quite a number of kindred spirits in Christ clearly is a good beginning, it is our hope that, with the help of others, we can fill out the list to include many additional states as well. These are all that have been turned in thus far.

Even with *this* list, enough new singers should be attracted to these singings for us to "make the welkin ring" all over this land and country. Manifestly, it will be impossible for any one of us to attend them all; however, as for me and mine, we hope to include as many as possible. Those "all nighters" may prove a bit much for some of our age; but even those we have participated in during the past 12 months have added a new dimension of great spiritual uplift and enjoyment to our lives already.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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*organizational unity but for mutual respect and understanding. We can converse, worship, pray and minister together. We can encourage one another. We can practice hospitality. With our common commitment to congregational autonomy, no one could even propose any meaningful form of organizational unity for us to adopt. For people who have watched these Restoration Forums with a fear that we are trying to create such an organizational unity, let those fears forever cease. Now listen very carefully. I am pleading for nothing more than the sort of unity one church of Christ (non-instrumental) has with another church of Christ (non-instrumental), nothing more than what one Independent Christian Church has with another Independent Christian Church. Frankly, the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ has more in common with the Donelson Church of Christ, in Nashville, than with the Jackson Park Church of Christ, in the same city. I mean no more disrespect by telling you that than by telling you that the Highland Church of Christ, in Abilene, has more in common with the Preston Road Church of Christ, in Dallas, than with the First Christian Church, of Nashville. Yet, in terms of actual shared*

*experience, the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ has more in common with First Christian Church, of Nashville, than with Jackson Park...* [Now that really makes us feel good. The thing is, we all knew that; we just didn't know that it would ever be in print! JO] "...Just as congregations within the framework of our two brotherhoods have greater or lesser fellowship with each other, so may congregations across those boundaries have greater or lesser fellowship with each other. We need not reject God-given opportunities for fellowship for fear of some schismatic brother or paper that might attack us for accepting them..."

Now, I don't imagine who he could be talking about there as being "a schismatic brother or paper that might attack us for accepting them," but the point in it is obvious that those who are openly seeking fellowship with denominations covet that relationship more than they covet the relationship with their own brethren, because in those tapes there is constant derision made toward churches of Christ, toward the practice of singing without instrumental accompaniment; there is a constant belittling of what we have taught as being the important issues pertaining

to how a person becomes a Christian. To make a joke about instrumental music is not to teach against it.

#### IF SINFUL IN 1985, WHAT ABOUT NOW?

And I want to quote here from a Forum (I don't think this is in the book either) from a Forum that was held here at Freed-Hardeman in October of 1985. Now, we are not going 'way back to the '70s here. The question was presented, will you affirm, *Resolved, the Scriptures teach the use of instrumental music in worship is sinful?* Answer (by Rubel Shelly): "I would so affirm, Paul; I have in the past; the debate's in print; I would affirm it today; and I expect to affirm it tomorrow."

**Question:** I'd like to ask Rubel how he can show consistency in not mounting the pulpit and opposing to bring an end to the instrument in a local congregation? And yet he mounted the pulpit and opposed Dunning in using instrumental music.

**Answer:** "I would not feel justified in having a conviction of personal conscience about the matter if in fact I did not share Alan Highers' belief that instrumental music violates the teaching

of the word of God. I do believe that it does."

But the statement as made in the book simply says that if a church and its elders decided that they were going to do that or, for that matter, they were going to drop church support of orphan homes, or whatever, "I would not mount the pulpit and challenge and presume to take over the right of leadership of that congregation from those elders or its members because you can be divisive with the truth. So, no, I would not force myself into a pulpit..." [Listen very carefully, JO] "...I would request permission to speak and speak precisely on the issue. I would state my convictions and try to convince them..."

#### OPPOSE IT—BUT NOT DIVISIVELY

After stating he would have no part in repudiating the authority of elders to oversee the church, he observes, "I wouldn't do that; but if I were given permission, if I were given lead, if I were allowed, I would oppose it as firmly, and faithfully, and biblically as any of you would; but I would not do it in a divisive way, because you can be a heretic in the truth and be divisive with what's right just as you can be with something that's in error."

Now one of our brotherhood editors sent me a nine-page letter the other day. I'm glad I'm not easily insulted, because for more than four pages he was explaining to me what the gospel is. This is one thing that amazes me is that none of us know anything about grace, none of us have ever heard about grace, evidently we've never sung "Amazing Grace," we've never been exposed to the teaching about grace. So, the first thing that has to be done in order to communicate with us is to explain to us what the gospel is—the gospel of grace. But then most of the rest of the letter dealt with things like the issue of congregational autonomy; but it also dealt with the fact that it is a matter of judgment—it's a "judgment call"—to have a worship assembly where instrumental music is used and you do not address that topic. But in 1985, here on this campus, brother Shelly affirmed strongly that he believed that it was "sinful" and that if he were given the opportunity to speak where it is being used he would speak against it.

Now, you will look for a long time, and in vain, for any reference along that line at any of these worship assemblies. As I say, when the topic is brought up, it's brought up in a light-hearted, joking fashion to make fun of

the practice of churches of Christ. As a matter of fact, when, on one occasion, the statement is made, "I want everybody to know I was singing acappella while you were singing with an instrument," I don't know exactly how that could be done, but I do know that the result was that everybody had a real good laugh about it. Now, is that the "restoration way"?

Moses E. Laird—now I know you think it's Laird, but those who knew him tell me it was Laird—was asked the question, *Do the unimmersed commune?* He replied in his quarterly of 1863—a portion of his reply, and incidentally it was many pages long—but a portion of his reply was that *belief in Christ, a fixed purpose to forsake sin, and the immersion of the body in water to constitute a man a Christian [was] always, everywhere necessary...* He said there are *no Christians who have not had a fixed purpose to forsake sin and have not been immersed in water—that the kingdom or church is something wholly distinct from the world, that between them exists a line deep, legible and ineffaceable—that from the world into the kingdom a man cannot pass except by a birth of water and spirit—and that without this birth he is not a Christian.* Thirdly, that *the institution called the Lord's Supper exists wholly within the kingdom and in no sense nor in any part out of it.*

Now it would be interesting, even though I didn't have time to go into this entire speech that was made in Abilene, but it would be interesting to pursue the whole issue of observance of the Lord's Supper, since Woodmont Hills is now meeting in the meeting house belonging to First Christian Church—and one group uses it part of the time and one group uses it the rest of the time. If all of this doesn't matter, couldn't we save time if everybody just met at the same time? What is the point, if there is no difference...?

#### COMPROMISING COMPACTS DISHONOR GOD

The disciples of Christ cannot afford to enter into any sort of compact or connection with denominations that will recognize them as being all right in their names, their claims and practices without imposing upon and dishonoring in some measure the word of God, which does not name or recognize any of them as such.

That they all teach and practice some things that *are* in the Bible, I presume no one will deny; but that they all teach

and practice some things that are *not* in the Bible is equally certain. This being true, disciples of Christ cannot make an indiscriminate compact with them in anything that will recognize them as all right when they do not believe they are.

But we cannot see how good can result from a union—a union meeting—that ignores all differences and thus blots out the line between truth and error. Christians must be frank and conscientious before God in all things; and when they really think others are wrong in any matter involving the plain word of God, they ought to say so, and enter into no compact that will silently ignore errors and act as if they are not errors and thus involve themselves in the errors of others by publicly recognizing them as right in the sight of God and men.

But let them, without hatred or bitterness or prejudice, investigate the word of God regarding them with the understanding also upon the part of the disciples that if in the investigations they find that they hold any errors, they will give them up. We suppose it would be difficult to get up such a union prayer meeting as this. We've never known such a one, and yet we're willing to enter not another kind.

#### "CHILD-STATUS" IN 1986— AND NOW!

Brother Shelly said, in 1986, "All who accept that faith will be baptized into Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection as an act of further identification with it" (*I Just Want to be a Christian*, Nashville, TN, *20th Century Christian*, 1986). He further stated on page 109, "One who denies any element of the faith (i.e., the gospel message of redemption through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ) has turned back from the truth and are (sic) walking in the footsteps of those whom John rebukes in his three epistles. One who has not received the one baptism has not yet been born into the family of God and has no child-status with God which permits brotherhood and fellowship. In fact, one who has not received the one baptism has neither been admitted to the one body of Christ nor been made a partaker of the living hope believers have through the resurrection of Jesus."

Now what does that mean? It means that in 1994 this man was worshipping with and identifying as "brothers" and "sisters" people who in 1986, he said, did not have "child-status" with God. Now the plan of salvation has not

changed. What it takes to make a person a Christian has not changed. And it will not change. It doesn't make any difference what any group of people decide about the matter, the Bible is still going to teach the same thing.

### **SOUTHERN VIRGINIA/EASTERN TENNESSEE CHURCHES REPUDIATE "JUBILEE"**

Later last year... brother Shelly was to speak at a Christian Church/Church of Christ gathering in Johnson City... What happened was there was quite a bit of advertising about this unity meeting. So, many congregations of the churches of Christ in southern Virginia and eastern Tennessee took out an ad in the newspaper in which they endorsed the letter that had been written by the Trinity Lane congregation in Nashville pertaining to the status of whether or not they would support the "Nashville Jubilee" because of the fact that Woodmont Hills was the sponsoring church. I was tempted to really go off on a tangent here in this speech because he puts in his conclusion [that] the "*Christian Jubilee*" and the "*North American Christian Convention*" [are] in the *same category*, and I thought that was an interesting point there. But these congregations said, "*We do not fellowship this. We do not extend—this is not 'us,' this is not a part of the churches of Christ of this area.*"

Now is it proper for congregations to do that? That question came up. I believe that it is. If we have congregational autonomy, and if we can *extend* our fellowship, as was said yesterday, if we can extend our fellowship through making a contribution to or through announcing or through adding a blessing to—whatever way you want to put it—we can also *refrain* from doing that. And sometimes it is important for congregations to be willing to make a definite statement, as many congregations in the middle Tennessee area did last year.

### **SCRIPTURES ARE CLEAR**

Now the Scriptures are very clear and there are a number of them that are listed... Matthew 7:15-16; Acts 20:29-31; Ephesians 4:14-15; Ephesians 5:11; I John 4:1; Philippians 1:17; and I would especially emphasize II John 9-11, "**Whoso 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.**"

Now I'm using that verse the way we always used it. I'm not using it in the context of the "new hermeneutic" that has to go through a long explanation about how it doesn't mean what it says. It means exactly what it says, and it says what it means, and it says it is wrong for congregations of the church to extend our support, our blessing, our encouragement and our fellowship to error; and the fact that we do it does not make the error right.

### **OLIVE SUGGESTS FOUR THINGS**

Now what do we need to do, since this is the situation? I want to suggest four things (I don't think this is in your book):

First, we must positively teach the truth about the New Testament church and clearly distinguish her from the denominations. Whenever one writer refers to the church as "*a small segment of the body of Christ*," he is not talking about the same thing we are talking about. The church is not "*a small segment of the universal body of Christ*;" the church *is* the body of Christ and any person who is not a part of it is not *in* the body of Christ.

Secondly, we must stop patronizing publishers and printers who endorse and support the new teachings of the "church changers." Now, what does that mean? It means that a publisher has a right to decide whether he wants to rent a space at "Jubilee" in order to sell his wares. And it also means that I have a right to stop doing business with him if he does. It means that a publisher can publish a magazine like *Image* if he wants to; but it also means that I can not buy his song book if I don't want to, because I do not want to support our own destruction.

It means that we must stop thinking in terms of supporting schools that are no longer taking a strong stand for the truth and no longer properly training our young people in the way they should go; and we should, No. 1, stop sending our money, and, No. 2, stop sending our students to places that will not teach the truth. And, in that regard, I want to say, that we should *commend* Freed-Hardeman University for, No. 1,

choosing this topic at this time because of its timeliness, and, No. 2, for allowing this presentation to be made. I do not expect to have to fill my calendar with invitations to other campuses to talk about this particular issue. I have set aside no other hour for that purpose at any time.

Fourthly, we must emphatically teach and practice II John 9-11. We must be willing to stand by it. We must recognize that what we have been taught is the truth. We must abide by it. Elders must take the lead.

### **START IN LOCAL CONGREGATIONS**

Now let me explain to you how things happened in the Southern Baptist Convention. In the Southern Baptist Convention, the conservatives did not get things back where they wanted them by starting at the top. They started in the local congregations. And if you start getting the local congregation in order, and elders stop supporting that which is wrong and start supporting only that which is right, and enough preachers start losing their jobs, it's amazing how that gets their attention. Enough preachers start losing their jobs and enough people start losing financial support, somehow the point gets through.

When elders say, we are no longer going to support this work because of the ties that we see between this work and something else that is being done, this is not advocating being suspicious of everybody; this is not saying that if some person ever went somewhere at any point in his life, you should never have anything to do with him again, that's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is, be vigilant, be watchful, because the adversary is very much alive, and we need to stand where we have always stood in a preparation for the defense of the gospel.

I want to say that I appreciate the fact that the lectureship committee was willing for this lecture to be presented. I hope you do, as well. I thank you for your attention; and may God bless us in doing what he would have us do.

—4111 Gallatin Road  
Nashville, Tennessee 37216-2109

### **Do Dozier, Lewis, Dodd and Tippens Accurately Represent Church?**

*It is our view of Frances Meeker, Religion Editor for the Nashville Banner, of Nashville, Tennessee, that in writing concerning the churches of Christ, she is a conscientious reporter and always strives to be accurate. Such cannot be said of some of her sources, who, in fact, misrepresent us.*

*In the January 31, 1995 issue of the Banner, she reviewed briefly two recent books by writers connected with the church—*

*one from Madison, Tennessee; three from Abilene, Texas. Please now read what she had to say in her article, photo-reproduced at top-center of next page—then what Elder/Minister Lloyd Gale, of Lebanon, Tennessee has to say immediately following—and decide for yourself if writers Dozier, Lewis, Dodd and Tippens accurately represented the church as you know it.—The Editor*

# Books probe problems for Churches of Christ

"What is the most boring thing to you?" the host of the popular television game show, *Family Feud*, asked a television audience recently. The most frequently given answer was "church."

Forty-five percent of all teenagers raised in Churches of Christ end their affiliation sometime after high school graduation.

These two alarming facts are addressed in two new books written by Church of Christ writers:

■ *Come Let Us Adore Him* (College Press Publishing Co., \$19.95) by Dan Dozier, associate minister of Madison Church of Christ in Madison.

■ *The Gospel According to Generation X: The Culture of Adolescent Faith* (Abilene Christian University Press, \$14.95) by Abilene faculty David K. Lewis, associate professor of Bible and ministry and director of the Center for Adolescent Studies; Charley H. Dodd, dean of the Graduate School; and Darryl L. Tippens, director of graduate studies in English.

In his book, Dozier addresses the swell of controversy among churches of all faiths concerning



**RELIGION**  
Frances Meeker

the styles of worship, including contemporary vs. traditional format, old vs. new songs, and emotional or celebrative vs. reverent atmosphere.

Regarding the Churches of Christ, Dozier says that due to Alexander Campbell's views, many people in the Restoration Movement have been suspicious of the nonrational and emotional aspects of religion.

"Campbell talked about the need for a personal relationship with Jesus as the Son of God," Dozier says. "However, it was said of him that he had a religion that trusted more in the reasons of his head than in the reasons of his heart."

Dozier says that the lack of emphasis on emotion or "spirit" in Church of Christ worship has left a deep emotional void in the hearts of many people.

He suggests the acceptability in the worship service of expressions such as "Lord, have mercy" and "Thanks be to God" as well as the uplifting of hands.

The book on Generation X is based on a survey of more than 4,000 teens and youth in Churches of Christ throughout the United States. The authors asked respondents to answer a detailed battery of questions about personal spiritual attitudes, beliefs and practices, as well as to provide their perceptions of the importance of various traditional and non-traditional beliefs related to Churches of Christ.

"One of the most startling things we found out was that about 45 percent of teens are ending affiliation with Churches of Christ after high school graduation," said Darryl Tippens. "That means that if you take an adult Sunday School class of, say, 20 families, almost half of their kids won't be going to a Church of Christ after they leave home, and not all of these kids are re-affiliating with some other Christian fellowship — many of them are leaving Christianity altogether."

—Nashville Banner  
Nashville, Tennessee

[NOTE: Above article appeared in January 31, 1995 edition of the *Nashville Banner*—reprinted by permission.]

## Books Probe Problems For Churches of Christ

Lloyd Gale

This is the title of an article written by Frances Meeker in her January 31, 1995 Religion column in the *Nashville Banner*. This article makes reference to a book written by Dan Dozier, Associate Minister of Madison Church of Christ, entitled, "*COME LET US ADORE HIM*," as well as a book written by David K. Lewis, Charley H. Dodd and Darryl L. Tippens of Abilene Christian University, entitled, *THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GENERATION X: THE CULTURE OF ADOLESCENT FAITH*.

Frances Meeker observes that "Dozier addresses the swell of controversy concerning the styles of worship including contemporary vs. traditional format, old vs. new songs, and emotional or celebrative vs. reverent atmosphere."

### "SWELL OF CONTROVERSY"?

First of all there is no "swell of controversy concerning the styles of

worship" in congregations where there is strong Biblical preaching and faithful, knowledgeable leadership.

Throughout the years new songs that are scriptural in their message, have been welcome additions to the old, tried, and much loved ones. What some large, liberal congregations may be experiencing is a crop of the foolish seed they sowed by establishing the unauthorized position of "youth director." They themselves have created two separate groups within the church which have been segregated by both worship and activities. This is not God's pattern.

Such is typical of liberals who *cause* a problem with their foolishness and then *wonder what happened!* How can they blame the results on sound and faithful brethren? Why don't they ask themselves, "Why in many generations past has this *not* been a problem? Why has this *just now* emerged? What have we done in the recent past that has

caused this 'swell of controversy'?"

### MANY "YOUTH DIRECTORS" ARE UNBELIEVERS

I wonder if those liberals are aware of another recent survey among "youth directors" who do not believe that we must be a member of the church purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ to be saved?

Many believe and no doubt teach that there are many "faiths" or "traditions" that God accepts. Many unsuspecting parents have entrusted their children to "youth directors" who do not know the truth, do not believe the truth, and who do not teach the truth.

Perhaps the liberals would have us "revisit" the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. Do we not see that Abel was nothing but an unemotional traditionalist? It was Cain who was the "enlightened" one. His worship was one of "celebration" and "emotion," not a cold legalistic ritual. Cain was, after all,

contemporary and not bound by ossified tradition.

Cain was the one who had the courage to "break out" of tradition and to exercise his free will. He would not allow his religious creativity to be stifled. Can anyone blame him for being angry with his brother Abel? Was it not Abel's fault for the division and animosity that developed? This is the convoluted logic of liberalism.

#### NONRATIONAL, EMOTIONAL ASPECTS

Again Frances Meeker quotes: "Dozier says that due to Alexander Campbell's views, many people in the Restoration movement have been suspicious of the nonrational and emotional aspects of religion."

I must plead guilty to being suspicious of the nonrational and emotional aspect of religion but not because of anything Alexander Campbell did or did not believe. My rejection of nonrational and emotional religion is based upon the clear, simple teaching of God's word. I am reassured by the fact that not only Alexander Campbell, but a great host of knowledgeable and faithful men and women of God, believe the same thing.

Jesus taught: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Truth is an objective absolute. God expects his people to know and hold in common the truth. God's people are commanded to 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). Jesus prayed for unity of faith (John 17:20-21).

#### TRUE, BIBLICAL FAITH

The apostle Paul wrote to God's people: " whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). In Romans 10:17 Paul by inspiration stated: "So then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." God tells us what faith is in Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith therefore is *rational* for it is based upon "substance" and "evidence." There is nothing *irrational* about *true Biblical faith*.

Denominationalism is based upon that which is nonrational and purely emotional. How many deceived by denominationalism have patted their breast and declared assurance of their salvation based, not upon God's word, but upon feelings or emotions?

Better-felt-than-told religion has been around for many years. It is a sad day

when those who are supposed to be preachers and teachers of God's word are so *uninformed* or *misinformed* as to teach that God's people should be *nonrational* and *emotional*.

#### THE WORD "RATIONAL" DEFINED

The word "rational" is defined as: Possessing the faculty of reasoning. Having full possession of one's mental faculty, sane. Conformable to reason: sensible. Attained by reasoning (*Funk & Wagnalls Standard Encyclopedic Dictionary*.)

Nonrational religion would be the exact opposite. *Not* possessing the faculty of reasoning. *Not* conformable to reason, *Not* judicious. *Not* sensible. *Not* obtained by reasoning.

Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Hebrews 5:14: "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Paul wrote to the church in Rome these words: "I beseech you brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

#### LIVES BASED ON REASON

Our lives in service to God, in obedience to God and in sacrifice to God are predicated on *reason*. When the first gospel sermon was preached the apostles presented facts and logic. Evidence was provided to produce the faith that caused those present to be convinced that Jesus is the Messiah and to be convicted of their sins.

The scripture says, "When they heard this" (not when they *experienced* this or *felt* this), they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

If they would have rolled on the ground, waved their arms above their head or shouted, "praise the Lord," it would have nothing to do with their salvation or the salvation of anyone else. I have no doubt that their emotions were touched because they asked what to do, were told what to do, and many of them did what God commanded (Acts 2:36-47).

#### HEAD-REASON VS.

#### HEART-REASON

"Campbell talked about the need for a personal relationship with Jesus as the Son of God," Dozier says: "However, it was said of him that he had a religion that trusted more in the reasons

of the head than in the reasons of the heart."

How very unfair to quote some detractor of Alexander Campbell with such twisting of the truth. My understanding of Campbell's belief is that he believed in God's word rather than human subjectivism. Campbell understood denominationalism far better than Dan Dozier because Campbell extricated himself from the muck and mire of it.

Perhaps the learned Dozier will explain the difference between the "reasons of the head" and "the reasons of the heart."

How exactly does the heart reason? How does this differ from the reason of the head? Is reason sometimes reasonable and at other times unreasonable? Would the reason of the head be in conflict with the reason of the heart and if so which should be believed? I do believe these are reasonable questions.

#### IS DOZIER'S APPRAISAL ACCURATE?

Do we note a bit of a sectarian view of God's people as he refers to Church of Christ worship? Is he suggesting that some sects have a better view and understanding of acceptable worship than those purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ? Is he advocating that we learn from the Pentecostals or some other false religious group? Perhaps, Dozier needs to go back to those things that were written before for our learning (Romans 15:4). He needs to see what happened to God's people in times past when they desired to be like the nations around them.

Does not Dozier know the difference between "spirit" and "emotion?" One may be highly emotional and not one bit spiritual. Again, we observe Dozier is more influenced by denominational fantasy than by scriptural truth. Is Dan suffering from spiritual malnutrition?

#### ON WHAT BASIS CONCLUSIONS REACHED?

How does Dan Dozier conclude that there is a "deep emotional void in the hearts of many people?" When he here speaks of the heart is he talking about the organ that pumps blood through the system or the mind that reasons, thinks and feels? How does he know the hearts, minds of "many people?" Is this pure conjecture or does he have some empirical studies? Should we reason that his assumption is reasonable and if so should we use our minds or our hearts? Would the results be the same or would they be different and which one should we believe?



Then I wonder if Dan Dozier is speaking from his own personal experience where he worships and serves as the associate preacher to Steve Flatt? Since the Madison Church of Christ is not certain whether or not the kingdom has come, this may have left an emotional void. Maybe the desire for contemporary worship is due in part to the fact that Madison may no longer sing in good conscience "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord," "The Kingdom is Spreading," "He's My King" and such like. Or can it be that when Madison built their playhouse, organized teams, went into the recreation and entertainment business that the emphasis shifted from the spiritual to the material leaving a spiritual void?

Many faithful congregations may be surprised to learn from Dan Dozier that they have a "deep emotional void." They believe that they have been worshipping "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). They believe that their worship is conducted decently and orderly (I Corinthians 14:40). They have not realized until now that this deep emotional void existed.

#### WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

Dozier, however, has the answer for those congregations with deep spiritual voids. He suggests the acceptability in the worship service of experiences such as "Lord, have mercy" and "Thanks be to God" as well as the "uplifting of the hands." Dan gets a little conservative here and for the present leaves out

rolling in the aisles, the tossing up of babies, jumping up and down, and other verbal expressions. It is no doubt a beginning to spirituality. Later, perhaps, we may have a Holy Ghost tongue-speaking, and a real explosion of "spirituality."

When a congregation with as many members as Madison goes along with the false doctrines of Steve Flatt and Dan Dozier without a whimper or protest, it is much later than most imagine. There is a cure. It is the pure word of God. It has the power of salvation (Romans 1:16).

—Elder/Minister  
Powell Grove Church of Christ  
1186 Martha Leeville Road  
Lebanon, Tennessee 37087

## Do We Want The Gospel As The Apostles Preached It?

Dan Goddard

When people leave "the precepts and commandments of men" and come to the Bible, and take only what the Bible says, all confusion and division ceases and they can easily see the truth. The Bible does not contradict itself. It says the same thing to everyone. It does not tell one man to do one thing and another man something else. There is but one gospel, which is God's power to save, and the way to obey the gospel and be saved is set forth very plainly by the preaching of the apostles.

The preaching of the apostles, as it is presented to us in the Bible, shows very clearly and plainly what men must do to be saved. The cases of conversion that occurred under their preaching embrace all classes of people in every condition and circumstance of life, and are recorded as examples for all until the end of time. Every case of conversion began with preaching the gospel and ended with all those who believed repenting of sins and upon making the great confession being baptized into Christ.

Preaching the gospel the way the apostles did will counter the doctrinal theories, "the precepts and commandments of men," the confusion and obscurity that has so clouded the plain teaching of Christ.

#### FAITH ONLY

For instance, one denominational doctrine is that people are saved by "faith only." They are exhorted to accept Christ as their personal Savior by a mere assent of the mind, by holding up their hands, or by signing a card, without

paying attention to what Christ says. The scriptures make it very plain that a mere assent of the mind is not the faith that obeys. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [him], lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42,43). They believed that he was the Christ but for an unholy reason would not confess him. Also read James 2:14-26. The denominational doctrinal theory is that a man is saved by "faith only." The foregoing scripture says, "not by faith only." A man is saved by faith when it is a genuine faith that obeys.

When a preacher, preaching a man-originated doctrinal theory begs people to come up to what is called an "altar" and to fall down and give their hearts to Jesus, or when, over the radio, he begs them to fall down right where they are and give their hearts to Jesus, and assures them that if they will do so, they will be saved, he thus ignores the preaching of the apostles. Under their preaching they regarded no one as saved until he obeyed what Jesus commands every creature who believes to do. The apostles' preaching, without an exception, always ended in all who believed being baptized.

#### HOW DOES THE SPIRIT SPEAK?

Another man-originated doctrinal theory is that the Spirit comes down straight from heaven to the sinner and speaks to his soul, giving him "a sense of sins forgiven" and causing him to

"know" that he is saved. And all this without the sinner hearing the gospel preached, as Jesus commanded his apostles to preach it.

I do not doubt the sincerity or the honesty of those who get caught up in "experience meetings" and testify that they had such and such an "experience." I point out only the obvious truth that the Spirit of God had nothing to do with such an "experience," but that the Spirit, speaking through inspired men of the Bible, repudiates the whole matter.

Psychologists fully understand the "experience" to which people testify. There is nothing mystic or mysterious about it. It is a psychological reaction brought on by a certain state of mind that is produced by the denominational doctrinal theory under which the mind labors. No one ever had such an "experience" until he first heard the doctrinal theory that causes it. No person in New Testament times, of all those who were ever saved under the preaching of the apostles, ever had such an "experience."

#### WOULD SPIRIT CONTRADICT SELF?

Could it be possible that the Holy Spirit would communicate with anyone, other than what he says in the Bible, and contradict himself by saying something different from what the Bible says? He is the *author* of the Bible. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21). "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto

themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (I Peter 1:12). The Bible is our infallible, perfect guide.

Are men so short-sighted and presumptuous as to imagine that the Holy Spirit would come to them in an "experience," sometimes described as "better felt than told," and communicate to them a "sense of sins forgiven" or cause

them to "know" that they are saved, while they ignore, or for any reason fail to do what the Spirit himself guided the apostles to tell people to do to be saved?

**"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**

Would the Spirit speak outside the Bible to any man and contradict himself by causing him to "know" that he is saved without repenting and being

baptized?

To believe such a thing a man would have to ignore the word of God. If the Spirit talks, outside of the Bible, to anyone, how could the Bible be our complete and perfect guide? The "experience" is a fallacy, built upon a psychological reaction. The Holy Spirit is *not* its author.

Give me the gospel the way the apostles preached it.

—1400 Troy Road  
Collinsville, Illinois 62234

## SOME HISTORY IN REVIEW

Wayne Coats

The Disciples of Christ met together in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, from Monday, October 11, through Tuesday, October 19, 1909 for their **International Centennial Celebration and Convention**. A little handbook was printed in 1909 which describes all of those daily events. It consists of 207 pages and is most revealing.

The booklet states, "It has been thought that this religious movement in behalf of a United Church should properly date its origin from the publication of the 'Declaration and Address,' which occurred at Washington, Penn., Sept. 7, 1809." I suppose if a person wants to be a member of a movement, it would make no difference when the movement started or by whom. Several of our broad-minded brethren are repeating the Disciples of Christ jargon about the "American Born Movement." They prefer to follow a movement instead of the Master.

The fever from innovations had reached a new high as reported by **J. H. Garrison**, the "Chairman of the Centennial Campaign Committee." The American Christian Missionary Society had been operating since 1849. The Disciples Board of Church Extension began in 1888. The Christian Women's Board of Missions began October 22, 1874. The Foreign National Benevolent Association was organized by a group of leading women. The Ministerial Relief was organized at the National Convention in Dallas, Texas, October 1895.

### HOW CONVENTION PROGRESSED

With all the societies, associations, boards and delegates, in addition to those at large, the Convention planned for 50,000 people to be present. Daily sessions were held in the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian

churches. There was an admixture of women speakers during some of the sessions. The solo was popular, being rendered by both men and women, as was true of the many chorus presentations. The "National Advisory Council" enjoyed a "Concert and Song Service, assisted by Third Regiment Band of Kansas City."

At some of the night services a Fraternal Delegate would be present. Those delegates consisted of a "Baptist Fraternal Delegate," a "Congregational Fraternal Delegate," a "Presbyterian Fraternal Delegate," a "United Presbyterian Fraternal Delegate," and a "Methodist Fraternal Delegate."

That Convention was one more rollicking affair. It surpassed by far the "Disciples of Christ Jubilee" which had been held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1899. That is another chapter for sure. (Some

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brethren are marvelous copy cats.)

There were five speeches titled, "Isaac Errett's Contribution to the Movement." Those who lived with, worked with and supported Isaac Errett surely knew what the man was doing for the liberal, digressive Disciples Church. In his recent book, "Will the Cycle Be Unbroken," Doug Foster of Abilene University, actually attempts to picture Errett as a sort of sweet peacemaking mediator. Foster asserts that Errett put forth, "...intense efforts to mediate between the contending groups and to prevent the split that was finally realized in the 1890's." (If brother Foster would exert as much concern in *writing* history as he does in *re-writing* it, his efforts would be somewhat more credible.)

#### MCGARVEY'S HOBNOBBING

In that great convention, J. W. McGarvey delivered a twenty minute speech in the First Presbyterian Church. Why he thought he could hobnob with the liberals and do any good is puzzling indeed. Later when the liberal element kicked J. W. McGarvey out of the College of the Bible, he whined about the matter.

We have any number of brethren who, "look this way and that," like Moses (Exodus 2:12). When they decide upon a winner, and which side will be to their best political and monetary

advantage, they join up. Some preachers just cannot seem to be certain which button to push. They vacillate, wait, study the reports, and with a little prodding from an elder, a few members or a disturbing voice from this side or that side, the preacher puts his ear closer to the ground. He wonders and he waits. At last, with all the reports available, he boldly, courageously and victoriously barges into print, becomes loquacious in lecturing and pronounces to one and all how sound he has been—for at least the last half hour. Even the liberals can see through such a facade.

Some among us are having spells and spasms to develop all the machinery which the old Digressives borrowed from liberal Protestantism. We should be able to learn a few things from the events which occurred during the last century. Alas, some learn only enough to borrow.

The new liberals know what happened and they are determined to lead the church into apostasy again. The blind among us feel complacent, secure and comfortable, not knowing what the devil has planned. They do not intend to see. Their favorite blather is, "Please remove my name from your mailing list." Such people would make wonderful members in the Disciples Conventions. They wouldn't know whether

Christ was crucified on Calvary or shot at Bunker Hill.

#### MORE MAN-MADE SOCIETIES

Men have been prone to devise all sorts of schemes and innovations in order to assist God in his work. Nashville, Tennessee, has an abundant supply of organizers who can rival the old Disciples Convention folks. A look at the Nashville Christian Jubilee *Charter* with its *boards, executive director, "Coordinating Committee of Sponsoring Churches,"* and its purpose to "present an organization devoted to the training, encouragement and inspiration of congregations and individuals toward greater service to God," along with its *by-laws* and its *officers*, presents just *another man-made Missionary Society*. We sincerely wonder how and why any speaker or sponsor of the Jubilee would be able to successfully oppose the old Missionary Society of the Christian Church.

Another project which has been started in Nashville is the "*Healing Hands International*" benevolent organization. According to a brochure mailed out, the Healing Hands International started "...as a class project at David Lipscomb University." "The elders of the Harpeth Hills Church of Christ accepted oversight of the work." The organization has been incorporated

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and "A board of faithful Christians now looks out for the operations." **Charlie Newsom** is the President of the benevolent conglomerate.

Another big operation in Nashville is the "*Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.*" Along with the "Healing Hands International," it shares a big warehouse on Allied Drive. The corporation has a *president, vice-president, executive director, secretary* and a *treasurer*. It has a *board of directors* comprised of brethren from Antioch, Brentwood Hills, Vultee, Natchez Trace, Otter Creek, Tusculum, Hillsboro and Woodson Chapel congrega-

tions. The entire structure is "...overseen by elders of Tusculum Church of Christ." **John Miller** is the president of the monstrosity.

The trials of faithful brethren of yesteryear have been recorded as they made impassioned pleas to respect the ancient order of things. Their voices were muffled by the drum beaters for organizational changes in the church. Good men such as Lipscomb, Sewell, Harding and Srygley were kept busy opposing the Digressives. Several hundred articles were printed and sent out from the office of the old *Gospel Advocate* in Nashville opposing the

new organizations. **Where is that opposing voice today?**

The proponents of the super-organizational innovations always refer to the great and good work which is being done. No work is good which supplants the local church regardless of its claims. Must we fight the society and benevolent organizational battles again? There may not be even a skirmish from many churches in Nashville—and certainly no preacher would be popular who would oppose the biggies. Nashville has a lot of popular preachers!

—705 Hillview Drive  
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## Respect For The Authority Of The Bible

Gary L. Grizzell

There are a number of reasons we should love, honor and respect the Word of God. The Bible gives us a knowledge of the existence of God, creation, Jesus Christ, salvation, heaven and hell. It gives us a knowledge of God's will for us (Ephesians 5:17). The Word of God frees us from sin and all its evil consequences which reach out to grab and destroy us. It frees us from the power of sin (Colossians 1:13-14). It frees us from the pollution of sin, *i.e.*, guilt and fear (II Timothy 1:7). It frees us from the pleasure of sin (Hebrews 10:25). It frees us from the old man of sin (Romans 6:3-4). It offers us heaven where we

will be free from the presence of all sin. The Bible tells man of his origin, his purpose of existence, and his destiny (Genesis 1:1; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; II Corinthians 5:10). The Bible is the only book that deals sufficiently with the subject of death.

Though God has given us the Bible to guide and instruct man in the way of righteousness, why then is the nation (and the world) so full of sin problems? All one has to do is read the daily newspaper or watch the evening news on television to see that our society is full of crime and sin. Our interest turns to concern when recognizing that God

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eventually delivers an increasingly rebellious people into the hands of its enemies (Nehemiah 9:26-27).

#### AN APPROACH TO THE SIN PROBLEM

As an approach to answering the question of why our nation is full of sin problems in spite of the fact that most (if not all) in this country have access to the Bible, consider the following facts: Jesus teaches that only *few* will enter heaven while the *majority* of men will enter hell in eternity (Matthew 7:13-14). Why is this the case? A look at the *first* sin ever committed reveals that Eve violated God's law by eating of unauthorized fruit (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-6). If we can find out the reason Eve committed that *first* sin, perhaps then we can understand the reason that most will be lost on the day of judgment. After all, Adam and Eve were the entire population of man in the Garden of Eden at that moment in time. Yes, it is true that Eve was deceived by Satan (I Timothy 2:14). But why did she *allow* herself to be deceived? Yes, she fulfilled the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life (Genesis 3:6; I John 2:15-17). But why did she *allow* herself to transgress through those avenues? It is *not* true that she was ignorant of the law of the trees. Note that she revealed her level of knowledge in her conversation to Satan. She even knew she was not to "*touch*" the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:3). The *underlying reason* Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was simply because she disrespected the authoritative Word of God. This is also true with reference to Adam. When tempted to eat of the forbidden tree Eve faced a decision. **She could have chosen either to respect what God had said or to do her own will.** Biblical history clearly reveals that she disregarded the words of God. Figuratively speaking, she spat on the Word of God. Figuratively speaking, she spat on the word of God. Figuratively speaking, she stomped under foot the word of have it! She had eternal life in her hands and dropped it.

#### "DON'T KNOW/DON'T CARE"

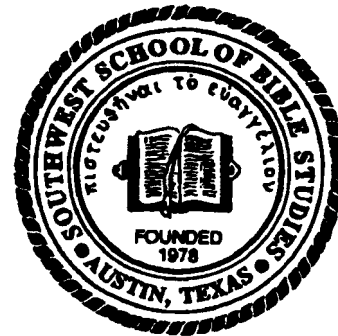
Again, why are all the sin problems in existence in our society such as abortions, homosexuality, immorality, unethical conduct, active euthanasia, humanistic philosophies, religious error and such like? Why is it the case that *most* will be lost on the day of judgment? The reason is that age-old problem of mankind and that is a *lack of respect* for the authoritative words of God.

What are the five steps which constitute the plan of salvation according to the New Testament? A lost and dying world answers, "*I don't know and I don't care*" (Romans 10:17; John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Romans 10:9-10 and Acts 2:38). What are the five authorized acts of worship which God accepts in the Christian age? Again, the answer comes from so many, "*I don't know and I don't care*" (Acts 20:7; Ephesians 5:19; I Corinthians 14:15; 16:2; and II Timothy 4:2). What does the New Testament teach about faithful Christian living? What is the work of the Lord's church? What is the church authorized to do and not to do? What three ways does the Bible authorize a religious belief or practice? Again, the many say, "*I don't know and I don't care.*" However, the Bible teaches that all men *will* reap what they sow and that God is not successfully mocked (Galatians 6:7-8).

#### DENOMINATIONALISM

All the sin problems in denominationalism may be laid right at the doorstep of a lack of respect for the word of God. Who is to have all authority in religious matters? Paul stated that "**He (Christ) is the head of the body, the church**" (Colossians 1:18). Jesus himself claimed the right to command and enforce obedience. He stated that "All

power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). This rules out any "Pope" who claims to be the earthly head of the church (the word, pope, is never



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found in the word of God). The people in Jesus's day recognized that he spoke with the authority of God (Matthew 7:28-29). All today *must* produce New Testament authority for questions relating to salvation, Christianity and religion (Colossians 3:17).

Denominationalism is the setting up of man-made institutions with their own peculiar doctrines, creeds, beliefs, and traditions (Matthew 15:7-9). The problem with this arrangement is that it takes Christ off the throne and puts the "Reverend" on it (or some other unauthorized person, council or organization\*). The word "*reverend*" is used only once in the English translation, the King James Version of the Bible, and is descriptive of the name of God (Psalms 111:9). No man has a right to place himself on the level of deity (Matthew 23:8).

While all 66 books of the Bible are the inspired words of God, the *New Testament* is the *binding* law in the Christian Age (Hebrews 10:9; Romans 15:4). If your creed book contains *more* than the Bible contains, then it contains too much. If your creed book contains *less* than the Bible contains, then it contains too little. If your creed book contains just what the Bible contains, then it *is* the Bible and no other creed book is needed (I Corinthians 4:6).

The work of the Reformers sought to put the Bible into the hands of the common people. Many sacrificed their lives for this cause. In America that goal has been accomplished. Many today have *more* than one Bible. Now that the Bible has been put back into the hands of the people, let us demand a book, chapter and verse from those who preach from the pulpits (I Peter 4:11). Let us imitate the first century Bereans who searched the Scriptures *daily* to see if what the apostle Paul had preached was really in the Bible. Surely if the *inspired* apostle Paul did not become offended when his message was graded by the people, neither should any preacher today (Acts 17:10-11). Let us tell our friends who are in religious error that they have the opportunity, right and obligation to "**prove all things, hold fast that which is good**" (I Thessalonians 5:21). Let us recognize that *we* can interpret the word of God for ourselves on things necessary for salvation and that any "church" that is built upon *man's* doctrines instead of the doctrine of Christ has no authority for its existence (Ephesians 5:17; Matthew 15:13-14).

#### IN THE CHURCH

All the sin problems in the church such as materialism, a fleshly definition of love, the belief that doctrine is not important, the lack of zeal for evangelism may be traced back to this same problem first exhibited in the beautiful garden, disrespect of God's authoritative word (*cf.*, Hebrews 13:5-6; II John 5-6; I Timothy 4:13; II Timothy 4:1-4; II John 9-11).

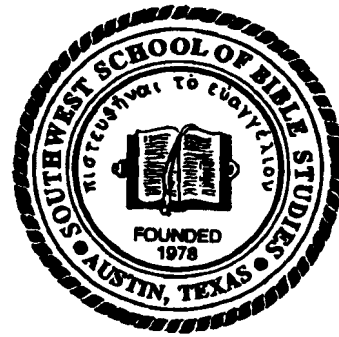
#### IN THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE

All the sin problems in the individual Christian's life such as the failure to continue in daily prayer and the failure to study the Bible, means that at some time, somebody, when a crucial decision was to be made, *chose* to disrespect what God's word said and instead chose to do what *he* wanted to do (*cf.*, Philippians 4:6-7; II Timothy 2:15).

Men are to "**rightly divide**" the word of Truth, the Bible, according to II Timothy 2:15. Though this command was originally written to a preacher, Timothy, the principle is certainly applicable to all responsible human beings. Many have *read* the Bible but how many have been *approved of God* in their study? Many have *read* the Bible but how many have *studied* it? Many have claimed to have *rightly*

*divided* the Bible, but how many know the difference between

\*The Old and New Testaments?



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announce

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Southwest School of Bible Studies is pleased to announce that our 14 full-time students and 4 of our Bible faculty members will conduct a week-long evangelistic campaign with the church of Christ in Hughson (Modesto) California. Our students will knock doors with members of the Hughson congregation during the day and preachers for the evening sermons will include: Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Joseph Meador, Gary Colley, Chuck House, Al Macias, and John Moore. Brother Macias will be preaching both in English and Spanish. All brethren in the Modesto Area are cordially invited to attend the series on the theme:

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- \*Explicit and Implicit teaching?
- \*Commands, Approved Examples, and Implications?

### THE SOLUTION

The Bible shows the way to abundant life (John 10:10; 14:6). May we show God that we appreciate him giving us his book by studying it, believing it, practicing it, and even teaching it to others. Then we can say, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path...O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psalms 119:97, 105).

You, my friend, are at the crossroads. What will your decision be? Will you respect the word of God today? Will you believe and obey the gospel of Christ today so as to position yourself to spend eternity with God?

\*The Bible teaches Christ as head and elders as overseers (Colossians 1:18; Acts 20:28).

[NOTE: The foregoing article may be obtained in tract form by writing to *Pillars Publications, 2128 Crystal Court, Cookeville, Tennessee 38501*. It should be in every tract rack brotherhood-wide.—The Editor]

# Notes & Quotes...

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Eighth Annual Tiptonville Singing has been set for 8:00 p.m. until ???, Friday night, April 28, 1995. Song leaders are expected from Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

**Manuel K. Pelayo, P.O. Box 1944, Manila, Philippines:** "I am still recovering from injuries that I suffered when I was hit by a car on EDSA Boulevard on January 17, 1995. It has been a most difficult situation for me since then with all the pain in my right arm and shoulder which is compounded by other problems. I hope I would be able to go for X-rays and other examinations which the doctors are requiring and which should be done twice next month.

"My recovery has been slow, but I am able to use my hands for short periods of time...I am glad I am able to keep up with my Sunday preaching at the Makati Central Church of Christ. I find myself spending most of my time reading and doing a few little things at home...

"Please pray that I would be able to survive these hardships and be able to resume my

normal activities. The doctors say all these would depend on how I respond to treatment and the final X-rays."

[NOTE: Our sympathy goes out to brother Pelayo in this emergency situation. Any wishing to have a part with him regarding his hospital and medical bills, please address him airmail to his Manila mailing address as noted above. IYRJR.]

**C. B. Short, Dallas, Texas:** "What a subterfuge Royce Money employs! You and I know the man has to have more 'gumption' than is exhibited in that 'address' 'ON THIS ROCK'—it may be that Royce Money is 'BUILDING HIS CHURCH'..."

"How can those people, in the face of all the evidence against them and their 'professors,' so blatantly defend an indefensible stand? Don't make any sense at all!

"I'm enclosing a check (\$100.00). Use it. I know you will wisely and well, my friend."

**Garry Gage, Tahlequah, Oklahoma:** "Please cancel this subscription."

**Shelby & Shirley Roberts, of Hollywood, Florida,** enclosed a fund-raising letter from

**Dale Randolph and World Bible Translation Center,** under date of February 17, 1995, writing to *Contending for the Faith* that "this letter is a sample of requests we are still receiving from Dale Randolph even AFTER we requested them to STOP. Shirley and I had fallen into their trap UNTIL getting *Contending for the Faith* for January, 1995.

"I called Dale the last of January, as I remember, and FINALLY the lady let me talk to him personally. I asked, 'Do you personally think there are Christians in ALL the denominational churches?' He said, 'Yes.' I said, 'That sounds like Rubel Shelly...Do you also meet with them when you're in places like India?' He said, 'Yes, you must have been reading some of that garbage that Goebel Music is putting out!' I said, 'Yes—please remove our names from your computer mailing list.' Evidently, they haven't. He did send me one of the ETR Bibles this morning (2-27-95).

"I just talked to brother Music to THANK him for his good work and for sending copies of his two books to our Sunday a.m. Bible teacher at Hollywood Hills and to brother Danny Morris (faithful preacher) now at Marianna, Florida, and also to us. Brother Music said you were back home now. Bless your heart. Thank the Lord.

"I enjoyed last issue of *Far East/World*



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*Dennis Cambell, Board of Trustees*

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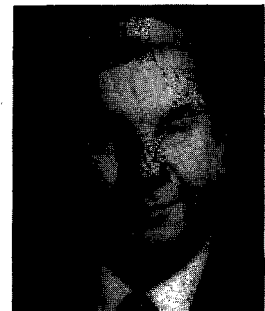
Colossians 3:16

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June 18 - 21, 1995



David P. Brown, Director

## Sunday, June 18

9:30 A.M.	Isaiah Introduces His Book.....	Bob Berard
10:30 A.M.	Jerusalem From Three Perspectives .....	Dub McClish
2:00 P.M.	A Denunciation, the Messianic Age, and Vengeance.....	Marion Fox
3:00 P.M.	A Foolish Reliance and God's Protection.....	Tyler Young
6:00 P.M.	Hezekiah's Illness and Judah's Captivity.....	Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
7:00 P.M.	Sennacherib's Invasion.....	Mac Deaver

## Monday, June 19

9:00 A.M.	Modernism's Attack on Isaiah.....	David P. Brown
10:00 A.M.	Prophecies of Jerusalem, Shebna, and Tyre.....	Roelf Ruffner
11:00 A.M.	Isaiah's First Vision and His Commission.....	Lester Kamp
2:30 P.M.	Damascus and Israel Judged.....	Bob Patterson
**2:30 P.M.	What Does God Want Me to Do?.....	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	Another View of the Messianic Age.....	Gus Eoff
7:00 P.M.	Attacks and Prophecies.....	Darrell Conley
8:00 P.M.	A Psalm of Thanksgiving for Redemption.....	Buster Dobbs

## Tuesday, June 20

9:00 A.M.	Messiah's Reign and the Jews Return From Exile.....	Eddie Whitten
11:00 A.M.	Babylon's Downfall.....	Noah Hackworth
1:30 P.M.	Thanksgiving, Exhortation, and Return from Captivity.....	Robin Haley
2:30 P.M.	Moab's Judgment  .....	Michael Hatcher
**2:30 P.M.	Discerning Between Good and Evil.....	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	The Future Blessings of the Ransomed Exiles.....	Roy C. Deaver
5:00 P.M.	<b>Houston College of the Bible Honors Roy C. Deaver at the HCB Banquet</b>	
7:00 P.M.	Doom and Judgment  .....	Ronnie Hays
8:00 P.M.	God Speaks of Ethiopia and Egypt .....	Lyndell Mitchell

## Wednesday, June 21

9:00 A.M.	Warnings, Scoffers, and a Parable.....	Barry Hatcher
10:00 A.M.	Immanuel Prophesied.....	David Baker
11:00 A.M.	Israel's Doom Declared.....	Andy McClish
1:30 P.M.	An Invader Condemned and a Promise of Deliverance.....	Terry Hightower
2:30 P.M.	God's Indignation Against all the Nations.....	M. L. Sexton
3:30 P.M.	Judgment, Pleading, Deliverance, and Thanksgiving .....	Royce Williamson
7:00 P.M.	The Virgin Birth of Christ.....	Tom Bright
8:00 P.M.	Isaiah in the Eternal Purpose of God.....	Paul Sain

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Evangelism Newsletter so much. I was in Bangkok, Thailand and the Philippines (in '72) and on around the world and could relate to your accounts... You are doing so much in the little time we have left.

"I'm a heart victim with tremors and arthritis at 75 years. I'm thankful for brother Brown and brother Cates and all those helping you in the Lord's work and going to then carry it on. We try to send extra along to help in your travels and the extra copies being mailed and will be trying to send \$30.00 monthly in '95 instead of the \$20.00 you mentioned in last Contending for the Faith..."

"Does Bellview have a program for sending 'Bibles to the World' that are OK kind of translations?..."

[NOTE: "Even though I have known—and known of—Dale Randolph for many years," I replied to the foregoing, in part, under date of March 3, 1995, "I still find it hard to think of someone such as he continuing to make no distinction where God has made a difference. There is just no way for those true to denominationalism to be 'our brethren.' Yet, if anything, though he does most of his fund-raising among 'US,' in fact, he prefers THEIR fellowship and recognition to OURS! In fact, especially when overseas, he fellowships with THEM rather than with those of the BODY OF OUR LORD!"

"You asked if Bellview has a 'Bibles for the World' program. We do indeed! It started out as 'Bibles for China.' When China was able to block much, if not most, of our Bible-distribution there, we enlarged it to include 'China and Asia.' Then, last year, we decided to call it 'Bibles for the World'—and that should cover it all!

"As for the translations we distribute, we recognize that it is impossible to find translations in SOME languages that are entirely accurate. However, we seek out those translations that are the MOST NEARLY ACCURATE AVAILABLE—not deliberately mis-translated, as in the case of World Bible Translation Center. Whatever you do to help you always know that we appreciate it..."

Those wishing to have a part with us in our "Bibles for the World" program, please earmark checks "Bibles for the World" and address such contributions to BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST, 4850 SAUFLEY FIELD ROAD, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32526. IYRJR.]

Albert F. Thompson, 1229 Old Dickerson Pike, #C-14, Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37072: "I hold in my hand a copy of the February edition of 'Contending for the Faith,'" he wrote, under date of February 27, 1995. "I stare in amazement at its contents. This has got to rate with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. I, like Saul, persecuted your cause with a vengeance, mistakenly thinking that I was doing the Lord's will. Issues of 'Contending

for the Faith' would arrive at our home, and I shunned them all, instructing my wife, Caroline, not to bother me with such radical, venomous drivel. (I surmise that this is precisely the way that the majority of 'Jubilee' supporters regard your efforts, even to this day!)

"So, there I was, thoroughly entrenched in that mental persuasion. If anybody had even remotely suggested that one day I would find myself firmly in your camp, I would have said they were crazy! But just look at the contents of your latest publication! You know, brother Rice, at the time I sent you the information that I did, I said to Caroline, 'I just wonder if he will truly appreciate the potential worth of what I am sending him?' Well, seeing as how you have seen fit to make it your leading, front page story, my uncertainty was unjustified! I am so very honored, sir, and I thank you so very much for the regard you had for the material, and for the prominence you gave it. And I must add this additional comment: You would make a superb reporter, because you printed every word I said without addition or subtraction, or changing it in any way! That is so refreshing in a day and age when so many reporters are guilty of distorting the facts every way, shape, form and fashion. Again, may I say, 'Thank you;' I appreciate what you have done so very much.

"You realize, of course, where this leaves me in the eyes of my esteemed brethren at Madison. For those who are unwilling to

investigate the truth, they will most certainly hold me in the highest contempt reserved for a traitor. You, of course, no doubt know that feeling better than anyone—having been villified for your efforts for many years. But it is my contention that if what you have printed on my behalf can cause even one, single, honest soul to change his errant course, then it will be worth whatever condemnation I must endure. The bottom line is simply this: let the record of my life show that I stand on the side of truth. As far as I am concerned, they can bury me with the Bible in my left hand, and the February, 1995 issue of 'Contending for the Faith' in my right hand.

"Thank you again for this great honor. Please notify us if you intend to speak anywhere in Nashville or the surrounding communities so that I can be afforded the opportunity to thank you in person. If we can be of service to you in any way, we would be delighted to help. You have friends in Nashville!"

[NOTE: The foregoing letter is one of the most extraordinary that I have ever received in a lifetime filled with more than 50 years of religious journalism.]

"Thank you for letting me know that you had seen a copy of our February/1995 CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH and that it met with your approval," I replied, in part. "I am quite certain that the reaction of the 'Jubilee' folks will be as you foresee; however, with the Lord's backing, you can 'take' whatever they may hurl. One STILL can 'chase a thousand' and TWO can put 'TEN THOUSAND to flight.' (See Deuteronomy 32:30 and Joshua 23:10.)..."

"Watch for our APRIL issue. Since I had to be overseas the latter part of January and most of February, I left the MARCH issue to be put together by my Associate Editor David Brown. It is a good one—should be to the printer by this weekend. However, in April, we'll have one more issue directly concerned with Madison and the Nashville area. In the Greatest Cause, (Signed) Ira Y. Rice, Jr."

Don & Pat Lutzenberg, Turlock, California: "Your paper Contending for the Faith is doing a good work getting information out to the churches. Thank you so much."

Robby Eversole, minister, Fort Oglethorpe church of Christ, 6 Harker Road, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742, has written an 18-page tract, entitled, Homosexual Relationships—Sinful or Sanctified? For copies of same, please write to him directly.

S. David Martin, Madras, India: "I was shocked when I read your magazine of March, 1994, that denominational preachers are brought into churches of Christ to preach by the Richland Hills Church of Christ. We appreciate the work done to efficiently distribute the book BEHOLD THE PATTERN by Goebel Music.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

A publication of Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383  
FOR ELDERS, DEACONS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

"An Embarrassing Faith" Vs. "Politically Correct Faith":

## Rubel Shelly Challenges George Fowler

J. E. Choate

An essay written by **George Fowler**, a syndicated columnist, titled "Embarrassing Faith," was featured in the February 3, "Nashville Eye" of the *Nashville Tennessean*. **Rubel Shelly** took issue with Fowler with his own essay, which was titled, "Politically Correct Faith."

Fowler was attacking the TV evangelist who blubbers about Jesus between pleas for money, or the woman preacher who clutches her Bible to her chest shouting threats at those who will not share her bigotry. Fowler describes the image of such preachers as vulgar, cheap, and far too familiar. He does not charge them with lack of sincerity, but stupidity and ignorance.

Fowler has a specific case to make against the fundamentalists because they equate homosexuality as "man with man" and "lesbian with lesbian." Apparently not a seminarian, he also contends that modern biblical scholarship shows through the "deconstruction of Scripture" that what Moses, Yahweh and Paul had in mind was that the sin of homosexuality was identified with the pagan fertility cults whose practices were marked by the most vile excesses of lewd, orgiastic, and frenzied sexual behavior. The thesis of his essay reveals a familiarity with current "liberation theology" as it is applied particularly to the "gay" movement.

Shelly launches a "no-holds-barred" attack on Fowler's statements through his essay printed February 25 in the "Nashville Eye." (We remember another preemptive attack in another essay of Dr. Shelly printed July, 1991, in the *Tennessean* in which he brought the conservative churches of Christ under harsh attack.) There is more than first meets the eye in Shelly's taking issue with Fowler.

Dr. Rubel Shelly is a brother with multiple theological personalities. He dons different religious hats when he preaches by invitation to the Disciples of Christ, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and the Pentecostals. He is like the ubiquitous Moby Dick in that he pleases one denomi-

national church today, and another one tomorrow. He is much like Hector's horse and his rider racing off simultaneously in all directions and returning to the same starting gate. Shelly portrays himself as a radical theologian at one time, and as a conservative theologian in another—and never quotes *tomorrow* what he said *today* because he may have said something different *yesterday*!

Dr. Shelly and his Woodmont Hills flock assemble each Lord's Day in the sanctuary of the *First Christian Church* of Nashville for worship soon after the sounds of the pealing organ have died away. Shelly was a "sound gospel," full time preacher at the age of 14. Now he poses as a global, ecumenical preacher who would bring peace and unity to Christendom—worldwide. He flatters all and would be flattered by all.

### SHELLY'S ESSAY IN THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

His essay is printed under the caption: "Politically Correct Faith," with the sub-line reading, "*Conservative Christians are unfairly criticized by those on the left who ignore biblical teaching.*" Let us say at the onset that this is another of Dr. Shelly's "grandstand" acts that he knows will play well before his cheering fans.

Shelly says he dares to take issue with Fowler at the risk of being dubbed as a bigoted and silly fundamentalist. However, we think that Shelly is using Fowler to appear as the champion of the "moral majority" and the "religious right." Fowler uses such insulting epithets as "bigotry," "self-righteousness," "silliness," and "ignorance" to describe this brand of evangelicals. His main attack centers on Fowler's views on homosexuality.

The martyr's garb actually has never fitted Dr. Shelly, and never less so than in this setting. He knows that the most prestigious biblical scholarship for more than 300 years have produced monumental translations beginning

(Continued on Page 7)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 5

May/1995

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David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## Editorial...

# What Was Brother Woods' Position On The Use Of Women Translators?

Over the past couple or three years, several of our esteemed brethren, usually careful in their doctrinal stances, have expressed rather strong convictions that the use of women translators is in violation of certain passages of scriptures. If such is provably the case, then certainly women translators should not be so used. However, if this position is itself wrong, then such contentions are both offensive and divisive.

The one single brother among us who wrestled with hard questions more than any other during the past half-century was brother **Guy N. Woods**, now deceased. While serving as Associate Editor, some 16 years ago, in August and September of 1979, brother Woods ran a series of three articles by brother **Billy Leavell** in the *Gospel Advocate*, relative to the deaf work. These articles included, "Introduction to the Deaf Work," "Frustrations of the Deaf Work" and "Women Interpreters," in that order.

It was not until the third article in the series appeared—the one on "Women Interpreters"—that brother Woods made any comment. The following article is photo-reproduced from the *Gospel Advocate* for September 20, 1979. Please read brother Leavell's words carefully, then study brother Woods' comment at the end of the article.

## Women Interpreters

Billy Leavell

Once as my hearing wife prepared to interpret for the deaf in a gospel meeting, the evangelist declared that if my wife started interpreting, he would walk out.

This embarrassment quickly killed the deaf's interest in that gospel meeting and we quietly met separately in another room.

This is a typical situation in many congregations that are shocked when they see a woman standing up to interpret for the deaf.

Our Lord commissioned us to preach the gospel to every person as we go out into the world. (Mark 16:15.) This includes the deaf! They need the gospel as much as the hearing. But they need *adequate communication* in order to understand the Good News of Christ and to obey him. While there are deaf and hearing preachers skillful in the language of signs, we have so pitifully few of them. At this writing I know of only ten full-time ministers to the deaf, while there are about 6 million Americans that are severely deaf. I also know of roughly ten part-time workers with the deaf. In many con-



gregations there is neither full-time preacher nor part-time worker, only an interpreter. And as far as we know, there are 120 congregations in the U.S.A. that have any kind of provisions for the deaf. When we look at congregations in other countries, we find only about 15 to 20 that serve the deaf at all. The estimated world population of deaf is 50 million!

Of the interpreters that serve in our nation's churches, a surprising majority are women. It has been my personal experience wherever I go to find that 75% or more of those who learn to interpret for the deaf are women. And we have also observed that women learn to read and use sign language more skillfully than men. Why this is true I must leave to those wiser than myself.

But this situation does create a problem—is a woman interpreter scriptural?

We are a people who strongly believe in doing things by the Bible. We believe in doing things God's way. We believe that to add to his Word, or to subtract from it, is sinful. (Revelation 22:18, 19.) We are familiar with those scriptures which prohibit the woman from addressing the assembly or exercising authority over the man in a religious context. First Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12 are the principal passages supporting our resistance to women speakers in our assemblies. The Corinthian passage in the American Standard Version reads: "Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law." And the Timothy passage, also in the American Standard Version, reads: "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness."

We have used these passages, and rightly so, to condemn women preachers, women elders, etc.

But a careful examination of these passages reveals that the scriptural injunction has a limited sense. It is not in the present scope of this article to provide an exhaustive exegesis of the above passages, but I would point the reader to certain facts.

First, we do not object when a woman stands up in the midst of our assembly to confess her faith in Christ prior to her baptism. Our women sing along with the men when hymns are sung. To give an extremely legalistic interpretation of the above passages, our women are sinning when they audibly confess their faith in Christ before the assembly, or when they join with the men in singing hymns!

The truth is that these scriptural injunctions are not directed against women speaking *per se*, but against exercising authority. That is expressly forbidden. Hence a woman addressing the assembly—preaching a sermon, or teaching a Bible lesson—is exercising authority.

The question will arise: Is public interpreting for the deaf the same as teaching? To be honest, at first glance this appears so. But a deeper probe reveals the difference. Even secular interpreting for the deaf recognizes this difference. The Registry of Interpreters, whose headquarters is in Silver

Springs, Maryland, has a Code of Ethics in which is found this statement:

"The interpreter shall maintain an impartial attitude during the course of his interpreting avoiding interjecting his own views unless he is asked to do so by a party involved." (Registry For Interpreters For The Deaf, 814 Thayer Avenue, Silver Springs, Maryland 20910.)

And again,

"The interpreter shall interpret faithfully and to the best of his ability, *always conveying the thought, intent and spirit of the speaker*. He shall remember the limits of his particular function and *not go beyond his responsibility*." (Ibid.)

What this Code of Ethics shows is that even a secular organization recognizes interpreting for the deaf to be what it is, not teaching nor authority, but a translation for the deaf, *leaving out the authority of the interpreter*.

Thus when we start condemning women interpreters in our worship services, the secular world looks at us with askance. Why? Because the world knows these women interpreters do not exercise a single amount of authority. They only convey the message of the speaker, be he an elder, deacon or preacher!

The women interpreters I have known have always been faithful to the message of the original speakers and to the best of their abilities have attempted to convey the original message to the deaf. I have seen deaf go forward during a gospel meeting—not to the interpreter but to the preacher! They certainly weren't dumb as to who had the authority.

Remember as we learned at the beginning of this article, there are about 120 congregations throughout the U.S.A. with deaf works. Only 20 preachers or workers, both full-time and part-time, are able to provide special services. But there are many who are struggling to bridge the communication gap for those unable to hear the preacher. To deny the services of an interpreter, regardless of his or her sex, is to deny the deaf the valuable word of truth!

May the Lord hasten the day when we all will recognize interpreting for the deaf for what it is, a method of communication, and not a method of wielding authority.—2285 Frayser Blvd., Memphis, Tennessee 38127. ■

*Editorial note: We do not believe that the use of women interpreters violates any principle of New Testament teaching. She simply becomes a medium through whom the teaching is passed from the teacher to the learner to the same extent that the public address system conveys the message of the speaker to those who otherwise could not hear. As the use of the audio amplifier does not violate the principle which excludes instrumental music neither does the interpretation to the deaf by a woman constitute an infringement of 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12.*

—Guy N. Woods, Associate Editor

# NEVER ASSUME

**Those Who Assume That Because Your Editor Agreed With Them On ONE Point, I Must Have Agreed With Them on ALL Points, Are Dead Wrong. Such Never Was the Case. Assumptions Are Dangerous.**

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

The first thing in training new missionaries I try always to persuade them *never to assume*. I learned early that assumptions—particularly on the mission field—are dangerous, and that they are *almost always wrong!*

Let me give you an example:

Approximately a dozen or more years ago, I was invited to sit down with some missionaries and local brethren in an all-day discussion in Taiwan, having to do, especially, with doctrinal matters that were causing divisions and offences among them. *One* of those matters centered around an older sister in Christ in the city of Taichung. As it was presented in our discussions that day, even though there was a *male* member in the Taichung congregation (a colonel in the Chinese army) who knew the English language well, and who *could* have handled the translation of church services from Chinese into English (and vice versa), this Chinese woman member *insisted* on doing the translating herself rather than the colonel.

## **VIOLATION OF I TIMOTHY 2:12**

As I sat listening, I agreed with at least *two* of the missionaries in the discussions that this was in clear violation of I Timothy 2:12, in *part* of which passage the apostle Paul said that he suffered not a woman to “**usurp authority over the man.**” By insisting that *she* do the translating rather than *the male colonel*, she clearly was *usurping authority over the man*, something which I agreed she should not be doing!

If those two missionaries had left my objections alone where I put them on this one point, there should have been no confusion at some later date. However, it now appears that *both* of these brethren had objections that overreached what I was objecting to; they just *assumed* I agreed with them on some *additional* points that *they* had in mind that were not in *my* mind at all! Hence, years later, when some of these *additional* points came up over *another* matter, they likewise *assumed* that I had changed my position, which was not the case, although I am sure they *thought* I had done so.

Another bit of advice I give to young preachers, whether they are missionaries

or not, is to avoid *rushing to conclusions*. In my experience, rushed conclusions are often dangerous, leading to conflicts which otherwise would not have to exist.

One of the first decisions I had to make, once arriving in the Far East 40 years ago last month, was how to use translators, whether male or female. I already knew the teaching in I Timothy 2:8-12, of course, as well as that in I Corinthians 14:23,34-35. In the latter passage, of course, there appear to be connotations having to do with spiritual gifts; however, I concluded from my own studies that if a woman did not address the church on her own when “**the whole church be come together into one place,**” and if she did not attempt to “**teach, nor to usurp authority over the man,**” she should be on safe ground.

For those forcing the word “**silence**” to include *all* vocal expression, such would have to include the “**speaking**” that is done in “**singing**” (Ephesians 5:19). What proves too much proves nothing. And if a woman can *speak* while *singing*, at least she does not violate the “**silence**” envisioned by these two passages while singing.

I know that she can *teach* a man, while not teaching *over* him or usurping authority *over* him. Such clearly took place, when Aquila and Priscilla, a man and his wife, took Apollos (a man) “**unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly**” (study Acts 18:24-26).

## **WAS TRANSLATION WRONG FOR GLORIA?**

The first Lord’s Day that I preached the gospel in Hong Kong (March, 1955), all but two of the Hong Kong church (some 30 in all) spoke and understood *only* the *Cantonese dialect* of the *Chinese language*. The only person present who could translate my spoken *English* into *Cantonese* was a young woman Gloria Yue whom sister Elizabeth Bernard had reared from childhood.

If you had asked any person present who *preached* that day, I am sure that all would have answered, *Brother Rice*

*preached!* Not a single one would have mistaken Gloria as having *preached*; she only *translated* into another language what *I* preached so that *my* teaching could be understood! Did she “*usurp authority*” over the man? Not at all; she translated *at my request* and was under *my authority*, as preacher, the entire time.

To argue that somehow Gloria Yue was *either* teaching *or* preaching that day in any accepted sense of these terms is to argue contrary to what actually happened. She *neither* taught *nor* preached; she only *translated!* There is a difference whether some recognize and admit it or not!

## **WHAT ABOUT LATVIA & RUSSIA?**

When some of us began going with the gospel into Latvia and Russia in recent years, we faced a similar situation as the one I faced years earlier in Hong Kong.

In Latvia, at first, we hired two men to translate—neither one a member of the church since the church was just getting started in Latvia. It was useless, yea, worse than useless! Not only did neither of these two men possess a vocabulary with the necessary Biblical words to translate properly, but one of them, in particular, was not actually *translating* but *teaching a different doctrine* from that being taught in English by the speakers!

The only other persons present who *could* do a proper job of translation were all Latvian women. What to do! If we stayed with the two men we had hired, neither one could translate properly and one was putting words into our mouths that we hadn’t said. If we turned to the women who *could* translate properly, at least one or two of those with us felt they would be in violation of the Biblical passages aforementioned.

When the majority of us decided to use *women* translators at least until such a time as we could convert and train some *men* translators to do the job, this so offended at least *one* couple that they abandoned the work entirely, taking the next plane back to the States! We were deeply saddened by this, of course; but how else could we have

proceeded and done any public teaching at all!

A similar situation existed in Russia—and, to some extent, still does. However, slowly, slowly, we have developed one or more of our *men* who now serve as translators into Russian—and, when we have a choice, we try to use *men* now, particularly in public teaching/preaching situations where other men are present. [In the public schools, where those being taught are either children or women teachers, we con-

tinue to use women translators—so far without objection.]

If we know that men are to be present in our public audiences, and we have a choice, we try always to use men translators and plan to continue so doing.

#### EVIL SURMISING DOES NOT HELP

One brotherhood phenomenon noted recently is the *presumption* on the part of some who were not present *either* in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Latvia or Russia that they know what I thought or said

or did on these occasions. They just “know” that I have changed my position on the use of women translators.

The simple fact is that they know *no such thing*, and that they are guilty of what God’s word calls “evil surmisings” (I Timothy 6:3-5). Paul taught Timothy “*from such withdraw thyself.*” If such people *really* want to help, a good place to start would be to *refrain* from “evil surmisings.”

—2956 Allshore  
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

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## LECTURESHIP COMPLETED—EASTSIDE, ABILENE

Roy Deaver

At this writing concerned brothers and sisters in Christ have just completed something which many thought could never be accomplished—an excellent, sound, solid, scriptural lectureship just off campus from ACU, in Abilene, Texas. Even to the very last minute there were serious obstacles thrown in the way—but these brethren are accustomed to obstacles.

The services began on Friday night, February 17, 1995 and continued through Sunday night, February 19 (overlapping only the beginning Sunday night lecture of the ACU Lectureship.)

Attendance was good, the preaching was distinct and powerful, the services and fellowship were delightful. The theme: “*Our Concerns—What They Are, and Why They Are What They Are*” was carefully followed, and no one had to guess as to what each speaker was saying. “*As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country*” (Proverbs 25:25). To many present in this lectureship, this was indeed pure, cold water to thirsty souls.

On Friday night, **Bill Lockwood** discussed “Search for the Ancient Order, Part One,” and **Lindell Mitchell** discussed “The Sin of Being Soft on Sin.”

On Saturday, **Bill Lockwood** presented “Search for the Ancient Order, Part Two.” He was followed by a former U.S. Air Force Sergeant and full time gospel preacher, the inimitable **Bill Towry**, who discussed “Walking by Faith—Jesus is Lord.” Then, **Mac Deaver** discussed “The Plague of Agnosticism.” In his second lesson **Mac** discussed “The Nature of the Church.” **David Brown** preached on “Love’s Relationship to Biblical Authority.” In the evening service **Eddie Whitten** reviewed **Dr. Carrol Osburn’s** book, “The Peaceable Kingdom,” and **David**

**Brown** explained “The Bible Doctrine of Salvation by Grace.”

On Sunday morning, the 9:00 hour, **Buster Dobbs** preached on “Not Ashamed of the Gospel.” In the regular worship hour **Eddie Whitten** discussed, “Who Shall Stand in the Gap?” Then, a question session was handled by brethren **Lindell Mitchell**, **Buster Dobbs**, **Eddie Whitten**, and **Roy Deaver**. In the evening service, **Eddie Whitten** preached on “Tell Me the Story of Jesus,” and **Roy Deaver** discussed “Just Don’t Call it Burnt Toast!”—dealing with **Dr. Douglas Foster’s** book, “Shall the Cycle Be Unbroken,” printed by ACU Press.

**Foster**, like **Osburn**, is a member of the ACU Bible faculty.

It is “good news” to know that brother **Edwin Wilcoxon**, who lives in Abilene, is now preaching for the Eastside congregation. This, to me, is a wonderful development. This puts a man in town, living and working among the area people, who knows the situation and who is willing to uphold the right and to oppose and expose the wrong.

Please be careful to keep these wonderful people, in this great “mission field,” in your prayers.

—Post Office Box 1107  
Wellington, Texas 79095

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*[Since many of the Bible Faculty, the Administration and the Board of Trustees for Abilene Christian University no longer follow the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, it seemed good to a number of concerned Christians to publish the paid ad appearing on the opposite page in the Abilene Reporter-News for Monday, February 20, 1995. Please note the challenge to debate the issues involved. This challenge has been outstanding since April, 1992. No takers to date.]*

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### Change Agents and Churches of Christ

Inasmuch as followers of the “Nashville Jubilee,” the “Tulsa Workshop,” and the “Greater Northwest Evangelism Workshop” all are charged with helping “Change Agents” to lead the churches of Christ into apostasy, brother **William Woodson** has written a book explaining all this, entitled, **Change Agents and Churches of Christ**.

If we could afford it, we’d just give each of those being thus misled into error a copy of this most-enlightening book. Since this is out of the question, the next best thing we have secured a good stock of same so that you may order a copy of your own.

In hard-back, **Change Agents and Churches of Christ** is \$14.00 per copy—plus \$2.00 for postage and packaging. In paper-back, send just \$6.95—plus \$2.00 for postage and packaging. All such orders are payable in advance and should be addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118**.

If you are not going to read and study this book carefully, don’t bother; however, if you *really* want to know what the hullabaloo is all about, we suggest you order **two** copies—one for yourself and one for a friend likewise caught up in the confusion.



# The Creed of the Change Agents

(as powerfully set out in William Woodson's exposé:  
*Change Agents and Churches of Christ*)

The change agents believe and militantly promote:

1. That churches of Christ are sectarian and denominational in their nature and status;
2. That brethren generally have misunderstood or failed to understand the true and full teaching of the Bible on grace;
3. That understanding grace means there has to be a revision (more accurately, abandonment of) the understanding brethren have maintained on the relation of faith and works in the plan of salvation;
4. That baptism for the remission of sins is not mandatory to be understood and present in one's becoming a Christian;
5. That salvation is by the grace of God alone - but also by faith, which is not required to do anything to demonstrate it is genuine;
6. That nothing one can do contributes or can contribute "one whit" to his or her salvation;
7. That one who has thus been saved by "grace alone" can never be lost - the verdict of "no condemnation" has already been pronounced;
8. That worship services must be revised and renewed to be more appealing to the present generation of younger adults (including hand clapping and teaching by drama, RD);
9. That mechanical instrumental music in christian worship is not a legitimate barrier to at least some form of fellowship and worship with the independent Christian Church denomination, and/or - for that matter - the other denominations. (Note: it is here that the "change agents" push their doctrine of "unity-in-diversity," and they are not talking/writing just about matters of "option" RD);
10. That the Bible must not be regarded as setting forth "pattern" instruction which must be followed exactly;
11. That women are to have certain new and obvious roles in the public worship of the church, such as leading singing in worship teams, testifying, etc.;

12. That certain "core" elements of the entire New Testament can be isolated and used as the irreducible minimum and the unexceedable maximum of the test of fellowship with religious groups around us, etc. (Note, some argue that the **only** thing required for fellowship is the acceptance of the "deity of Christ" - that this, and this **only** is the proper application of 2 John 9);
13. Total rejection of the Bible doctrine of miraculous "word-by-word" Holy Spirit inspiration of the Bible;
14. Restoration is an on-going process, never an accomplished fact;
15. That the Holy Spirit, both before and after conversion, provides informational guidance, leading, illumination independent of (separate and apart from) the written word of God.

Brethren, these are the positions (in whole or in part) held by the "change agents" now in control of ACU. It is high-time - yea, long past time - for faithful, concerned Christians to demand that the apostates in ACU be turned out, and that the school get back to its chartered purposes. "It is time for them to go."

Suggested propositions for a public, 4-night, oral debate, in Abilene, directed to any member of the Administration, Bible Faculty, or Board of Trustees. These propositions were presented to a member of the ACU Bible faculty in April of 1992, but have never been accepted. Is there any one there now who is willing to debate these matters.

**Proposition #1. According to the Bible, Abilene Christian University, through its Bible Department especially, now poses a dangerous threat to the church of Christ.**

Affirmative: Mac Deaver  
Deny: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposition #2. According to the Bible, Abilene Christian University, through its Bible Department, does not now pose a dangerous threat to the church of Christ.**

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deny: Mac Deaver

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# Shelly/Fowler

(Continued from Page 1)

with the *King James* translation. Equally qualified scholars in the biblical fields of higher criticism (literary, historical and archaeological research) have brought their knowledge to bear upon the meaning and exegesis of Scripture. Fowler's position on homosexuality is totally rejected by them.

On the other hand, the most prestigious Bible scholars in America and Europe would know that Fowler is relying solely on the "liberation theologies" which surfaced in central America in the 1960s. Liberation theology is most pronounced in the United States as it focuses on the rights of feminists, people of color, and the gay movement.

The student of contemporary liberal theology knows this branch of theology as the "hermeneutic of suspicion" which relies on the literary methodology of the "deconstruction" of the primary works of literature and history. [There is another story here which demands telling—and will be in due course.]

The fact is that Fowler has supplied Shelly with a "straw man" to tear apart. He knows that Fowler is going against the very grain of reputable biblical scholarship. Shelly knows that Fowler's defense of homosexuality (man with man, and woman with woman) is repugnant to every "fundamentalist." This includes the "moral majority," the "religious right," and a great majority of the people in general. It most certainly includes his conservative brethren whom he ridicules and pokes fun at across the country.

Shelly was the featured speaker for the 1994 April 10 *Post-Easter Celebration* at the Woodmont Christian Church. A dogma of this denomination gives full fellowship to the gay community. Shelly made the conservative churches of Christ the butt of his jokes on that occasion which were met by applause and laughter. (I was present.)

Dr. Shelly will be a keynote speaker for the *World Convention of Churches of Christ* which meets in 1996 in Calgary, Canada. (This is an *ecumenical* assembly sponsored by the liberal *Disciples of Christ*.) The Rev. Cynthia Hale, pastor of the fastest growing Disciples church in America, is also featured. No one thinks Dr. Shelly will be critical of the Disciples for their positions on "liberation theology," whether it be addressed to women, blacks, gays—or anyone else.

Many of our trusting conservative brethren will be convinced that Dr. Shelly is speaking solely for them. As a matter of personal opinion, I entertain the idea that he has cast himself in the role of the "defender of the faith" with delusions of grandeur that he is the leading champion of all fundamentalist Christian believers everywhere.

Shelly counters Fowler charging that intolerance usually comes from the left protesting some imagined intolerance from the right. Dr. Shelly does believe in calling names, and especially when he is doing the name calling. There are none in churches of Christ who can use pious and sanctimonious rhetoric with greater effectiveness than brother Shelly. He says that George Fowler and others of the same ilk use such tactics to silence and intimidate their critics.

I personally dared criticize "Christian Jubilee" and its sponsoring churches in publications that went across the country. A letter came to me written on the official stationary of the Woodmont Hills church of Christ, and

signed by Phillip Morrison, an associate minister of Rubel Shelly. I was subjected to withering attacks. Such language from such pious brethren!

Scurrilous charges were made because I dared use the same liberty as Dr. Shelly, to express my disapproval of "Jubilee." Phillip Morrison registered his disapproval of my articles in the harshest of words: "*Whether your errors are a result of ignorance, or a deliberate attempt to deceive, I cannot say.*" There were other demeaning personal charges contained in a "Jubilee Fact Sheet" which was handed out in the 1994 June meeting of the 20th Century luncheon attended by the Morrison and Shelly entourage.

I replied to Phillip that ignorant, I am not. I cited that I, my son, his wife, my two granddaughters, my daughter and husband have 14 earned undergraduate and graduate degrees on every level from the nation's prestigious colleges and universities. A Ph.D. and LL.D. will be added this year.

I also wrote Phillip that I do not intend to deceive anyone because there is no reason why I should. I am not under anybody's "gun" or influence. I leave it to those who know me best to pass judgment on my character.

## STANDING IN JUDGMENT OF DR. SHELLY

In his essay Shelly begs his readers to read to the end of his response before passing judgment. Fowler is dismissed out of hand for proposing a liberation theology which is totally rejected by Shelly. However, at the risk of having Dr. Shelly label me as bigoted, self-righteous, silly, and ignorant, I dare to take issue with him on a select number of his sophistries which are embedded in the "Nashville Eye" essay:

1. He paints himself as a conservative Christian who is honest to offer the biblical historic Christian faith to people and allow them the freedom to exercise their choice of options. [The *sophistry*: Shelly does not disguise that he holds in contempt the conservative churches when he speaks in the assemblies of the denominations who approve of his abusive humor directed against conservative churches of Christ. But in this essay, the impression is that he is solidly on the side of his conservative brethren!]

2. Shelly accurately states that the Bible condemns homosexuality, and he implies that he does also. Nevertheless, there are noticeable ambivalences in Shelly's addressing facets of homosexuality in other situations. He points up the fact that the Bible also condemns adulterers with which he equates thieves, slanderers, greedy church deacons, and gossipy Sunday school teachers. Our question here is: are homosexuals, and gossipy Sunday school teachers to be placed in the category of "going-to-hell sins," or are they separated?

When he writes these words that "we refuse to be intimidated by today's version of political correctness into denying the clear statements of Scripture," where is it "politically correct" to uphold the practices of homosexuality and abortion? This is not the general case throughout the halls of Congress and the marketplace.

[Brother Shelly, you know that you are not really taking a courageous stand. Even your loyal Woodmont Hills church would reject you if you did not reject the blasphemous position of Fowler? Do you not persist in defending the blasphemous *Wineskins* article "Christmas at Matthew's House"?

You know full well that your conservative brethren are opposed to abortion, homosexuality, and such like.

A *second sophistry* is that you are leaving the impression

that you are mainly speaking for churches of Christ as their champion. This is your primary base of operations, and whose money you must not lose.]

3. Dr. Shelly's *third sophistry* is carefully crafted in that he means to appeal to the "rank and file" believers of all Protestant churches who make up the "religious right." He would be the champion of all. And in the meantime, he calculates to increase and to tighten his control over his considerable following among churches of Christ.

[Brother Shelly, we have done what you proposed and have read to the end of your essay. You request then to be judged by your attitude and behavior. This we have done. And we are of the opinion that Fowler has provided you with an opportunity and place to win favor with those with whom you calculate to win favor. Remember I observed your performance at the April 10, 1994 *Post-Easter Celebration* at the Woodmont Christian Church (the church of the liberal Disciples) when you ridiculed and belittled your conservative brethren.

And in this perspective, brother Shelly, don't play your favorite role of the martyr that the liberals are out to "get" you, and that you must be brave. And you think it is "still more honest to offer historic Christian faith to people and allow them to exercise their freedom of choice in relation to its options." So do we.]

### A COMPREHENSIVE POSTSCRIPT

Brother Shelly, why don't you practice what you preach, and leave the conservative churches of Christ alone to work out their salvation by the grace of God with fear and trembling? I am persuaded that George Fowler is as honest in expressing his beliefs as you are. We know that Fowler is coming from the context of the "hermeneutic of suspicion" and gay-liberation theology.

Brother Shelly, are you prepared to face your day of reckoning along with others of your persuasions, that you,

too, subscribe to another version of the "hermeneutic of suspicion"? This radical contemporary theology employs the critical methodology of "deconstruction" in the interpretation of written history.

Brother Shelly, when it comes down to it, is your theology so much different from that of George Fowler? You, too, go against whatever biblical teaching is not to your liking. Fowler says that Moses and Paul did not equate the "same-sex" with homosexuals. You say that baptism is not a scriptural mandate for the forgiveness of sins. And you say that instrumental music is not a "heaven-and-hell" issue. And your liberal colleagues would put women in the pulpit and in the elders' office—and much, much more.

Brother Shelly, what I am saying is that you and George Fowler are feeding from the *same theological trough*. That you both head off in different theological directions does not alter the facts.

I also am saying to members of churches of Christ that your brand of a "hermeneutic of suspicion," which you press at every opportunity to compromise the gospel of Christ, will be infinitely far more damaging than the blasphemous views of George Fowler which will never reach the churches of Christ. The present proof is that troubled and divided churches follow in your wake—and there is no end in sight.

It is my understanding that *Contending for the Faith* goes into many Nashville homes despite the "book burner's" suggestion that they be returned to sender. An informed church in Scripture is a free church in Christ. I am confident that many a church friend who worshipped where I preached in another time will give this article also a fair and unbiased reading and pass judgment accordingly.

—3714 1/2 Belmont  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

## The Murky Beginnings Of The 'New' Hermeneutics

Robert Lawrence

You probably know that the word *hermeneutics* contains the name of the Greek god Hermes, comparable to the Roman god Mercury. In Greek mythology, Hermes was a messenger of the gods. This helps us understand why certain agents of change see their interpretive methods as coming from Mount Olympus. And at least one of the authors of the New Hermeneutics, Rudolph Bultmann, actually incorporates Greek mythology into what he terms the *mythical* aspects of the Jesus story.

The Greek word *hermeneuo*, from which we get our word "hermeneutics," means an *interpreter*. All Christians must be interpreters, otherwise we would have nothing more than words on paper with little meaning. This does not suggest that each person has a unique doctrine. Quite the contrary. Sound interpretation leads to the oneness of a common understanding. As Paul wrote, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Ephesians 3:3,4).

If hermeneutics helps us grasp a true interpretation of scripture, well and good. Nevertheless, any version of

hermeneutics must be seen only as reliable as human wisdom is reliable, since it is made by the hand of man. A system of study must account for the inerrant perfection of God's word. But an attempt to critique the New Hermeneutics is hampered by the nebulous state of its existence: it's like reviewing a book that is not yet fully written.

### HERMENEUTICS HELPS UNDERSTANDING

Orderly methods of interpretation are guidelines based on biblical expressions that are literal, allegorical, analogical, spiritual, inferential, and the like. In the past, these methods proved to be reliable helps in our understanding of holy thought.

The collected work known as *hermeneutics* is merely statements of common sense interpretation, and is not intended to make liturgy of interpretive methods. Rather, such a work *supports* the reasons behind the conclusions we draw from ancient holy writings. We honor a reliable interpretive method that is external to the Bible, not because it is of divine origin, but because it has proved itself a valuable asset in our pursuit of understanding.

### ORIGINS OF THE 'NEW' HERMENEUTICS

To gain the most complete picture of the origins of the

New Hermeneutics, we find ourselves confronted with a need to know something of the words of **Soren Kierkegaard** (1813-1855), and additionally those of **Karl Jaspers** and **Jean Paul Sartre**. It was Kierkegaard who advanced the philosophy of *existentialism* which shows up in the later hermeneutics.

The philosophy of existentialism states that human existence cannot be described by scientific or idealistic terms, but must rely on the analysis of critical (although clouded) situations in human life, especially those of such intensely *subjective* phenomena as anxiety, suffering, feelings of guilt, and the like. This analysis (it is averred) shows the need to make decisive choices through the utility of man's freedom in an uncertain, chancy, and apparently purposeless world.

The same Kierkegaardian argument over the existence, not as an object of thought but of experience, reappears in the New Hermeneutics. Subjectivism is the expeditionary force behind these new methods of interpretation. Simply put, subjectivism states that it is *impossible to know anything for certain*. There is no absolute and objective method of testing whether a statement is true or false. Truth, therefore, can be measured only in subjective terms. You will see this theme reoccurring even in the doctrines of certain of our brethren.

The new hermeneutical turmoil is decidedly German in origin. In 1926, Lutheran Rudolph Bultmann wrote "Jesus And The Word," a work that began the quest for the Jesus of history. This essay foreshadowed the coming New Hermeneutics, as it was later more clearly seen in Bultmann's, "The New Quest for the Historical Jesus." (*Das Verhaltnis der unchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus*—Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitatsverlag, 1961).

Our interest in these matters becomes evident in the modified form of the term, "Christian existentialism," and how it influenced the New Hermeneutics. This term defines the *natural* desire of the creature to seek his Creator. Taking this a step farther, we find the dialectical or crisis theology of **Karl Barth** and **Emil Brunner**, summed up as "the distance between guilty man and omnipotent God." This also is called *Catholic existentialism* and *Protestant existentialism*. Those who follow from the Bultmannian school—particularly **Martin Heidegger** (and in turn, **Gerhard Ebeling** and **Ernst Fuchs**—perpetuate interest in the existentialist theology which he influenced.

#### EXISTENTIALIST VIEW OF UNDERSTANDING

Methods of interpretation growing from the existentialist view state that language (in that it came *before* humanity) forms the basis of human understanding: that is, it defines our *being*. In turn, our being communicates with existence through language, thus making it authentic. This idea is important to our study, because the purpose of the New Hermeneutics is to transmit ancient holy writings (actual events that became text) into *word-events* today. By way of the New Hermeneutics, the word-event of long ago can become a word-event again in our day—even those of the Old Testament.

As a result (it is stated), we should no longer understand ancient holy texts in their historical context. We can now let them speak to our *existence* in our *own* historical context. You can see why modern agents of change insist that correct interpretation is to let only a single passage of text speak to us without the rounded harmony of other related texts. In this way, the word-event takes the shape they wish it to take.

The most significant need among new-doctrine preachers is the social relevance of "the church." So overcome with anguish about what they perceive as the *irrelevance* of old and hackneyed styles of worship, more than a few change-agents turn to the New Hermeneutics to gain authenticity. Alarmingly, their new methods of interpretation seem to allow these men to disregard whole sections of critical text. (In one instance, the entire book of James.)

They've missed something. One perplexing aspect of their crusade is that nothing is more relevant to modern man than the unexpurgated, unaltered truths of the New Testament. Today, what we once saw as biblically sound and fundamental, these men see as out-of-date. More finely put, they miss the idea of law: we enter the Lord's church on God's terms, not ours. It is their affinity for the New Hermeneutics and its license for elastic meanings that propels these men into doctrines that bear no resemblance to common sense understanding.

In my next article, I will continue to examine the evolution of the New Hermeneutics and its presumed authority to alter the evident meanings of scriptural texts.

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# “LIBERALISM”—What Is It?

David P. Brown

The word “liberal” is a generic term which may refer to good as well as evil. That one should be liberal in his financial contribution to the Lord is what God teaches and expects of his children (I Corinthians 16:1,2; II Corinthians 8:2,7). On the other hand, liberalism in doctrine and practice is to loose people from what God in his word has bound upon us (II John 9—ASV—1901). If believed and practiced, said doctrines will send souls to hell. Simply put, liberals are people who, in belief and practice, refuse to be limited by the truth of the New Testament (James 1:25). They want greater liberty than what God’s word allows them.

*It is amazing that brethren can have liberals (in belief and practice) in their very midst for years and not recognize them for what they are.* Why is this the case? Some of the reasons are: 1) general ignorance of the contents of the Bible (Hosea 4:6); 2) no respect for Bible authority (Colossians 3:17); 3) ignorance of how to ascertain Bible authority (II Timothy 2:15); 4) not convicted by the biblical truth known (Hebrews 4:2,6); 5) convicted by the truth, but not possessing the courage of one’s convictions [cowards] (John 12:42); and 6) false concepts of long-suffering, patience, forbearance, meekness, gentleness, kindness, mercy, and love for the brethren (Romans 11:22). *Not one of the biblical concepts listed under point six, allows for the belief, practice, and propagation of error. Not one of the aforementioned concepts implies that sin should not be exposed and rebuked.*

## TRUTH, ERROR DO NOT IMPLY EACH OTHER

It should be clearly understood that truth never implies error. It is just as true that error never implies truth. *Hence, a doctrine or view that implies error is itself erroneous.* If one’s concept of longsuffering implies the toleration of the perpetual erroneous conduct of brethren, one has the wrong concept of longsuffering.

If one thinks that love of the sinner, in or out of the church, does not permit swift and sure rebuke of the sin in one’s life, he has a false concept of love.

People who demonstrate their love for the gospel are to be treated differently from those who manifest their rebelliousness to God and his word.

One would think that a mere cursory reading of the Bible would establish this point.

Please consider the following true/false statements. Such statements will help us see the erroneous definition some give to the terms in point six as well as the fallacious reasoning regarding the same terms.

1. T F The Bible teaches that being *loving, longsuffering, patient, meek, gentle, kind, and merciful* with a person *forbids* reproving the sins of the person with whom one is loving, long-suffering, and the like.
2. T F Paul was *mean spirited* toward the Corinthian brethren when he asked them: “**What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?**” (I Corinthians 4:21).
3. T F Paul manifested a *loving spirit* when he wrote to the Philippian brethren: “**For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels (tender mercies, ASV—1901) of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment**” (Philippians 1:8,9).
4. T F Paul hated the Corinthians and loved the Philippians.
5. T F I know that Paul *loved* both the Corinthians and Philippians *because* he said to them what their spiritual condition demanded they should be told.
6. T F Before answering this question read Acts 13:4-12. Paul loved Sergius Paulus, but hated Barjesus (Elymas).
7. T F Paul should have said to Sergius Paulus what he said to Barjesus.
8. T F The Holy Spirit had Paul to use *harsh* and *unkind* words when he addressed Barjesus.
9. T F The words of the Holy Spirit through Paul to Barjesus prove that neither Paul nor the Holy Spirit loved Barjesus.
10. T F There was a difference in the attitude of Sergius Paulus and Barjesus, but Paul dealt with both of them in a Christian spirit.

11. T F When a person loves the sins in which he is engaged and refuses to be corrected by God’s words of truth, any words that are used to condemn his sins are in his sight *harsh* and *unkind*.
12. T F One loves his brother when he refuses to tell him the truth of the gospel that he needs to hear in order for him to turn from his sins.
13. T F *Unkind* and *harsh* words are words that a person does not deserve to have said to him.
14. T F An example of words that a person does not deserve to have said to him, are the words Paul said to Ananias the high priest: “**God shall smite thee, thou whited wall**” (Acts 23:1-5).
15. T F The following words of Stephen to his audience are words that his audience did not deserve to hear: “**Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye...**” (Acts 7:51).
16. T F Paul told Timothy that “**the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will**” (II Timothy 2:24-26).
17. T F When Paul withstood Peter to the face because of Peter’s sin, he violated the principles that he had given to Timothy concerning how to correct brethren in error (Galatians 2:11ff; II Timothy 2:24-26).

*It is important to understand that the liberal mind will always allow for itself what it will not allow in others.* The liberal mind-set will argue with you that it is wrong to argue; it will practice on you what it seeks to condemn in you; it will become angry at you because it ascribes anger to you; it is critical of criticism; it gossips to oppose gossiping; it pronounces judg-

ment on those it deems guilty of judging; it sows discord among brethren under the guise of building unity; and it

declares, if I cannot rule, I will ruin. Its evil, black, and sinful work is best accomplished under the cloak of dark-

ness in back rooms, back allies and over telephones.

It is the coward's way—the way of

# Houston College of the Bible Lectures



"Isaiah, Vol. 1"  
June 18 - 21, 1995

David P. Brown, Director



## Sunday, June 18

9:30 A.M.	Isaiah Introduces His Book.....	Bob Berard
10:30 A.M.	Jerusalem From Three Perspectives.....	Dub McClish
2:00 P.M.	A Denunciation, the Messianic Age, and Vengeance.....	Marion Fox
3:00 P.M.	A Foolish Reliance and God's Protection.....	Tyler Young
6:00 P.M.	Hezekiah's Illness and Judah's Captivity.....	Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
7:00 P.M.	Sennacherib's Invasion.....	Mac Deaver

## Monday, June 19

9:00 A.M.	Modernism's Attack on Isaiah.....	David P. Brown
10:00 A.M.	Prophecies of Jerusalem, Shebna, and Tyre.....	Roelf Ruffner
11:00 A.M.	Isaiah's First Vision and His Commission.....	Lester Kamp
1:30 P.M.	Jerusalem's Stupidity, Humiliation, and Deliverance.....	Randall Morris
2:30 P.M.	Damascus and Israel Judged.....	Bob Patterson
**2:30 P.M.	What Does God Want Me to Do?.....	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	Another View of the Messianic Age.....	Gus Eoff
7:00 P.M.	Attacks and Prophecies.....	Darrell Conley
8:00 P.M.	A Psalm of Thanksgiving for Redemption.....	Buster Dobbs

## Tuesday, June 20

9:00 A.M.	Messiah's Reign and the Jews Return From Exile.....	Eddie Whitten
10:00 A.M.	Judah and Jerusalem Arraigned.....	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:00 A.M.	Babylon's Downfall.....	Noah Hackworth
1:30 P.M.	Thanksgiving, Exhortation, and Return from Captivity.....	Robin Haley
2:30 P.M.	Moab's Judgment.....	Michael Hatcher
**2:30 P.M.	Discerning Between Good and Evil.....	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	The Future Blessings of the Ransomed Exiles.....	Roy C. Deaver
5:00 P.M.	<b>Houston College of the Bible Honors Roy C. Deaver at the HCB Banquet</b>	
7:00 P.M.	Doom and Judgment.....	Ronnie Hayes
8:00 P.M.	God Speaks of Ethiopia and Egypt.....	Lindell Mitchell

## Wednesday, June 21

9:00 A.M.	Warnings, Scoffers, and a Parable.....	Barry Hatcher
10:00 A.M.	Immanuel Prophesied.....	David Baker
11:00 A.M.	Israel's Doom Declared.....	Andy McClish
1:30 P.M.	An Invader Condemned and a Promise of Deliverance.....	Terry Hightower
2:30 P.M.	God's Indignation Against all the Nations.....	M. L. Sexton
3:30 P.M.	Judgment, Pleading, Deliverance, and Thanksgiving.....	Royce Williamson
7:00 P.M.	The Virgin Birth of Christ.....	Tom Bright
8:00 P.M.	Isaiah in the Eternal Purpose of God.....	Paul Sain

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the self-willed and selfish. It will never meet on the public polemic, platform of honest, forthright debate. It is the tool of liars and hypocrites, sired by the father of all such, Satan himself. It is a mind full of vindictiveness and hate. It constantly seeks its own to the hurt of those it professes to love. It is a corrupted mind-set. To one's face it is all smiles. With a warm handshake this foul character wishes you the best, but behind your back it is constantly plotting your overthrow by any means possible.

Well did Peter and Jude describe such corrupted liberalistic characters (II Peter 2; Jude). Paul declares exactly how they must be dealt with, and we are no better than they if we refuse to obey God in how to deal with them (Romans 16:17,18). Of such John, the apostle of love, wrote: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19). He who wrote the great chapter on love declared that love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (I Corinthians 13:6).

—25403 Lancewood  
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# Notes & Quotes...

**Mike Swanson**, Pontotoc, Mississippi: "I would like to help support brother Ira Rice, Jr., on his missionary work in Russia. Keep up the good work."

**Bill Prather**, Odessa, Texas: "I write you on behalf of a good, sound, deserving brother—**R. L. (Rick) Popejoy**... Do you know of anyone willing to take over this work in Wyoming?"

[NOTE: Brother Prather enclosed something from brother Popejoy, as follows:

## "It's A Long Hard Road

"One thing for sure, raising support is not for the weak nor the feeble-minded. My first real attempt has been one of my most interesting challenges.

"Do not mistake my words as complaining, they are not. They are simply an attempt to let you know that the road in Wyoming is a long, hard road, BUT one that we believe is well worth it. The benefit for the work in the Northwest is paramount above any of the minor aches and pains we might receive along the way. We love the challenge and believe that we are up to it.

"One of the biggest problems that exists is the rapid departure going on in and among the churches of Christ. With this in mind it makes the road a little longer and a little harder.

"Another problem, personally speaking, is the waiting period. We committed to the

work in the Northwest back in November; it is now January, but we do not move to Sheridan until June. This, it seems, is a long waiting process but due to our commitment to keep our children in the same school until the end of the school year, we felt this waiting period necessary.

"With this waiting period also naturally comes forgetful minds toward the work that we have proposed...

"We hope that 1994 was a good year for your spiritual development and that 1995 will be even better. If you think of others who might be interested in the Northwest work, please give them a copy of this bulletin."

Fund-raising among the churches of Christ can be hard indeed. We are happy to mention via Contending for the Faith brother Popejoy's need for support. For a copy of his aforementioned bulletin—and to better acquaint yourself with them and their needs—please address inquiries to them as follows: **Rick & Mona Popejoy**, Post Office Box 72, Avery, Texas 75554. IYR Jr.]

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A rather curious letter came to hand several months ago from someone who gave his name, which I am withholding since he was not writing for publication. In part, he said, "I'd like to thank you, as editor, for the insight and instruction your publication has brought to me over the past decade. I admire your persever-

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7:45 p.m. Robin Haley Acts & N. T. Church

Sat., June 3:

10:00 a.m. David Brown 1 & 2 Pet., & Jude  
11:00 a.m. Robin Haley Gal., Eph., Phil., & Col.

12:00 a.m. Lunch Break

2:00 p.m. Joseph Meador 1 & 2 Corinthians  
3:00 p.m. Carl Garner Romans  
4:00 p.m. Glen Williams James; 1,2,3 John

5:00 - 7:00 Dinner Break

7:00 p.m. Gary Colley 1 & 2 Thess., Phile.  
7:45 p.m. Johnny Ramsey Revelation

Sun., June 4:

9:30 a.m. Johnny Ramsey The Gospel Accts.  
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**Tim Ayers, Lectureship Director**

ance concerning false teachers and doctrinal issues.

"However, I must add that I no longer find **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH** to be edifying and uplifting for me or for my family; nor does it particularly help us to live Christian lives centered on Christ's teachings.

"Please discontinue sending your magazine to me. No reply is necessary..."

**[NOTE: I did not respond to this letter. If YOU were the editor of a militant, doctrinal paper, such as CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, how would YOU have replied? Or would you! We took him off our mailing list, of course. It takes all kinds. IYR Jr.]**

\*\*\*\*\*

**John M. Brown**, minister, Flatwoods Church of Christ, Flatwoods, Kentucky: "I so appreciate your great work with **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**. It is on the 'cutting edge' of gospel journalism, and thank God for that. When we hear all the garbage being spewed forth today, being called 'gospel preaching,' it is sickening. And I am glad you are there, brother Rice, to turn up the heat and burn the britches of these watered-down liberals who have forgotten what they believe.

"I take these matters personally. I was not reared in the Lord's church, and if the gospel preacher who taught me the truth had believed some of the compromising pabulum being set forth today, I never would have left my denominational upbringing. I thank God that I was shown the difference between the Lord's church and man-made denominations, and between God's plan for saving man and the theological rubbish that leaves men in sin. So if the man who taught me hadn't known the purpose of baptism (and taught me), and the unique character of Christ's church (and taught me), and the Bible as our only source of religious authority (and taught me), and worship in spirit and in truth (and taught me), then I would probably BE LOST TODAY! Yes, I take it personally!

"If the Bible is true (and it is), God doesn't expect of us to be compromisers and politicians, seeking alliances with false teachers, sharing and learning how to 'cope' with our religious neighbors. God expects us to FIGHT the fight of faith, and God wants us to WAR a good warfare as soldiers of Jesus Christ (I Timothy 1:18,19; 6:12; II Timothy 2:3; II Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:10-18).

"Have some in the army of the Lord forgotten that we are in a war? Have they laid down their weapons? or maybe they never picked them up! The church of our Lord is not a rest home, social club, or summer resort! It is an ARMED CAMP composed of foot soldiers of Jesus Christ who are scaling Satan's barriers to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. We serve our God as we march under the orders of the captain of our salvation and as we run, fight, and WIN!

"The beautiful old hymn says,

*Am I a soldier of the cross,  
A follower of the Lamb;  
And shall I fear to own His cause,  
Or blush to speak His name?*

*Must I be carried to the skies  
On flow'ry beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize  
And sailed through bloody seas?*

*Sure I must FIGHT if I would reign;  
Increase my courage, Lord;  
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,  
Supported by Thy word.*

"So, brother Rice, I just wanted to take the opportunity to write you and let you know how much you are appreciated. Keep up the good work of exposing the heretics among us! And if they yelp when they get stung, you'll know where to keep aiming and firing for you will know you've hit the target! And until they repent, keep pouring it on—it's the spotlight of God's word that is revealing their ungodliness."

**[NOTE: We receive so many of "the other kind" of letters, how delightful and encouraging it is to receive one such as the foregoing! Brother Brown demonstrates an ability to write straight to the point. We hope to receive articles from him for future publication.**

**We, like he, take doctrinal matters seriously—and, believe me, there is a difference between the LORD'S church and the DENOMINATIONS!**

**The LORD'S army is in a war—but some who like to SING about being "soldiers of the cross" evidently never heard of it! How they can fight that war WITHOUT fighting is beyond me! IYR Jr.]**

**The Dahlstroms**, 35 Wells Road, West Hartford, Connecticut 06107-1634: "Because you have helped alert us to the false teaching that is being promoted in the Lord's body in many places in our land, we wanted to send you material we have saved over the last couple of years and put together to give to our brothers and sisters locally and to some preachers here in New England... We have given out 36 copies so far—just giving, not selling."

**[NOTE: One thing I have learned is that it does almost no good to send such material to PREACHERS and/or ELDERS. If you don't get it to the MEMBERS, who, in turn, will approach their local preachers and elders, it usually goes into the trash.**

**As you know, we have been getting out "special mailings" to the member-families inside several big churches who are fostering error—and it truly is having a telling effect. Our advice to these good people, if they still are having doctrinal trouble in New England, is to decide which congregations and preachers are CAUSING it, then send their material to as many MEMBERS and FAMILIES inside those congregations as possible. Many will get angry and insult them; however, others will pay attention to the information. We just have to learn to "take" the insults and seek to pluck the rest as "brands from the burning." IYR Jr.]**

**Lloyd E. Gale, Jr.**, elder-minister, Lebanon, Tennessee: "Rubel Shelly is yet mean-spirited to multitudes of faithful Christians who have preceded him. There are yet a number of us among the living who were part of the Church of Christ, not only in the 1950's but also in the 1940's and the 1930's. Nothing was being taught or preached in the 1950's that has not been preached by faithful Christians all the way back to the establishment of the New Testament Church.

"Since Rubel admits that he preached with a motive of 'fear and anger' and that he was 'a mean person,' he was indeed wrong. However, even if Rubel's MOTIVE was wrong in the 1950's, what he THEN wrote and preached was the truth. We are reminded of what the apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 1:15-18 (when there were some in that day who were preaching Christ from a motive of envy, strife, and contention and not from a pure heart of sincerity): **What then? Notwithstanding, every man, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached: and I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice.**

"Rubel Shelly has fallen prey to Satanic German Rationalism and the new 'grace' he has discovered is nothing more than the old Calvinistic doctrine.

"Faithful Christians, beginning with the apostles and continuing to the present have proclaimed the Bible doctrine of grace with much reverence, love, and appreciation. The 'grace' Rubel now proclaims is a perverted and false grace.

"Today, Rubel lacks the courage to defend what he now teaches and he has become what Jesus described as the blind leading the blind (Matthew 15:14).

"Rubel speaks of 'abandoning some Church of Christ traditions.' Let him be man enough to name such traditions and to defend the same in honest debate.

"Did Rubel really say that 'the right answers' have no relation to life? Must we thereby conclude that the wrong answers Rubel now purposes to bear a relationship to life? We must ask what kind of life do wrong answers relate unto?

"Rubel (as a child of the 1950's) is so egocentric that he thinks the church began when he came of age. The 1950's do not identify the origin or a peculiar doctrine of the Lord's church. The church began on the first day of Pentecost after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus and will continue as long as God chooses. Faithful Christians will believe, teach, and practice 'the faith once delivered unto the saints.'

"Rubel obviously prefers the limelight to the truth he once faithfully proclaimed and no doubt will be well received by this present world, but this too shall pass."

**[NOTE: If brother Shelly would like to accept the challenge to debate which has been outstanding now for several years, let him so inform brother Gale and let's get on with it. He can address brother Gale in care of the Powell Grove Church of Christ, 1186 Martha-Leeville Road, Lebanon, Tennessee 37086—or telephone him at (615) 444-9574. IYR Jr.]**

**Tom Meacham**, Murray, Kentucky: "We eagerly await each issue of *Contending for the Faith*... Not a day passes that I don't grieve for the church. Could I be overly jealous? When I say I grieve for it I am saying that so many I know are caught up and sucked up by false teaching and it seems futile to endeavor to teach them better. And, as you are well aware, the clock of life for folks like you and me shows the time to be late. Lots of teaching needs to be done NOW.

"Your appointment of David Brown could not be improved upon. That, at least, is my thought.

"If I am not mistaken, Madison is feeling the crunch. I know lots of people there. How sad.

"If I had hit that \$1,000,000 lottery as the couple in Phoenix did, you may be assured zeros would have been added to the enclosed check..." **[NOTE: He enclosed \$50.00 for our "special mailings." IYR Jr.]**

**Stephen Wiggins**, Burkburnett, Texas: "The recent February issue of *Contending for the Faith* was par excellence, as usual. And now the real reason I'm writing. Your selection of brother David Brown to succeed you as editor is the perfect choice. Brother Brown will hold the line and do it up right as long as he is among the living. I'm sure of that. Appreciate your work. Keep the pressure on..."

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**Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee:** "On Christmas night our daughter Gail and husband Larry were awakened about 1:00 a.m. by an explosive noise. Their house was on fire and they escaped with their pajamas on. Larry was burned while running out but nothing real serious. Their beautiful house is nothing but a pile of ashes. They have moved into our house and are living upstairs in the apartment..."

"On Thursday night, about 2:00 a.m., our son Bud and Patti (his wife) were awakened by a neighbor who was driving home and saw great billows of fire and smoke pouring from their house. Elaine and I rushed over after we received the call and thankfully Bud, Patti and the two little boys had been awakened and were out safely. The house burned half way down and smoke has permeated the remainder. That which was not burned is black... Please keep us in your prayers."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Someone told me that elders and preachers can receive this publication free of charge," an

appreciated elder wrote recently. "I am an elder of the \_\_\_\_\_ Church of Christ, in \_\_\_\_\_, Alabama, and wish to continue receiving your publication. If I have been misinformed, please let me know and I will send you my check. Keep up the good work."

[NOTE: "Yes, for several years we DID send Contending for the Faith free of charge to elders;" I replied, in part, "however, we got so far behind with our finances that we had to discontinue this several years ago."

"When you wrote, the single subscription rate was \$6.00 per year. In the meantime, the cost of paper alone increased 10% per month over a period of four months, together with other costs; therefore, the subscription rate, as of NOW, has been increased to \$10.00 for one year, \$27.00 for three years, or \$40.00 for five years. We regret the increases as much as anyone; however, such are the facts of publishing life these days.

"Thank you for writing. We look forward to your renewal." IYR Jr.]

**Manuel K. Pelayo, Manila, Philippines:** "Thank you for the set of 27 lessons of your 'Basic Bible Course' which I found to be just the right one for the work I am doing here. I cannot see how anyone can fail to understand the important message from God the way you presented it in these lessons."

**Dema Lunsford, Olney, Texas:** "Your publication conveys hostility—not love. You 'sow discord' among brethren. 'Contending' and 'being contentious' are not the same thing. Somewhere along the line you lost sight of Christ's mission and set out on your own... Please remove our name from your mailing list."

**Lura Simmons, Lindsay, Oklahoma:** "I enjoy the paper very much and am sending in three (3) gift subscriptions for one year each. Enclosed you will find a check for same. You can use whatever is left as needed." [NOTE: Sister Simmons added an extra \$10.00 onto her check. We put it into our fund for "special mailings." IYR Jr.]

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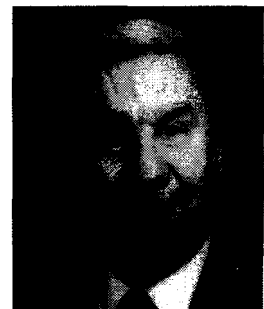
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#### Saturday, June 10

7:00 PM It Makes a Difference in Doctrine Garry Barnes  
8:00 PM The Doctrine of Christ Is Understandable Clifford Newell, Jr.

#### Sunday, June 11

9:00 AM Unity and Fellowship Eddie Whitten  
10:00 AM Morals Paul Vaughn  
*Lunch Break*  
2:00 PM New Hermeneutic Versus Christ's Doctrine Buster Dobbs  
3:00 PM Divorce and Remarriage Noah Hackworth  
4:00 PM Jehovah's Witnesses Versus Christ's Doctrine Joe Gilmore  
*Dinner Break*  
7:00 PM Pentecostalism Versus Christ's Doctrine Stephen P. Waller  
8:00 PM Why the Church Is Not a Denomination Stanley Ryan

#### Monday, June 12

9:00 AM Methodism Versus Christ's Doctrine Bobby Liddell  
10:00 AM Determining Christ's Doctrine Roy Deaver  
11:00 AM Premillennialism Versus Christ's Doctrine Howell Bigham  
*Lunch Break*  
2:00 PM History of Man's Doctrine J. E. Choate  
3:00 PM Emotionalism Versus Proper Emotions Dub McClish  
3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion on Emotionalism  
*Dinner Break*  
7:00 PM Evolution Versus Christ's Doctrine Garry Brantley  
8:00 PM Modesty Robin Haley

#### Tuesday, June 13

9:00 AM Independent Christian Church Versus Christ's Doctrine Ken Chumbley  
10:00 AM Determining Christ's Doctrine Roy Deaver  
11:00 AM Christ's Doctrine of Knowledge Versus Agnosticism Mac Deaver  
*Lunch Break*  
2:00 PM History of Man's Doctrine J. E. Choate  
3:00 PM The Holy Spirit Tom Bright  
3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion on The Holy Spirit  
*Dinner Break*  
7:00 PM Feminism Versus Christ's Doctrine Burt Jones  
8:00 PM Catholicism Versus Christ's Doctrine John Shannon

#### Wednesday, June 14

9:00 AM Presbyterianism Versus Christ's Doctrine Keith Mosher  
10:00 AM Determining Christ's Doctrine Roy Deaver  
11:00 AM Calvinism Versus Christ's Doctrine Daniel Denham  
*Lunch Break*  
2:00 PM History of Man's Doctrine J. E. Choate  
3:00 PM The Divided Assembly David Brown  
3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion on The Divided Assembly  
*Dinner Break*  
7:00 PM The Doctrine of Christ Darrell Conley  
8:00 PM Baptism Guss Eoff

## Bellview Lectures Information

### HOUSING

Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526). The following motel is available nearby and is providing *special rate* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Quality Inn (6911 Pensacola Blvd.) offers the following prices (tax not included) \$35.00—1 to 4 people per room; a restaurant is located in the hotel and several other restaurants are located nearby. Their phone number is 904/479-3800. When checking into the above motel, show them this advertisement announcing this special rate, or when calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the *Bellview Lectures*.

### MEALS

The women of the *Bellview Church of Christ* will provide a free lunch from Monday through Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants and a map will be available at the registration table in the foyer.

### EXHIBITS

Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of *Bellview elders* and available space. Exhibits are expected from schools, children's homes, book stores, publications, and other projects of general interest to the brotherhood.

### TRANSPORTATION

If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office. We will arrange to meet you at no charge if we know when, where, airline, flight number, and the number in your party.

### BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*The Doctrine Of Christ Versus The Doctrines Of Men*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-six chapters and approximately 350 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

### AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

All lectures will be recorded on cassette audio tapes and video tapes. These tapes may be purchased during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail order afterwards. Order blanks and price information will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* or by mail upon request. (We request the cooperation of all who attend the *Bellview Lectures* in keeping the pulpit area free of privately-owned recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the recording room.



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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## TRAGEDY in San Antonio

Darrell Conley

Listening to the tape recording of **Max Lucado's** sermon he delivered at Trinity Baptist Church was one of the most unpleasant experiences I have ever had. Coming from a family of gospel preachers and having spent more than forty years, so far, in the pulpit myself, I find it very difficult to observe what is happening to the church that I have spent my life trying to build up. Lucado is one of the most blatant examples of the present apostasy, but not the only one. For many years, those of us who were alarmed at what we heard and saw were told we were mistaken. We were told we had misunderstood what had been said. We were told we were seeing things that were not there. But we were right! There has been for many years a departure from the truth, but those leading it did their best to hide what they were doing while still doing it. With the help of uninformed brethren and brethren without backbone or conviction, they have been very effective. They have built their power base in the colleges and churches to the point where they do not have to be subtle or deceitful anymore. They have hauled down their false colors and have hoisted the Jolly Roger as they continue to pirate the church.

It has been clear to us in San Antonio that Max Lucado and the Oak Hills Church of Christ (of which my uncle was a founding member) have abandoned the truth. Several years ago we at the Northern Oaks Church of Christ here in San Antonio, received a letter from Saint John Newman Catholic Church (dated November 24, 1989) signed by "Father" **Tony Cummins** inviting us to come have fellowship with them and celebrate the beginning of "Advent." It announced that the speaker would be Max Lucado of the Oak Hills Church of Christ. One who attended said that Max

addressed the priest as "Father," and they held their hands clasped over their heads to signify unity and encouraged those in the audience to do the same. I have a tape of a sermon and prayer by Max, April 6, 1990, at the Trinity Church here in San Antonio (a charismatic group not to be confused with the Trinity Baptist Church where he spoke this April 2). In his sermon and prayer he praised the work of this pentecostal group and thanked God for "this great church." He recently delivered a sermon at Oak Hills where he said that he had no problem with worshipping with musical instruments (see *Biblical Notes*, ed. **Roy Deaver**, Nov./Dec. 1994).

It comes as no surprise then that he and *liberal* Baptist preacher, **Buckner Fanning**, agreed to swap pulpits (at Lucado's suggestion). They christened April 2, 1995, "Unity Sunday." Max told the audience at Trinity Baptist that when the agreement to swap was announced at Oak Hills, they applauded. So once again the wolf was invited by the shepherds into the flock, and the sheep bleated their approval.

His sermon at Trinity Baptist was filled with oversimplification or avoidance of the issues that divide us from the Baptists, with ridicule directed at those who might oppose such a "unity" meeting, including a retread of the old joke about those who thought they were the only ones in heaven. The Baptists really got a kick out of that one. Over and over he stressed that the problem of disunity was not doctrinal, but resulted from arguing about who was the greatest in the kingdom of God and stubborn, hardheaded Christians who refuse to get along. Since the Baptists have always been willing to recognize any who claimed faith in Christ as a Christian, who do you suppose he was talking about?

(Continued on Page 6)



# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 6

June/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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Associate Editorial...

## Max Lucado, Prince of the Apostates

Believe it or not, I had much rather have entitled this editorial, "Max Lucado, an Example of a Faithful Gospel Preacher." However, Jesus teaches us to:

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (Matthew 7:15-20).

The "fruit" of anything is its product. Thus, in the aforementioned passage, Jesus clearly taught us to examine a person's product (conduct and doctrine) in the light of God's word before accepting him for what he claims to be. The apostles Paul and John taught the same regarding the Christian's responsibility to prove and try (test) a person before fellowshipping him (I Thessalonians 5:21; I John 4:1). Hence, the Holy Spirit makes such "proving" and "testing" a necessary part of faithfulness to God.

## SOME ARE WILLFULLY BLIND TO THE ABUNDANT EVIDENCE

In the front page article of this issue Darrell Conley, faithful gospel preacher of the Northern Oaks Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas, gives Lucado's errors greater exposure. The abundance of evidence proving that Lucado has made shipwreck of the faith (I Timothy 1:19) has been available for several years. More of the same kind of evidence is revealed elsewhere in this issue. However, because people see what they want to see, adequate evidence and credible witnesses have little to do with conclusions and positions drawn and held by them.

In 1991 on pages 113-120 of his book *Behold the Pattern*, Goebel Music well documented Lucado's chicanery as well as his vain attempts to defend his belief and conduct. The evidence contained therein dates back to early 1989. Brother Music points out that Lucado (1) referred to **Chuck Swindol** as a Christian writer, (2) supported ecumenism, (3) taught that the New Testament is not a divine blueprint, (4) praised the existentialist theologian **Karl Barth**, (5) fellowships Roman Catholics, (6) co-authored a book entitled *Christ in Easter* with sectarians **Charles Colson**, **Billy Graham** and **Joni Eareckson Tada**, (7) and stated that the sectarian preacher **Dwight L. Moody** was in the kingdom and when Moody died he went to heaven. After all of this and more **Abilene Christian (?) University** selected Lucado as their outstanding alumnus in 1991. By their selection A.C.U. further declared their opposition to pure, primitive, New Testament Christianity.

Again in 1992 Kevin Cauley and Cleo Reeder documented the same antics of Lucado in their book *The Worldly University*, pp. 11-24. A.C.U. attempted a reply to Cauley and Reeder's material. In 1993 I saw fit to expose A.C.U.'s duplicity in my booklet *Abilene Christian University, "Ever Changing, Never Changing, ?"*.

In a comment in A.C.U.'s student newspaper, *Optimist*, 5/1/92, page 4, regarding Cauley and Reeder (Yes, Lucado, or any liberal, can speak negatively when it suits his purpose), he was quoted as saying, "Much of this could have been better received if it had been discussed over a cup of coffee. When there is never any honest dialogue, there are never any sincere solutions." I pointed out his rebuke of himself in the following manner.

**Major Premise:** Any time brothers speak negatively about other brothers in print without first coming to that brother in person, there is detrimental effect.

**Minor Premise:** Max Lucado is a brother who spoke negatively in print about other brothers (Cauley and Reeder) without coming to them in person.

**Conclusion:** Max Lucado is a brother who speaks with "detrimental effect."

The premises are true and the syllogism is valid. Thank you, Max Lucado, for proving that liberals **DO NOT** practice what they demand of others.

(David P. Brown, *Abilene Christian University, "Ever Changing Never Changing"*, (Austin, TX: *Biblical Notes*, 1993), p. 14.

### WHEN WILL BRETHERN EVER LEARN?

A century ago apostates were having a field day in the church. The majority of the people had digressed into the corrupt Christian Church. The attitude of those who comprised the Christian Church was the same as Lucado and the rest of the heresy tribe of today. To emphasize this point please consider the following salient quotations.

We have been pained for some time to see reproach cast upon those who insist upon faithful obedience to the law of God, as the condition of his blessing, as *legalists*, and the principle that required the submission *legalism*...Some of our progressive brethren have even gone so far as to deny there is any law in the New Testament as there was in the Old....

The tendency of our brethren's speculative distinction on these subjects is to weaken the sense of obligation to comply with the full requirements of God's will, and to give people license to follow some impulse, passion or prejudice which they may conceive to be the suggestion of faith within, that becomes law to itself (David Lipscomb, "Legalism and Obedience," *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. XIII, No. 17 (April 27, 1871), pp. 389, 390).

They are partial to the "pious" in other sects; yet they pounce unmercifully upon the faults of their own brethren. They appear doubtful that brethren are right in anything. They claim to have made greater progression spiritually; in that inner life, and in the secret walks with God. (Moses E. Lard, "The Progressive vs. The Sound." *Apostolic Times*, Vol. K, No. 1 (April 15, 1869), p. 1).

Solomon by inspiration declared "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which

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is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9). As long as the world lasts the faithful children of God will battle with unbelievers and apostates. Hence, we can always expect from the Lucado's and their ilk complete disregard and hatred for the authority of the word of God (II Peter 2:10-19; Jude 10-19). Paul said it best when he pointed out the responsibility of the faithful toward the Lucado's of his day as well as describing the apostate's twisted character. "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; also see I Timothy 4:1, 2). The wise have always appreciated credible witnesses and adequate evidence, but no matter what is proven by the evidence, fools will do as they please to their eternal destruction (Matthew 15:10-14).

—David P. Brown  
Associate Editor

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Brethren,

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Darrell Conley 494-2499

The write up of March 25, 1995 in the San Antonio Express-News, page 9B, written by Ron Wilson, is most disturbing. The article indicated that Buckner Fanning would preach to those in your charge Sunday, April 2, 1995 at 8:30, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m.

SERVICES

Sunday  
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You, as elders of the Oak Hills congregation, are allowing Max Lucado to lead the Christian souls that have been committed to your safekeeping into the denominational world. As elders, you should never allow a Baptist preacher, much less a "liberal" Baptist preacher (or any denominationalist), into your pulpit.



Please tell us how you can consent to such an arrangement, knowing that the Baptists teach that one is saved by faith alone, and then are baptized to get into the Baptist church. You know this should never be allowed.

"My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee,...(Hosea 4:6 and verses following). "For 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" (Acts 20:29-30).

No doubt, Christ is grieved that such would be allowed in a congregation of His church. This is a step into apostasy.

In His Service,

  
W.C. Boyd  
  
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## ECUMENIC MAX in the ALAMO CITY

# Pair of preachers planning to swap their pulpits April 2

By Ron Wilson  
Express-News Staff Writer

Call it ecumenicalism.  
Call it a busman's holiday.

On April 2, Oak Hills Church of Christ and Trinity Baptist Church will trade preachers for a day.

What makes "Unity Day" special is that neither denomination has been known in recent years for opening its pulpits to preachers from outside the faith.

The Rev. Max Lucado, Oak Hills pastor, said Unity Day will be a time when he and his fellow preacher, the Rev. Buckner Fanning, underscore what unites their congregations in God's love rather than the denominational doctrines that keep them apart.

"There is so much disunity — in education, in politics, even with our neighbors," Lucado said. "This is a gesture of unity, a statement of acceptance."

Lucado said he and Fanning first discussed trading pulpits three years ago.

Then, while preparing a recent sermon series, Lucado said he was struck by the words of John 17:21 that call for Christian unity so the world may believe that Jesus was sent by God.

Swept by the power of the passage, Lucado went to church elders and said: "Now we need to take a step."

They agreed, then Fanning agreed, and Unity Day was born.

Lucado will preach the 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. morning services at Trinity; Fanning will speak at Oak Hills at 8:30, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m.

The above article appeared in the March 25, 1995 issue of the San Antonio *Express-News* and further evidences Lucado's vain attempts at spiritual miscegenation.

The advertisement at right appeared in the October 7, 1994 issue of the *Houston Chronicle* announcing a Best of Times concert and conference featuring the powerfully voiced **Kathy Troccoli** and the award winning **Max Lucado**—both for only \$7 a ticket.

“Whenever I see a man call God ‘Father,’ I see a brother.”

— The Rev. Max Lucado  
Oak Hills Church of Christ

Though the day's theme is unity, the pastors said, it's not ecumenicalism.

"Ecumenism has gotten a black eye," Lucado said. "Some people see it as compromise. This is not compromise. What we have in common is greater than our differences."

"Whenever I see a man call God 'Father,' I see a brother," Lucado said.

Fanning agreed: "(It's) unity of spirit, not unification of organization."

Fanning also downplayed criticism from fellow Baptists concerned about doctrinal purity.

"We expect some flak," he said.

"We've already gotten some of that flak. But the churches that are not inclusive... are the real losers."

Baptist pastors read the works of Martin Luther and John Calvin to prepare their sermons, Fanning said.

"And for them to say they wouldn't let John Calvin or Martin Luther preach from their pulpit is hypocrisy."

Fanning said his message to Oak Hills worshipers will be the "Power of love: Only love can change a life... only love can change a heart."

In his guest sermon, Lucado said, he will use the allegory of Christians serving in God's navy: Some serve below, some on the upper decks. When they walk around they see people with different clothes, with different views on how to get to land. But when it's time to fight, they stand shoulder to shoulder to get the job done.

"That's a great analogy," Fanning said. "As a former Marine who wasn't necessarily in love with the Navy, I can appreciate that."

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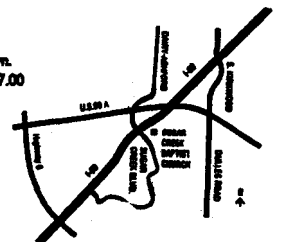


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# T R A G E D Y

(Continued from Page 1)

He indicated that division was in part because we like to hang around those we like.

I think I speak for myself and most faithful brethren when I say, this is not the problem! I have no animosity toward Baptists. Some of the people I have loved most are Baptists or Catholics or other sects. My problem with any religious group is not personal or not wanting to be in fellowship with them. I would love to be in Christian fellowship with every person on the face of the earth. God wants all to be saved, but they must be willing **"to come unto the knowledge of the truth"** (I Timothy 2:4). Not all will be saved. Many will be eternally damned, not because God desires it to be that way, but because many will neither hear nor obey the truth. Truth matters. [Truth is the issue, Max, not attitude.] But if he and other "change agents" can successfully paint us as unloving and hard-hearted, this *ad hominem* attack not only will discredit us, but Max and his crowd are seen as superior beings who are able to rise above the pettiness of their opposition. They have seldom been willing to discuss the real issues, certainly not in public debate, but are content to misrepresent and vilify us, while pretending butter wouldn't melt in their mouths! [Do you dare be fair and honest with us, Max and Rubel and Andre and Calvin and what shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Reuel and Carl and Leroy and Jon and Royce.]

He told that audience of precious lost souls that they were all going to get to heaven. He told them that unity already existed, we just had to preserve it. He illustrated unimportant doctrinal disagreements by mentioning predestination and the impossibility of apostasy! The only thing we must be agreed on is Christ, according to Max. We can evidently ignore everything that Christ and the apostles taught on every other subject and be faithful Christians! Ignore what 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."**

Pay no attention to Mark 16:16, **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."** Trust Christ, but don't believe what He said in John 8:32, **"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** And whatever you do, pay no attention to what Christ and the apostles had to say about the nature of love: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments....He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him"** (John 14:15, 21). **"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous"** (I John 5:2-3).

His statements regarding the nature of unity were poorly thought out and contradictory. He said that he hoped God was pleased with their "Unity Sunday." He said he hoped God was saying that He was glad they were trying to get along. He said that the Baptists and the Church of Christ should face the enemy shoulder to shoulder. He made no distinction between important error and unimportant error as long as we all believe in Christ (not defined). He argued that if God is willing to overlook our small and puny doctrinal problems, we should be able to. Max overlooked the major premise of his argument and didn't begin to prove that God overlooks doctrinal differences.

He closed by asserting that he represented the Oak Hills Church of Christ and then told the Trinity Baptist Church, "I accept you." He said he appreciated what they have done through the years and he was honored to be part of their family. He then offered the invitation by telling them that if any had not accepted Christ to open the door and invite Him in "while we stand and sing," at which point the organ began to play.

How can someone who at one point evidently knew the truth stand before a crowd of misled and confused and honest people and further mislead them? When we confirm precious lost souls in their deadly error, we commit a grievous offense against love, love of them and love of God. That is a sin which I do not want to meet in the judgment day!

We are not mean. We take no pleasure in the loss of souls or division among those who profess to believe in Christ. We take no pleasure in the loss of men like Max Lucado. But we are appeased. We truly want to please God. We want to go only by his word. We attempt at all times to humble ourselves and repress our personal wishes and wills in order that we may submit to the will of Almighty God. That is not arrogance. That is humility. That is not legalism. That is Christianity.

What a tragedy we have seen in the past thirty-five years in our brotherhood! Division and digression have visited us again. Thousands of souls will be lost as a result and hundreds of churches. But let us not despair. We have a great task before us to rebuild and pass on to our children and to the lost of tomorrow the restored church of Christ. Let us take heart and press on.

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# NOT ONCE IN 2,000 YEARS!

Bill Jackson

[Associate Editor's Note: "HE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH" (Hebrews 11:4)—In going through the article files of the paper, I found the following unpublished article by the late W. N. "Bill" Jackson. The post mark revealed that the article was mailed to brother Rice on December 3, 1990. This was only four months and two days before his death on April 5, 1991. Though four plus years have passed since our fellow warrior, brother, and friend laid his armor down, this article is as timely and needful now as when Bill drew it afresh from his IBM Electric typewriter. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13).]

The church of the Lord has been in existence for nearly 2,000 years. Every statement in the word of God about the nature, work, worship and blessings within the family of God has been tried and tested, and truth has been verified over and over again. God's system works—always has, always will. Above all of this, those in the kingdom have learned that "every word from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) is sure, can be relied upon, and works to the end God says concerning it. God is true when he speaks concerning righteousness, and he is true when he speaks concerning iniquity, blessing in the former, and condemning in the latter.

Even those in the kingdom have not learned these things in many places. There is a phenomenon existing pertaining to error that is terribly disturbing, and the very nature of it proves it not to be from God. Therefore, it must be from the other side! It is this: Long after doctrinal corruptness has set in, and long after a congregation's elders, preachers and members have shown that they do not intend to walk in the old paths, otherwise faithful individu-

als and families remain with them, continue to contribute to their work, and thus lend support to them in all ways, "hoping to turn them around!" It begins to smack of an individual's overmuch estimate of his own power and influence when he feels that against an evil tide which has been working for some years, he has the ability to turn it around! As we said at the outset, "Why do some think this, when it hasn't taken place, no, NOT ONCE IN 2,000 YEARS!?" Can anyone recall an instance wherein a congregation cut loose its New Testament moorings and then, for the sake of a faithful individual or family, returned to the truth?

Some New Testament instances can help us here. We note that Paul did not tell the Corinthians to continue to endure the filth of the fornicator's influence on and on, in the hope they could "turn him around" (I Corinthians 5). In this case, he did turn around, but it was some time AFTER they had disfellowshipped him! They did not continue with him in his sin, and were in a position to gain his leaving of their fellowship. In writing to Titus, Paul did

not urge an abiding with a false teacher on and on, after the teaching of truth and after repeated warnings were given, in the hope that in staying with him in his error, "you could turn him around." Paul's instructions were clear: "After the first and second admonition, reject!" (Titus 3:10). Paul also spoke, to the Romans, of those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine, and gave the instructions that these were to be "marked and avoided" (Romans 16:17). Of course, teaching must be done, and concerns expressed, and warnings given as to the action that will have to be taken if repentance is not forthcoming, but then, take the action that separates you from the evil work!

In this, obedience to God and remaining pure is vastly more important than "staying at the old home place" when Satan has taken over. It may well be true that "Granddaddy gave the land on which the church building rests" and many most wonderful memories attach to the location, but those faithful to God cannot give their lives to support wickedness there! The word still

## URGENT APPEAL

**Jeff Bradford Sims** is in need of lung transplant surgery. Jeff is 15 years old. He was diagnosed with *cystic fibrosis* shortly after he was born. Jeff has battled this disease all of his life. Jeff is a member of the Mabank Church of Christ, as are his parents, Oscar and Nancy Sims. Jeff's grandmother, Sallie Hebisen, is a member here as well. In order for Jeff to receive this transplant, the church at Mabank has undertaken to raise enough money to help the Sims family. We are appealing to the brotherhood to help in this endeavor. We **urgently** need to raise \$180,000 to have Jeff placed on the transplant list. The entire cost of this procedure is estimated to be between \$250,000 and \$300,000. Please prayerfully consider sending a donation to the **Jeff Bradford Sims LIFE Fund**, Mabank Church of Christ, Post Office Box 1386, Mabank, Texas 75147. For more information, contact Kerry Clark (903) 887-0311.



says it: **“Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing”** (II Corinthians 6:17). And the fact remains that in the entire history of the church, when a congregation persists in turning from truth, has any man or family, in abiding therein and supporting the wrong, turned it all around? The answer is, NOT ONCE IN 2,000 YEARS!

Early on, when some men had been clearly and correctly identified as false teachers, brother X consented to appear on a workshop with them. When concerned brethren asked him about this, his reply was “I figure in being with them, and presenting truth to them, maybe I

can turn them around.” Well, even if there was a glimmer of hope, it would be because he spoke on the New Testament order of things, baptism for remission of sins, the oneness of the church, the sin of denominationalism, and so forth. But what does he choose to speak on? “The Peace That Passeth Understanding!” Yessir, that will sure make one see the error of his sectarianism! He could thus speak for the next 2,000 years, and he’ll not thus “turn them around.”

Brethren, that kind of ridiculousness is taking place all over the world! We have colleges who have long since cut loose from a stance on truth, and yet we have men who will appear on their programs, with

and in support of false teachers, and it is all designed, they say, to “turn them around.” A great and most-needed lesson could be taught if all faithful brethren in all places would leave the congregations where liberalism has set in, and set in permanently, and begin to form congregations loyal to the truth. As it is, we have some faithful people who continually give talents, time, money and encouragement to that which they say they despise, and they know it to be the worst forms of error, but they remain, in the hope that they can “turn it around!” Pitiful for one to so deceive himself, when it hasn’t taken place, no, NOT ONCE IN 2,000 YEARS!

## HUMBLE AND THE CHRONICLE CALL FOR BANISHMENT OF TRUTH

Tyler Young

For those who may not know, *The Christian Chronicle* is a monthly newspaper published by Oklahoma Christian University and edited by **Howard Norton**, head of the Bible Department at OCU. Brethren who have been keeping up with this publication are well aware that for some time it has unashamedly promoted the liberalism which has been ravaging the Savior’s kingdom. In the January 1994 issue, **Bill Humble** offers readers yet another indication that the paper’s publisher and editor are indeed happy to advance the doctrines of demons to the hurt of Christ’s body.

In his article, Brother Humble, a professor at Abilene Christian University, calls for deeper fellowship between all brethren regardless of what issues may divide us. In typical liberal fashion, he blames the division which has riddled the Lord’s church in modern times on a lamentable failure to allow liberty in areas of opinion. From his pen comes the ridiculous charge: “In the last 50 years, instead of seeing how we can love one another, we have bickered constantly.” He sings the song of the New Hermeneutikers by claiming that we have failed to continue in the unity-in-diversity spirit which supposedly characterized the beginning of “our movement.” Like others whose thinking is removed from that of the inspired apostles and prophets, he refers to the brotherhood in terms of a “restoration movement” rather than the actual church of Christ. Of many disturbing things he sets forth, consider a few that are quite alarming:

“For one thing, the focus of the New Testament fellowship was family, not issues.” In order to elevate the significance of our being a family, he undermines the importance of being right on issues. Perhaps the reason he does not try to offer any proof for this

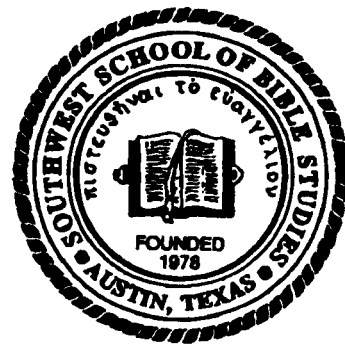
assertion is because there simply is not any. The Holy Spirit makes it clear in the New Testament that we have fellowship as a family **when we agree on the right issues**, including such issues as the deity of Christ, the conditions of salvation, the resurrection, just to name a few of many that might be given (John 8:24; Acts 2:38; II Timothy 2:16-17). He states: “*Since fellowship is based on family there may be degrees or levels of fellowship.*” Notorious heretic **Rubel Shelly** could not ask for his ungodly “Big F, little f” philosophy to be stated any more clearly than that. As for the idea that “fellowship is based on family,” brother Humble needs to recognize that fellowship is based upon faithfulness to the truth (I John 1:7), and if two brethren are both walking in the truth, then on that basis they enjoy fellowship as a family. People only enter God’s spiritual family by accepting and obeying the truth (I Peter 1:22), and they only continue in fellowship as a family if they keep on abiding in that truth. Otherwise—even though they are spiritual siblings in the family of God—fellowship between them is forfeited (I Corinthians 5; Romans 16:17,18). There is no reason these basic truths should not be understood by all who respect the word of God.

In an effort to support the false concept that brethren should be in fellowship regardless of what things over which they may differ, he refers to the “sharp contention” of Paul and Barnabas and says, “*Similarly there are views in our brotherhood that I cannot share. Some of these are on the ‘liberal left’ and others are on the ‘heretic detector’ right.... Even though I cannot share these brothers’ views, whether on the right or left, they are still my brothers and we have fellowship in God’s family.*” Can anyone possibly picture Paul being on the “liberal left” and Barnabas on the “heretic detector right” and still maintaining fellowship? It takes a wild and unscriptural stretch of the imagination to suppose that Paul’s contention with Barnabas was over anything even remotely akin to the serious doctrinal disagree-

ments that divide the liberal left from the radical right in the Lord's church today. Humble has grossly misapplied a disagreement on matters of judgment to the major differences over fundamental doctrine that presently plague the church. Is brother Humble in fellowship with those who deny the virgin birth of Christ? Is he in fellowship with those who make laws for God? Is he suggesting the apostle Paul would have cozied up in warm, fuzzy fellowship with those on the radical right who were making laws for God by binding the law of Moses? Perhaps this ACU professor needs to read Acts 15 and Galatians 1:6-9; 5:1-12 and see that Paul did not advocate fellowship with all brethren regardless of disagreements. He would do well to take the time to discern between matters of judgment over which disagreement could be allowed, and matters of obligation over which there must be agreement for fellowship to be possible.

Finally, and perhaps worst of all, there is this: "There are two expressions that never appear in Scripture. One is 'withdraw fellowship' and the other is 'test of fellowship.'" Humble goes on to recommend that we "banish these expressions from our brotherhood's vocabulary." Simply because the statements "withdraw fellowship" or "test of fellowship" are not explicitly recorded in the New Testament, does that mean these terms ought not to be used? According to this kind of thinking, we would need also to avoid such expressions as "Sunday School," "Bible Class," "Worship Service," "Bible Department," and "Christian College"! It is foolish indeed to make a statement which implies the ridiculous notion that we may not use any expressions but those explicitly set forth in scripture, or that terms not spelled out word-for-word in the Bible are questionable. Because certain terminology is not expressly used by inspiration by **no means** indicates that such language is inappropriate. If the terms correctly express **scriptural concepts**, then they are in harmony with scripture.

Do the words "withdraw fellowship" and "test of fellowship" represent scriptural concepts? Absolutely. It ought to be greatly disturbing to all truth lovers that a Bible professor is calling for the banishment of these terms and the ideas behind them. Is there *nothing* that brother Humble would consider a test of fellowship? Is there simply no such thing? Is belief in the existence of God an issue upon which there must be agreement in order for there to be fellowship between us? The divine nature of Jesus? The resurrection? *Anything??* And concerning the banishing of the withdrawal of fellowship, with Jesus we must ask, "Have ye not read" such passages as I Corinthians 5; Romans 16:17-18; Ephesians 5:11; II Thessalonians 3:6,14; II John 9-11? If one does not find these things agreeable, he may request that they be expelled from our thinking, but he cannot do so without incurring the wrath of the Almighty. To call for the banishment of terms which describe the teaching of these and other plain passages of scripture is nothing more than



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outright rejection of the truth of God. It is just as monstrous an error to encourage that we banish these concepts as it would be to cry for the dismissal of New Testament teaching on the fruit of the Spirit or the blood of Jesus Christ.

Statements like the ones noted above can only indicate that the one who made them (or the one who carries them with approval in a brotherhood publication) has turned his thinking far, far away from the pages of God's word and the simple pronouncements recorded

thereon to the devilish thoughts of unity-in-diversity now being championed by the likes of ACU president **Royce Money**. With material like this coming from the pen of a professor at Abilene Christian University and being carried by Howard Norton in his paper, one is made to wonder if maybe something else should be banished, like the "C" in ACU or "Christian" from *The Christian Chronicle*.

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- 7:00 p.m. Is Your God Too Small? . . . . . Dean Fugett
- 8:00 p.m. The Declaration of God . . . . . Trevor Parker

Friday

- 10:00 a.m. Elohim, Jehovah, and Adonai . . . . . Allen Weakland
- 11:00 a.m. The Eternality and Immutability of God . . . Eddie Whitten
- 12:00 noon Lunch Provided
- 1:00 p.m. The Omniscience of God . . . . . Dave Dugan
- 2:00 p.m. The Limitations of God . . . . . Barry Villaverde
- 3:00 p.m. The Omnipotence of God . . . . . Eddie Beard
- 4:00 p.m. Dinner Break
- 7:00 p.m. The Providence of God . . . . . Wayne Price
- 8:00 p.m. What the Holiness of God Requires of Us . . David Baker

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Saturday

- 10:00 a.m. El-Shaddai, Jehovah-Jireh, and Jehovah-Rophe . . . . . Dudley Morton
- 11:00 a.m. The Proper Fear of God . . . . . Bubba Phillips
- 12:00 noon Lunch Provided
- 1:00 p.m. The Omnipresence of God . . . . . Jesse Whitlock
- 2:00 p.m. The Eternal Plan and Purpose of God . . . Kevin Rhodes
- 3:00 p.m. The Judgment of God . . . . . Chris Harper
- 4:00 p.m. Dinner Break
- 7:00 p.m. The True and Living God versus the Idols of Our Times . . . . . David Dalton
- 8:00 p.m. The Nature of God . . . . . Oran Rhodes

Sunday

- 9:30 a.m. God, Our Father . . . . . Carl Garner
- 10:30 a.m. Our God, He is Alive . . . . . Don Walker
- 12:00 noon Afternoon Break
- 5:00 p.m. Jehovah-Nissi, Jehovah-Shalom, and Jehovah-Tsidkenu . . . . . Paul Fisher
- 6:00 p.m. When You Come to Know God Better . . . Oran Rhodes

## IS DENOMINATIONALISM O.K.?

Norman Davis

In recent years we have heard more and more of various "names" in the brotherhood who have expressed the opinion that there are saved Christians in most, if not all, the denominations. Primary among these names are well known preachers and "Christian" college educators, some of whom were once well grounded and sound in the faith, but at some point have completely lost the course. Others—and you wonder how and why they ever became preachers in the church of Christ—have never been sound in the doctrine.

These men have preached in denominational pulpits, joined wholeheartedly with denominationalists in semi-social causes and functions of questionable nature and have pronounced such things as instrumental music in worship as being a matter of personal opinion or preference and declared that they can be equally comfortable with or without it.

These men have, by and large, usurped the pastorate over the elders under whom they are meant to serve. This tells you, of course, that the elders in question are either too ungrounded and unqualified to know better, or too spineless, vacillating or apathetic to care.

They have labored mightily in recent years to effect a "unity" with one denomination in particular, and now seem ready to fellowship all denominations. They call

this "unity-in-diversity." They attempt to justify their position by taking it upon themselves to decide that the old paths to which we have adhered since the restoration are not essential to salvation and we need a "new hermeneutic." (A different way of interpreting and understanding the Bible.) Usually, when pressed to explain and prove their position, they will answer in vague, ambiguous terms and accuse the questioner of having a lack of love. They will decide that in case they are making mistakes, the grace of God will cover all.

Before we begin to unconditionally fellowship denominationalists and overlook the flaws in their man-made doctrines, we should consider the following facts and corresponding inspired scripture.

### UNITY IN DIVERSITY IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS

"...a house divided against itself cannot stand" (Matthew 12:25).

### JESUS ALSO PRAYED FOR HIS FOLLOWERS TO BE ONE

"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; that the world may believe that

thou hast sent me" (John 17:20,21).

### IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT GOD'S PEOPLE ARE ALL TO SPEAK THE SAME THINGS

In I Corinthians 1:10, Paul says, "Now I beseech you brethren by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that you 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 judgement."

### GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO BE LIKEMINDED

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:5,6). "... be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace and love shall be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11). "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Philippians 2:2). "Finally, be ye all of one mind..." (I Peter 3:8).

### GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO WALK BY THE SAME RULE.

"Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things" (Philippians 3:16). "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them..." (Galatians 6:16).

### THERE IS ONLY ONE BODY/CHURCH

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Romans 12:4,5). "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ" (I Corinthians 12:12). "And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from

the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4,5).

It would seem to a reasonable person that the foregoing statements of fact and corresponding scripture, along with many others, would negate any contention that Christ meant for his church to fellowship any part of the falsities of denominationalism.

So what is it that motivates these men in their pursuit of error? There may be different causes, depending on the individual in question. One thing most of them have in common is a string of degrees trailing their names, leading to speculation that they are over-educated, thinking they have license to add to and take away from the inspired word. While there is nothing wrong with having the degrees in itself, the human ego is difficult to control and many folks with extensive education let it get out of hand and start to believe of themselves as being the source instead of the recipient. (While many of these degrees come from secular schools and even denominational seminaries, there is reason to believe that many of the "Christian" schools might not serve a great deal

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### MURMANSK, RUSSIA CLIFF LYONS

Cliff Lyons is now in the process of raising support to preach the gospel "full time" in Murmansk, Russia. The elders of the Southaven Church of Christ, Southaven, Mississippi, will be overseeing his work. Plans are to establish an extension of the Memphis School of Preaching in Murmansk, teach Bible in some of the public schools and teacher training institutes, preach and work with the church, and teach privately. Cliff recently resigned from the good work at Eastside in Muskogee, Oklahoma. He has made three mission trips to Murmansk and plans to return when his support is raised. Murmansk is a city of 600,000 people located over 200 miles above the Arctic Circle. The door is open. Please help take the gospel to this lost city. Five were recently baptized. A congregation of about 25 is now meeting there. If you are able to support this mission effort, or should you desire more information, please contact Cliff at (918) 682-3228 (home); 682-6382 or 415 Belmont, Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403.



better, if any.)

Another probable cause is that they seek wider recognition and popularity in the communities in which they operate, leading ultimately to larger numbers and bigger money, as they seem to strive to become "a man for all seasons." National evangelists, if you will. Adherence to the truth gets in the way of this style of evangelism. And quite frankly, I cannot help but believe that many of these men are being influenced by the superabundance of denominational "televangelists" flooding the television screens, if not altogether in doctrine, certainly in style. It seems un-

mistakable in that regard. Priority is placed on appealing to the masses, from a largely social standpoint, and the truth is compromised so as not to offend.

Whatever the motives, it is tragic, alarming, sad and sick. Many once-sound congregations have fallen prey to these liberal, self-serving false teachers and wherever you are, you don't have to look far in any direction to notice a congregation in digression to at least some extent. I do not like to think that I am being an alarmist as some might charge. This is fact and it should be pointed out repeatedly, as there seem to be so many in the brotherhood that are

not aware of this problem. We should know who these people are and how to recognize them as they surface. We can only do this by obedience to such exhortations as found in II Timothy 2:15 and John 5:39. (Study and search.)

We should pray for these people, that they would return to, and in some cases for the first time, come to the truth. We should try to help them and teach them if they will hear and heed. If not, they should be exposed throughout the brotherhood.

—414 Doverfield Drive  
Houston, Texas 77037

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## MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND OLAN HICKS

[Associate Editor's Note: *On April 11, 1995, brother Gil Yoder, minister with the West Visalia Church of Christ, 4400 West Tulare Avenue, Visalia, California 93277, wrote Ira Y. Rice, Jr. informing him of a meeting held by brother Olan Hicks of Gospel Enterprises, Post Office Box 1253, Searcy, Arkansas 72143, in Armona in which brother Hicks propagated his false views on the subject of marriage, divorce and remarriage. The following letter to brother Hicks is revealing and self-explanatory.*]

Dear Mr. Hicks,

I was glad to have the chance to meet you in Armona last Saturday, and to hear you speak on the subject of divorce and remarriage, although I cannot say I was pleased to hear what you had to say. You will not be surprised to hear that I disagree with the great bulk of your argumentation for your positions relative to marriage and to the application of God's Word.

During the evening you called my integrity into question by intimating that since I was unwilling to agree with your strained interpretations of scripture, I simply do not have a love of the truth. It has always amazed me how some of my brethren who are quick to invoke the mantra of love and toleration for doctrinal diversity, and to apply the biblical injunctions against judging to those who only demand conformity to God's Word, can so easily surmise the hearts and motives of those who oppose them. I for one do not teach that all judging is wrong (John 7:24), but still I would be careful not to say what reasons may cause a man to follow the course he may follow. Such judgments as that are best left to Him who searches the reins and hearts of men (Romans 8:27; Revelation 2:23).

You began your lesson by claiming that I Corinthians 7:27-28 teaches that it is not a sin for a divorcee (regardless of the cause behind the divorce) to marry. The passage says in part, "Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou has not sinned." You claimed that "loosed from a wife" means divorced, and so Paul was saying according to you that it is not a sin for the divorced to remarry. However, despite your claim that the word translated "loosed" means "divorced" elsewhere in God's Word, the context of this passage will not allow this interpretation.

Beginning in verse 25, Paul is answering a question relative to the marriage of virgins. He writes that he has no commandment for the situation, but that it was his judgment that it would be best in present circumstances to remain unmarried. It was in that context that he said that those "loosed" should not seek to marry, but if they married, no sin would occur. Paul is not addressing the divorced in verse 27, but those never married—those who are still virgins.

The New Testament word for divorce is not λύω, the word used in verse 27 translated "loosed," but ἀπολύω, translated "shall put away" in Matthew 19:9. The Greek word λύω is used forty-six times in the New Testament, and is never used as a reference to divorce. I think it is obvious that by "loosed" Paul meant simply the opposite of "bound" used in the first part of I Corinthians 7:27, and this means that Paul used "loosed" to mean "unmarried," not "divorced." Other passages then must be consulted to learn if all the unmarried have liberty or authority to marry. Matthew 19:9, I Corinthians 7:11, and other passages imply that there are some limitations to the liberty Paul expressed in I Corinthians 7:28.

As we conversed after your lesson you made the claim that the scriptures may not be bound upon others except where the scriptures speak explicitly. I asked if this was a position you bound upon others, or if it was just a personal practice. Your answer was a little vague, so I am unsure where you stand on that point. I also asked where the scriptures explicitly say that only explicit statements may be bound upon others. You quoted several passages, but I failed to hear a single passage that made your point in an explicit way.

At best your position is but an implication of scripture, but if that were true it would be meaningless, because it would disallow its own application. The truth is you have inferred a position from scripture which is not implied in God's Word, and thus you have bound upon others a law that is neither explicitly nor implicitly part of God's will.

As a matter of fact the scriptures require that we accept not only the explicit statements of scripture, but also the implications which are rightly derived from those statements. Jesus said that the Sadducees erred because they failed to draw proper conclusions from the old law (Matthew 22:29). In the law God said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the

God of Jacob" (v. 32). This implied according to Jesus that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were yet alive, and that the Sadducees were in error for rejecting that truth. Note that they were not reprimanded for rejecting the explicit statements of the law, but for rejecting what the law implied! Jesus used logic to refute his detractors, revealing and applying the implications of God's Word to others. Since we are commanded to follow Him (I Peter 2:21), we should do the same.

Before our departure that night you suggested that we should debate our differences on these issues. I would welcome this opportunity. It has been my experience that most preaching brethren who hold to your views, especially with regard to unity in diversity, are unwilling to allow their ideas to be examined under the microscope of truth. I was therefore surprised to hear you say that you had been trying to find brethren to debate you on these things for the last ten years without success, for I cannot believe that one who has done the damage you have done to the kingdom of God could find no ardent defender among us to oppose your words. I think I know the caliber of my brethren better than that.

The marriage and unity questions have brought untold harm to God's kingdom over the last several years, harm that has caused those who love the truth and the church to weep. I know that some believe debating to be sinful; that we should ignore the differences that divide us and "get along" despite the error that many teach. But it is not the defense of the Word that has brought harm to the Lord's church, but the putting away of the faith that makes shipwreck (I Timothy 1:19). The preachers of the first century church were debaters (Acts 9:29; 17:17), and Christians of the twentieth century church should support the same.

I am therefore happy to accept your challenge for a debate, and hope that the details for such can be worked out soon. In my opinion we should debate both our differences relative to marriage, divorce and remarriage, and to the application of implications within God's Word. Since your positions in both of these matters are contrary to the status quo, you should take the affirmative in both matters. Therefore I would suggest the following propositions, both of which I am willing to deny:

1. The scriptures teach that all persons, including those who divorce a mate for causes other than fornication, and those who have been put away after committing fornication, are authorized by God's Word to marry.

2. The scriptures teach that only the explicit instructions of scripture may be bound upon others and made a test of fellowship.

If you will agree to affirm these propositions, and if you are sincere in your willingness to debate these issues, I can see no insurmountable barriers to our discussion of them. I will therefore anxiously await your response.

Sincerely yours

/s/ Gil Yoder



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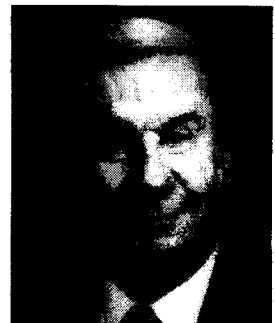
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June 18 - 21, 1995

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## Sunday, June 18

9:30 A.M.	Isaiah Introduces His Book	Bob Berard
10:30 A.M.	Jerusalem From Three Perspectives	Dub McClish
2:00 P.M.	A Denunciation, the Messianic Age, and Vengeance	Marion Fox
3:00 P.M.	A Foolish Reliance and God's Protection	Tyler Young
6:00 P.M.	Hezekiah's Illness and Judah's Captivity	Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
7:00 P.M.	Sennacherib's Invasion	Mac Deaver

## Monday, June 19

9:00 A.M.	Modernism's Attack on Isaiah	David P. Brown
10:00 A.M.	Prophecies of Jerusalem, Shebna, and Tyre	Roelf Ruffner
11:00 A.M.	Isaiah's First Vision and His Commission	Lester Kamp
1:30 P.M.	Jerusalem's Stupidity, Humiliation, and Deliverance	Randall Morris
2:30 P.M.	Damascus and Israel Judged	Bob Patterson
**2:30 P.M.	What Does God Want Me to Do?	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	Another View of the Messianic Age	Gus Eoff
7:00 P.M.	Attacks and Prophecies	Darrell Conley
8:00 P.M.	A Psalm of Thanksgiving for Redemption	Buster Dobbs

## Tuesday, June 20

9:00 A.M.	Messiah's Reign and the Jews Return From Exile	Eddie Whitten
10:00 A.M.	Judah and Jerusalem Arraigned	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:00 A.M.	Babylon's Downfall	Noah Hackworth
1:30 P.M.	Thanksgiving, Exhortation, and Return from Captivity	Robin Haley
2:30 P.M.	Moab's Judgment	Michael Hatcher
**2:30 P.M.	Discerning Between Good and Evil	Vada Rice
3:30 P.M.	The Future Blessings of the Ransomed Exiles	Roy C. Deaver
5:00 P.M.	<b>Houston College of the Bible Honors Roy C. Deaver at the HCB Banquet</b>	
7:00 P.M.	Doom and Judgment	Ronnie Hayes
8:00 P.M.	God Speaks of Ethiopia and Egypt	Lindell Mitchell

## Wednesday, June 21

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11:00 A.M.	Israel's Doom Declared	Andy McClish
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2:30 P.M.	God's Indignation Against all the Nations	M. L. Sexton
3:30 P.M.	Judgment, Pleading, Deliverance, and Thanksgiving	Royce Williamson
7:00 P.M.	The Virgin Birth of Christ	Tom Bright
8:00 P.M.	Isaiah in the Eternal Purpose of God	Paul Sain

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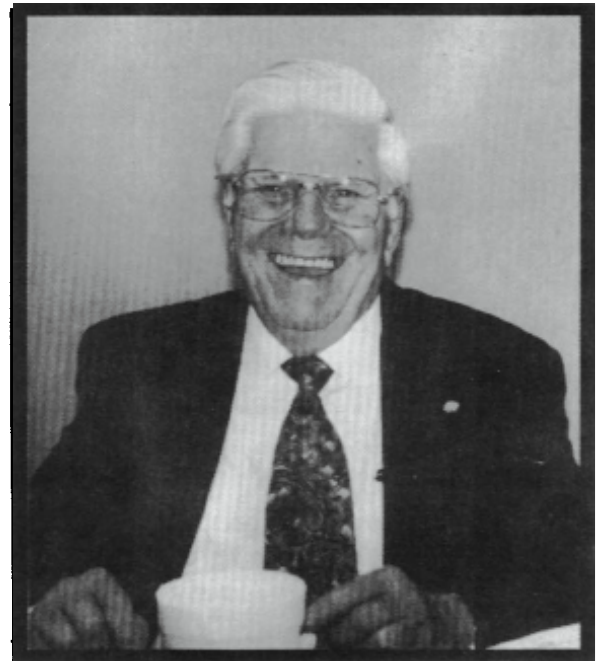


# Contending FOR THE Faith

A publication of Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## ESTABLISHMENT OF KNIGHT ARNOLD CONGREGATION WAS E. L. WHITAKER'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT



Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Although his own father, Emory Lon Whitaker, Sr., was a well known gospel preacher in the Memphis, Tennessee area, his son, E. L., Jr., had no intention of becoming a preacher. His father planted several congregations in the Memphis area including Coleman Avenue and Merton Street; his son only one: the Knight Arnold Church of Christ. Yet, in eternity, who can say whose lifelong achievement may prove to be the greater!

When E. L., Jr., was born, March 13, 1927, his father was ministering to the Coleman Avenue church of Christ, in Memphis. With his parents' consent, at the age of 17, he was admitted into the U. S. Navy, where he served for several years.

### MET SUE IN SINGING SCHOOL

At age 19, while visiting with his sister Myra and her husband Harvey Martin, then ministering to the church at Dardanelles, Arkansas she attended a singing school taught by my own father, Ira Y. Rice, Sr., in June, 1946.

During that singing school, a young lady named Cora Sue Minor, from Economy, Arkansas, near Russellville, took part in this same event.

My father was a great tease and he delighted in teasing E. L., Jr., about Cora Sue. Actually, that is how they were introduced to each other and encouraged to marry, which they did two months later on August 25, 1946.

Their wedding ceremony was performed by E. L., Sr., at Russellville. They remained married until his death 48 years later, on November 28, 1994.

### FATHER WANTED SON TO PREACH

If E. L., Jr., was late in life starting to preach, it was not his father's fault. In fact, one of the few regrets that brother Whitaker ever expressed was that his father already had died when he began his ministry and never got to hear him preach.

Once out of the Navy, E. L., Jr., attended David Lipscomb college for one year. (His father had attended Freed-Hardeman College.)

Instead of preaching, E. L., Jr., took a job as field engineer with the Fairbanks-Morse Scales Company. As he moved from place to place with his employment, he taught Bible classes once a month at Springville, and later every Lord's Day for five years at the Sulphur Wells Academy church between Paris and Paris Landing, Tennessee.

### FIRST PREACHING IN MISSISSIPPI THEN KNIGHT ARNOLD, MEMPHIS

When Fairbanks-Morse moved Brother E. L. and his family back to Memphis in the late '50s, they started attending the Getwell Church of Christ on Wednesday nights, during which

(Continued on Page 3)



# Contending FOR THE Faith

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## Editorial...

# ARE WE GIVING TOO MUCH CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS NOT DUE?

One of the most puzzling phenomena in these closing years of the 20th century is the great and seemingly growing numbers of "our brethren" who evidently have not a clue as to what the erstwhile and present "restoration movement" was and is all about.

Time was in the more-or-less recent past that you could refer to the scriptures relative to a given point and almost anyone in the church would know "where you were coming from." Nowadays, however, likely as not, a glaze comes over their eyeballs, and you can tell by their response or lack thereof that you are not getting through.

## WERE THEY NEVER CONVERTED?

The thought occurs that we may be giving credit to some for being "our brethren" who are not really converted to the truth and never were!

When it comes to someone like **Rubel Shelly**, whether he ever really was *converted* or not, the Lord only knows. From his writings prior to his March 1983 speech at Centerville, Tennessee, it is clear that he once *knew* the truth, whether he *believed* it or not. From that day forward, if he ever *had* faith, he has made *shipwreck* of it. There is no similarity between what he preaches now and what he preached before that lamented occasion.

Ten years *before*, in September 1973, some 200 preachers and elders called **Lynn Anderson** to account for the false declarations he had been making from the pulpit at *Highland/Abilene*. It was clear even then that he no longer viewed churches of Christ as being the ONE TRUE CHURCH revealed in the New Testament, referring to us as a "BIG...SICK...DENOMINATION."

Even before that, in his February 1971 debacle at the Freed-Hardeman Lectures, **Landon Saunders** was seeking a way to unite "us" with the denominations when such manifestly was impossible.

Just when **Marvin Phillips** surrendered *his* teaching of the "one true church" is uncertain but now for many a year he no longer teaches it; in fact, he practices *inter-denominationalism*, making no discernible distinction between "them" and "us."

Someone asked recently if we believed that Max Lucado ever *had* been a brother in Christ! I simply do not know. If so, there is no way to explain his actions now meeting in full fellowship with the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Catholics, going right along with

their instrumental music, calling their preachers "Reverend," their priests "Father," and praising them to the skies.

#### WHY INVITE THESE TO SPEAK?

That there still are at least *some* in the congregations sponsoring Nashville's so-called "Jubilee" who still know, believe, and love the truth, I have no doubt. However, if so, why do almost all of them remain silent? If they disagree with their supposed-to-be elders inviting these unconverted false teachers to appear on their programs, why don't they speak out? Their failing to do so makes no sense at all.

Their inviting such known teachers and practitioners of error as Shelly, Anderson, Saunders, Phillips, and Lucado as speakers is like inviting Apollos to speak *before* his conversion. When he came to Ephesus, Apollos, just like these men, already was "an eloquent man and mighty in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24). He "spoke and taught diligently" (vs. 25). When Aquila and Priscilla heard him speaking "boldly" in the Jewish synagogue, "knowing only the baptism of John" (vs. 26), rather than inviting him to speak on some "Jubilee," they took him unto themselves and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." It was only *after* thus getting his teaching corrected that the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to "receive" him! (Read vs. 27.)

A gnawing question exists in the minds and hearts of many: Do those churches who "receive" these false teachers as speakers (contrary to II John 9-11) really believe the truth of the gospel any more? If so, it is not apparent.

In writing to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul warned of "that Wicked" who should be revealed, "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thessalonians 2:8-12).

We used to cite this passage and apply it to the Roman Catholic Church. Might it not equally apply to the sponsors of the so-called "Jubilee" as well as to the sponsors of the "Tulsa Workshop" and the "Greater Northwest Evangelism Workshop"? All of these sponsoring churches pay *lip service* to the truth but their greatest pleasure seems to be listening to these smooth-worded, fair speakers who are determined to lead the churches of Christ back into the same, damnable denominational error from which we supposedly were restored more than 200 years ago!

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT

(Continued from Page 1)

time he started preaching every other Lord's Day for a year at Hernando, Mississippi.

It was during this time that the Getwell elders decided to begin a new congregation on Knight Arnold Road. They began this new work on the second Sunday of January, 1959, inviting E. L. Whitaker, Jr., to be its first preacher.

Being 32 years of age at the time, E. L. continued working with Fairbanks-Morse the first two years before going full time as minister to the Knight Arnold congregation. (Meanwhile, sister Sue continued working for a time at the Veterans Administration Hospital, at Memphis.)

As conscientious as brother Whitaker was in preaching, it was not long until part time did not suffice. So, within a couple of years after starting Knight Arnold, he finally gave up his secular employment with Fairbanks-Morse, devoting the rest of his preaching life ministering to the needs of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ.

#### EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH

Even though he concentrated his major effort to building up the Knight Arnold congregation, nevertheless his evangelistic spirit caused him to reach out with the gospel to others. When the opportunity came, in 1969, to move the then three-year-old Memphis School of Preaching from Getwell to Knight Arnold, he embraced this new challenge for training others to preach the gospel from the eastern shores of the Mississippi River to the ends of the earth.

Of the hundreds of graduates of Memphis School of Preaching, first under the directorship of Roy J. Hearn and for the past 12 years under Curtis A. Cates, many of them have carried the gospel into foreign countries, including the exemplary work now being done by Bob Hawkins and others in Murmansk, above the Arctic Circle, in Russia.

For the past several years, until recently, Knight Arnold also was the sponsoring church for Truth for the World pouring huge sums of money into this worldwide outreach. And any financial statement by the Knight Arnold elders attests to the evangelistic spirit he poured into them during all those 33 years that he was their faithful minister.

#### HEALTH PROBLEMS CUT HIM SHORT

The closing years of E. L.'s ministry were particularly trying for him. He *wanted* to give full measure to every work that he undertook. However, both cancer and heart by-pass surgery were to shorten a life wholly devoted to the cause he loved.

Finally, his health was such that he saw fit to retire, being in and out of the hospital much of the time. Because of an abdominal aorta aneurysm, he endured 105 days of critical care before returning to his maker at approximately 8:00 p.m., on Monday, November 28, 1994.

#### EDITOR OVERSEAS AT PASSING

I always wanted to be present for the funeral of E. L. Whitaker; however, it was not to be. Having been invited to speak on the Tenth Annual Asian Bible Lectureship, in Singapore, I, together with others, had left these shores and was in Hong Kong at his passing.

I am indebted to Curtis A. Cates for the following information as to what took place:

"...His family was by his side as he departed. He was buried on the following Thursday; funeral services took place at the Knight Arnold Church of Christ at 11:00 a.m., with interment in Memorial Park on Poplar Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee.

"Steve Sanders, David Looney (nephew), and Steve Ellis, each a former student of brother Whitaker, conducted the services Sanders and Looney in years past had worked as associates at Knight Arnold with brother E. L., and brother Ellis is the pulpit preacher at Knight Arnold, having succeeded brother Whitaker after his thirty-three years of faithful, significant work with the church here. Some 500-600 friends were in attendance at the funeral...

"His influence as a teacher in the Memphis School of Preaching and as long-time evangelist of the great Knight Arnold church is immeasurable. His influence lives on in the far reaches of the earth, through his hundreds of students. He touched powerfully the lives of thousands.

"The school was privileged to sponsor a dinner in his honor on March 27, 1989; the 1984 lectureship volume of the Memphis

School of Preaching, *The Book of Acts - I*, was dedicated to him, and the 1992 lectureship volume, *Jesus Christ, The Gift of God's Grace and the Object of Man's Faith*, was dedicated to E. L. and Sue Whitaker.

"The Memphis School of Preaching is establishing the *E. L. Whitaker, Jr., Scholarship Fund* in honor of the outstanding labors of this wonderful servant of God. The fund will be perpetual, inasmuch as the principal will be put at a high rate of interest and the moneys accrued therefrom monthly going to support needy and worthy students in the school. What a way this is to honor a dedicated, powerful example of preaching to train faithful, gifted, sound 'men of the Book' in his name!

"Those congregations and individuals wishing to send gifts [tax deductible for individuals] in his honor should make checks to the Memphis School of Preaching, earmarked for the *E. L. Whitaker Scholarship Fund*. Numerous such gifts already have been made.

"Like Abel, '...he being dead yet speaketh' (Hebrews 11:4). Our prayers, love, and best wishes are with sister Sue and family."

(Signed) Curtis A. Cates

## LIPSCOMB HIGH SCHOOL'S Stomach Rubbing Worship Event

Wayne Coats

The title is not a misnomer by any means, but is plainly descriptive of a recent worship event during Chapel at David Lipscomb High School in Nashville, Tennessee. I just could not believe the description as presented to me by a concerned parent. Not being one to rely upon rumors and being a stickler for facts, I went to the campus to see and hear at the scene. The first response noted that there was widespread revulsion upon the part of some faculty members as a result of a stomach rubbing scenario during Chapel worship.

My trip and its purpose was explained to one who came to me as I walked the corridors. I said, "Say, tell me about the recent Chapel service where the students were rubbing and/or patting each other's stomachs. Did that actually happen? Who was the fellow inducing such excitement?"

You see, some person was invited to the school as a Chapel speaker. I believe Chapel is a time and an event where faculty, staff, and students assemble to worship something—maybe the stomach in this case. (Webster defines "chapel" as "a subordinate or private place of worship: a place of worship in a residence or institution.") Who was the speaker? From whence did he hail? Who invited him to speak in Chapel? Well, a faculty member seemed to be the culprit—or the hero, heroine, or whom-

ever, depending on whom one questioned.

### WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE?

The leader of the Chapel worship period reportedly was a fellow by the name of **David L. Martin** who is in Admissions at Lipscomb. Brother Martin is a member of the Harpeth Hills Church in Nashville. This church is where **Harold Hazelip** worships and where **James Vandiver** preaches. The Gallatin Premillennial Church had brother Vandiver and Rubel Shelly to conduct revivals for them. The Harpeth Hills Church is the home congregation of **Gayle Napier** who babbled about conservative churches fostering incest.

Brother Martin told the Lipscomb High School Chapel assembly to rub their stomach if they loved Jesus. I have no doubt that such would bring about renewal. The young folks were worked up into a fit of frenzy as they worshipped.

Brother Martin then told the young people to rub the stomach of their neighbor if they loved Jesus. (That would never promote incest, but one can only wonder what it would promote.)

Can you imagine high school boys and girls sitting beside each other rubbing each other's stomach to show that they love Jesus? If I were a Lipscomb mother, I just believe I would get me a piece of cloth and sew it around the top of each dress which

my daughter wore to Lipscomb. That cloth would be the upper limit of the stomach. Likewise, I would sew a bit of cloth around the lower part of the dress to identify the lower extremity of the stomach. I would say, "Honey, when you start showing how you love Jesus at Lipscomb, don't let Demas depart beyond the boundaries of these strips of cloth when he rubs your stomach." (That would put my reaction mildly to say the least!)

### RENEWAL IN WORSHIP

It was reported by Paul and others that the Cretians were slow bellies (Titus 1:12). Could that be the authority for rubbing the belly of someone during worship? We learn where some made the belly their god (Philippians 3:19). That should suffice for authority to rub bellies while worshipping gods. If that is a weak argument, then Paul wrote of some who served their own bellies (Romans 16:18). What a wonderful way for "renewal" during worship!

I realize there has never been as much back-scratching and ear-tickling among school folks as we are now seeing. A new and exciting effort is sure to become widespread when people get together for worship at Lipscomb. There could be belly-rubbing, back-patting, ear-scratching worship experiences which the old traditionalists might find exciting.

The worship renewal must have been extremely raucous. Some of the faculty members (to their credit) walked out. They didn't want another person rubbing their stomach and I commend them for taking a walk. It is pathetic that someone did not have enough character, courage, and conviction to stand up and condemn such crass cavorting and to rebuke sharply those in charge!

### IS CORRECTION POSSIBLE?

That Lipscomb is in a precarious mess is putting it mildly. Richard Jones is in

charge of K-12 at Lipscomb and he is a member of Rubel Shelly's church (Woodmont Hills). Obviously, he will not intervene to keep the school sound.

Carl McKelvey has been appointed to have charge of Campus Affairs and letters to him are met with silent contempt. It is my candid judgment that brother McKelvey is the prime mover in much of the liberalism which is invited to the campus. More will be addressed to brother Carl at a later date.

I have no present plans to try to enroll at

Lipscomb. I may just take a vacation to Crete. I do not believe at my age that I could tolerate very many such "Holy Wows" in worship.

And to think that I actually meet parents who brag about sending their offspring to Lipscomb! It may be that in order to activate the brains of such people, one would need to rub some stomachs during worship at Lipscomb.

—705 Hillview Drive  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122

## WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO REGAIN OUR STRENGTH

Shan Jackson

In articles past we have read of things which are attacking, and thus weakening the church. We have all read excellent articles showing how emotionalism and sensationalism, though popular, are weakening the church. I recently read a fine piece showing how gimmicks and "fun-and-games" ministries are undermining our foundations.

However, in this article I would like to approach this problem from the other direction. Instead of showing things that are

weakening the church, let us look at some things that will make us strong again.

First, however, let us consider our history. When the church came into being during the first half of the 1st century A.D., idolatry, paganism, and such like dominated religion. Though our beginning was spectacular (Acts 2), it was still unnoticed by the majority of the world. However, within the lifetime of some of the early Christians the teaching of Christ had spread to the entire world.

One historian who was expressing surprise at the church's growth attributed it to these factors: dedication and zeal, anticipation concerning eternity, miraculous gifts, obligation to purity, and unity among the believers. Obviously, these factors are true. The early church felt a personal relationship with Christ and his bride and were honored and stimulated because of that relationship.

In this time, when many feel the church is growing weak, what will it take to regain

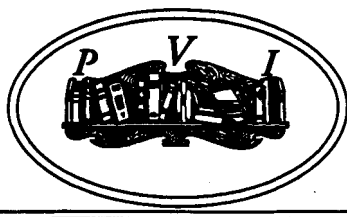
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our strength?

### #1 DEDICATED LEADERSHIP

I do not hesitate when I say that the church has grown weak because of weak leadership. Our Lord left responsibilities to each individual, but he left the well being of the church to its leaders.

For the church to regain its strength we have to see, and be led by men of strength. Men who are willing and capable of leading the flock in the paths of righteousness.

Elders are instructed to feed, tend, and oversee the sheep whom the Holy Ghost has given them charge. To gain strength we have to have quality and qualified leaders. Men who want to lead and know how to do so.

### #2 BIBLICAL PREACHING AND TEACHING

Paul left perfect instructions when he said, "Preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2). When God's word is preached and taught in its simplicity, forthrightness, and without compromise, it will bring strength to the Lord's church and cause. To preach and teach any other thing will allow the drift to continue and the church to remain weak.

### #3 LOVE AND COMPASSION

For too long the brotherhood has been falsely labeled as unloving and without compassion. Perhaps, in times past, that was the face we showed, but today we realize that we must win someone's friendship before we can teach him the way more perfect.

We are not hinting at compromise, we are demanding Christ's instructions be upheld. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

### #4 PURITY OF LIFESTYLE

The old saying goes, "Christians live in glass houses." Would we be following Christ if we expected otherwise? Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world." He taught that we are a "city set on a hill." Christians must refuse the lifestyle of the world in order to bring the lost out of the world.

If our actions weaken the church, they are wrong. If something hinders me from being Christ-like, or keeps me from correctly affecting others, it is wrong. If anything binds me to something that I should not be bound to, it is wrong. If it destroys my body, my influence, my heart, it is wrong. As Paul says, if what I do "is not by faith" it is wrong and must be avoided.

### #5 EVANGELISTIC URGENCY

The reason the early church was so effective in enlarging the borders of the king-

dom was their evangelistic urgency. The church will grow and become strong again when we rekindle this feeling.

### #6 AN ATTITUDE OF SERVITUDE

Christ taught that he came "not to be served but to serve." To regain our strength we must regain this teaching.

### #7 AN AURA OF JOY

No one should ever accuse a Christian of being weaned on a sour pickle. When strangers and non-members enter our midst they need to be swept away with the joy they see in our hearts. Because of joy we reach out to others. Because of joy we "go

into all the world." Because of joy we pray "Lord, come quickly."

What will it take to regain our strength? Well, since we did not lose it in one fell swoop, we must accept the fact that it will take time and dedication to get it back. Furthermore it will take dedicated leadership, biblical preaching and teaching, love and compassion, purity of lifestyle, evangelistic urgency, an attitude of servitude, and an aura of joy to regain our strength.

With our dedication and God's help we will be able. May God richly bless us in this endeavor.

—Post Office Box 904  
Palacios, Texas 77465

## In Whose Image?

Eddie Helms

**"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth"** (Genesis 1:26 ASV).

While man might not fully grasp the entirety of the meaning of the phrase "in our image" there are some things which inspiration surely had in view. How is man made in God's image? Man is more than matter, having an inner being like unto that of the being of God himself (Ecclesiastes 12:7; John 4:24). Certainly, man's inner being is part of the explanation of the verse under consideration in the book of beginnings. Man is capable of reasoned communication with himself, with others and with his Creator (Philippians 4:8; I Peter 3:15; Isaiah 1:18). Man possesses the emotions of love and hate which are certainly parts of his likeness to the Creator (I John 4:7-8). The ability to discern between good and evil and the freedom to choose between the two also plays a major role in the understanding of the phrase "in our image" (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6). Other things could be said of this verse, but truly in pondering these perplexing thoughts, one cannot help but exclaim as the psalmist, "I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14). Thanks be to God that man is made in his image! May thanks be ascribed unto him who has revealed the knowledge of man's being unto man!

Some men would deny the fact that man was created by God and made in

his image. Secular humanism declares that there is insufficient evidence for belief in God. They would say the universe is self-existing and that man came into being by purely macro-evolutionary forces. God has had no part in the make-up of man, and according to them, humans are responsible for what they are and for what they will become. One of their quotes godlessly declares, "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

False science is the image in which man is created according to this view. Secular humanists begin with the atom instead of Adam! To them, man is nothing more than a sophisticated animal. Therefore, there is no objective standard on which to base man's reason, his love or his choice between right and wrong. There is no life after this life based on this image of man since man is but matter; therefore it is understandable that their philosophy would be "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" Crime, murder, sexual atrocities and diseases, drug abuse and the collapse of morals in society are but a few of the fruits of this philosophy.

Man needs to put away the imaginations of secular humanism which exalts itself against the true knowledge of God and the true image of man (II Corinthians 10:5)! Man needs to renew himself with the true knowledge of God (Colossians 3:10)! He needs to exchange the lie that he is serving with the truth and serve God accordingly (Romans 1:20-25). Man is made in the image of God! Let him always acknowledge this truth!

—4218 McKee Road  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28270



# Accepting False Hermeneutics Is A Sin

Robert Lawrence

Since God will not send a latter day revelation, it is by the force of wisdom (James 1:5) that we arrive at proper meanings from the doctrine once delivered (Jude 3). Thus a hermeneutical process can be expressed from the New Testament itself: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (correctly handling) the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). Though the word "study" in the English of the King James Version compares to "give diligence" of modern English, study is still involved, as we understand from the phrase "rightly dividing" or "handling aright" the word of God. That is, we are to give diligence to our study. Each Christian individually must accept this responsibility for it is not the exclusive domain of but a select few.

No system of study can overlook the inerrant perfection of God's word, and that's a problem today. Some do. Thus we must be alert to a clear-headed understanding of the intent and meaning of a biblical text. Otherwise, what we call *study* becomes merely an exercise in academics. To quote the New Testament condemnation of such a practice, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Timothy 3:7).

We find a parallel thought in I Timothy 6:4,5, "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." Decidedly a harsh warning, but are we hardy enough to handle it?

Distilled from Kierkegaardian existentialism, the New Hermeneutics appropriates *subjectivism* as its pivotal continuing prerogative. Thus, if a brother's doctrine leans in a liberal direction—some lean worse than the famous tower in Pisa—he justifies his dogma by way of the *indefinite* interpretive methods of the New Hermeneutics.

## CAN WE KNOW FOR SURE?

The ruinous idea that we can *know nothing* for sure grants permission to agents of change to conclude that a biblical text can have more than one meaning, and in some instances, little meaning at all. But God's word teaches differently: "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the *full assurance of understanding*, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ..." (Colossians 2:2).

What better tool than language can anyone use who is bent on changing the doctrine of the Lord's church? Indeed, liberals need not overtly change doctrine to succeed in a take over—something many Christians would recognize and reject outright. An agent of change needs only to change *meanings* piecemeal, and true doctrine itself is changed—even to a point beyond recognition. Thus, the Christian watchman (Isaiah 21:11) is to be constantly alert to such deviations from common sense interpretation.

Look to II John 1:9-11 for a warning: "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." The penalty for failing to be alert while on Christian duty is dreadful to the uttermost: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (II Thessalonians 2:11).

The Christian must be intent on escaping deception so strong that it seems to make a lie sound like truth (Romans 1:25; I John 1:6). Paul was wroth over his understanding of such things to come. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (II Timothy 4:3). Perverse lessons change the timeless doctrine of the church of Christ through teachers hired by Christians for the expressed purpose of *tickling* their ears. A high price to pay for entertainment. And again Paul laments distortions of truth: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (II Corinthians 2:17).

## TRUTH TORN ASUNDER

By use of linguistic manipulations one truth in particular has been torn asunder. In the minds of agents of change, grace removes baptism as the culmination of faith; as an act of submission to God's will; and as the point of entry into the body of Christ. Yet the only way agents of change can *explain* certain texts is to *explain them away*. Example:

How do you understand Jesus's discussion with Nicodemus? (John 3:1-21) Jesus could not yet instruct Nicodemus to be baptized. Thus, he used earthly terms to tell him of things to come. Jesus had not yet gone to the cross, and baptism for the remission of sins as an emulation of His death, burial and resurrection was then impossible (Romans 6:3,5; Revelation 20:6; Galatians 3:27; I Peter 3:21; I Peter 1:3; Philippians 3:10,11; John 11:25).

Jesus instructed the ruler of the Jews in foreshadow. As expressed by his outlandish question, Nicodemus mistakenly took Jesus's words to refer to natural birth. But Jesus made it clear that he did not speak of natural birth, nor its water, but spiritual birth. Yet taking the dogma of grace alone from the New Hermeneutics, some brethren attempt to teach the lesson that this is a natural birth—and, thus, Jesus did not teach of a baptism for the remission of sins. But the text stands abundantly clear: Jesus taught Nicodemus a baptism of water and of spirit that would save, Acts 2:38.

## "GRACE ONLY" AND "NEW HERMENEUTICS"

Yet brethren who sanction their doctrine through the subjectivism of the New Hermeneutics of Rudolph Bultmann (and those who followed) plunge headlong into the dense shadows of grace only. As observers of Bultmann's work point out, his Lutheran orientation is most evident in his fixed dogma of justification by faith only, a foundational article of the New Hermeneutics. Since agents of change zealously subscribe to the New Hermeneutics, we shouldn't be surprised that *grace only* is a pivotal point of their dogma as well.

Thus the warning is sounded. Men who might otherwise seem fine individuals, men who depict themselves as preachers of the gospel of Christ, men who present entertaining and lively sermons; men who occupy positions of prominence among churches of Christ can also be men who pervert sound doctrine through false and illogical forms of interpretation.

As Paul wrote to the church in Galatia: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-8).

Our task is to sort out the false teachers from the true, for the

charge to us is this: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

When you read the writings of agents of change, notice how few Biblical texts they use to affirm their ideas. They write with *much opinion and little chapter and verse*. Before you accept what they say as biblically sound—and, for that matter, anything you read *including this article*—be as noble as those of Berea and search the scriptures daily to see if these things are so (Acts 17:10,11).

—Post Office Box 37086  
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## MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING ENTERS THIRTIETH YEAR OF DISTINCTIVE SERVICE

Entering its 30th year, Memphis School of Preaching continues faithfully to train men to be "men of the Book" and able proclaimers of Gods Word. The 26 members of the 27th graduating class received their diplomas June 18, 1995. H. A. Dobbs, Editor of *Firm Foundation*, delivered the commencement address. From across the United States and beyond its borders, these fine men came to equip themselves better for the greatest work in the world. They, and all who supported them, are certainly due commendation and congratulation.

A highlight for the students is the annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship. This years lectureship, the 29th, had as its theme: "Heaven's Imperative or Man's Innovation: Shall We Restructure The Church?" and hosted record crowds. In connection with the lectures, J. A. and Clara McNutt were accorded the appreciation which they richly deserve for their longtime, faithful service to the cause with a dinner in their honor. Brother McNutt has served for 27 years on the faculty of MSOP. At the annual alumni dinner, Bobby Gayton, 1975 graduate, was selected as Alumnus Of The Year, and Dub McClish and Paul Sain were chosen as Honorary Alumni.

Curtis A. Cates, Director for the last 13 years, reports MSOP anticipates a large enrollment for the new school year beginning August 21, 1995. Applications are now being accepted for the tuition-free two-year course of intensive college level instruction. Scholarships are available for deserving students. Write Bobby Liddell, Dean of Admissions, Memphis School of Preaching, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118, or call (901) 362-5139 for an admission packet.

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July 7, 1995

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Dear brethren:

A unique opportunity exists for the church of our Lord. God has opened the door to spread the gospel in the former Soviet Union. The Memphis School of Preaching has been privileged to work in Murmansk, Russia. The city of Murmansk is approximately 600,000 in population and serves as the capital of the Murmansk region, above the Arctic Circle.

The church is now established in Murmansk, and Robert Hawkins (1991 MSOP graduate) serves as the local evangelist. Brother Cliff Lyons, a faithful gospel preacher and experienced missionary, is planning to move to Murmansk shortly. Plans are to establish an extension of the Memphis School of Preaching in Murmansk, which can help to train men to preach the gospel throughout northern Russia, as well as the world (Mk. 16:15).

The purpose of this letter is to inform the brotherhood of another unique opportunity. Alexander and Tatiana Nesterkine are members of the church in Murmansk. They are both medical doctors as well as faithful workers for the Lord. Alexander has a strong desire to preach the gospel of Christ. Consequently, the Memphis School of Preaching has extended an invitation to this couple to come to Memphis for the purpose of being trained to be knowledgeable workers for the cause of Christ. After being trained in the School, they will return to Russia to teach and preach the word of God. In Alexander's words, "...the preaching of the gospel is most important work. And we intend to do this when we return to Russia."

Brethren, can you help support this family while they are being trained at the Memphis School of Preaching. Alexander is thirty-nine years of age and he and his wife Tatiana have two children, Dmitry (age 16) and Ekaterina (age 12). Alexander plans to enter school in August. The cost of getting this family here is approximately \$6,000.00. Monthly support is likewise needed. With plans to establish a school of preaching in Murmansk, it is very important to have a sound in the faith, dedicated Christian who is Russian to help work in the school. Alexander could be just that man. Will you help train this man and consequently help preach the gospel in Russia? Will you help by either making a one time donation toward their air-fare or making monthly contributions toward their \$1,750.00 monthly support? Since time is of the essence, we look forward to hearing from you soon. If you desire more information please call us.

Sincerely,

Billy Bland  
Dean of Students and coordinator of Russia work

Curtis A. Cates  
Director

[NOTE: Please read the above letter with special attention to helping bring Alexander and Tatiana Nesterkin and family from Murmansk, Russia for special Bible training at Memphis School of Preaching here in the U.S. These are the same two Russian doctors who treated me and nursed me back to health earlier this year, when I was so sick in Murmansk. Vada and I both know them well. They are worthy. Of the \$6,000.00 for their air-fares, she and I purpose to give \$600.00 of it ourselves. What can you do to help? Whatever the amount, address it to Memphis School of Preaching, clearly earmarked "Nesterkin Fund." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Eccl. 9:10). *[Signature]*

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# "CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE" GIVES FORTH AN UNCERTAIN SOUND RE: MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING LECTURESHIP

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

As one of the speakers on the 1995 Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship this past March, I was somewhat surprised to see a purported "analysis" of it by someone signing himself "GS" in the June 1995 issue of the *Christian Chronicle*. The early part of this diatribe, I suppose, was not too bad; however, toward the close, the writer abandoned scriptural analysis substituting questionable views of his own. It reminded me of what the apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 14:8, "...if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" With writers like "GS," no wonder readers of the *Chronicle* are so ill prepared to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered!

That our readers may know exactly what was said, please note the *Chronicle* article photographically reproduced in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* (see right). Having read that, now please consider carefully Memphis School of Preaching Director Curtis A. Cates' response, followed by Wayne Coats' response, both of which first appeared in the June 27, 1995 issue of *Yokefellow*, the official publication of Memphis School of Preaching. Also both are on the editorial staff of *Contending for the Faith*.

First, brother Cates:

## CALLING NAMES AND JUDGING UNRIGHTEOUSLY —THE CHRONICLE "ANALYSIS" OF THE 1995 MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING LECTURESHIP

Curtis A. Cates

The *Christian Chronicle*, June, 1995, page 28, specifically GS [I take it to be Glover Shipp, Managing Editor] "analyzed" our recent lectureship, which theme was, "Heaven's Imperative or Man's Innovations: Shall We Restructure the Church of Christ?" He did not attend the lectureship, but says he read the 850 page book. He did a quite commendable job in reviewing the excellent speech by brother Bobby Duncan "Shall We Restructure the Church?"

### "NAME-CALLING"

Brother Shipp wrote that he saw "a strong tendency toward name-calling and accusing." He questioned whether the speakers had done so in a "kind way or sarcastically," and whether the speakers "went first in every case to those they accused, in the spirit of New Testament teaching on dealing with differences between brothers in the faith." [See Wayne Coats' excellent reply to the article, page 12.]

1. What is wrong with accusing, brother Shipp? Do not the Scriptures accuse, and cannot one show wherein they do accuse (John 5:45-47)? Can an elder be accused (I Timothy 5:19)? Do not we try the spirits (I John 4:1)? Did not Paul accuse and expose the Judaizers (Galatians 2:4,5), and even accuse and rebuke Peter and other Jewish members of the church (Galatians 2:11-14)? *That is the spirit of New Testament teaching, if done in love for God, Christ, the Word of God, the bride of Christ, and the souls of men, and Paul did it!*

2. What is wrong with name-calling, brother Shipp? Is it never warranted, mandated, and scripturally appropriate? Shall we castigate John the Baptist (Matthew 3:7), or Christ (Matthew 5:20; 16:6,12; 23:23; 12:34; 7:15; Revelation 2:6,15,20),

or Paul (I Timothy 1:20; II Timothy 2:17; 4:10,14; I Corinthians 5:1-13; 1:11)? How do we fulfill the command to "mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and turn away from them" (Romans 16:17) without naming them?

3. What is wrong with using sarcasm at times, brother Shipp? Is it never appropriate? Did Job use sarcasm (Job 12:2; 21:3; 26:2,3)? Did God use sarcasm (Judges 10:14)? Did the prophet Elijah use sarcasm (I Kings 18:27)? Sarcasm is sometimes justified and very appropriate, a powerful literary device. (See Dungan, *Hermeneutics*, pp. 316-319.)

4. Are you certain brother Alexander Campbell never used sarcasm or called names, brother Shipp? I was shocked that you used him as an "example" with Christ, one in whose debates you wrote, "I have never found the least hint of name-calling or sarcasm." Brother, have you never read over several lines from Campbell's debates? The Campbell-Owen debate, which is before me, hardly started before brother Campbell chided Owen for making arguments as remote from the proposition "as would be the history of a tour up the

## 28 ANALYSIS

# Memphis lectureship

The 29th annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship was conducted from March 26 to 30 at the Knight-Arnold congregation's building, Memphis, Tenn. About 55 speakers developed the topic, "Heaven's Imperatives or Man's Innovations: Shall We Restructure the Church of Christ?"

Attendance reached a record high of 920, according to Knight-Arnold minister Steve Ellis. The singing was uplifting, the speeches were of the highest quality and the care given to the lectureship and its participants by Knight-Arnold members was exceptional, Ellis said.

Although I did not attend this series, I ordered the book and have read it. Since it is almost 850 pages in length, space does not permit an analysis of all of the many speeches. Therefore, a representative speech will be analyzed.

Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, Ala., gave a theme speech entitled, "Shall We Restructure the Church?"

Duncan's opening statement is that the church of the Lord is both human and divine. "It is human," he says, "in that it is composed of human beings who have been saved from sin by God's great scheme of redemption. Human beings are imperfect, and make many mistakes."

He then lists several examples of human error in the church that are not necessarily sinful: a song leader using a wrong pitch, a preacher failing to use good judgement, an eldership that might make a wrong decision, a failure to articulate a prayer well ...

From the human standpoint, he says, there

Ganges," material of "no legitimate bearing" (p. 36). Note further from Campbell, "It seems a very hard matter, indeed, to reason logically when we have nothing to reason against...nothing pertinent in Mr. Owen's last address" (pp. 72,73). Space forbids noticing his much additional sarcasm.

Note the Campbell-Rice Debate, which is before me. Campbell said, "He (Rice-CAC) has given us a few of the dry remains of some old harangues or lectures upon total depravity, which he may have preached around the country I know not how many times" (p. 640); "When he (Rice) will rise, he may tell you with a



# Worship warns against trend toward restructuring the church

is as much room for improvement in the church as there is in the life of individuals who make up the church.

From the divine side, however, Duncan says, the church cannot be improved. It was planned by God from eternity. The pattern for every phase of the church was given by God, just as he gave a pattern to Moses for the tabernacle.

Some are clamoring, Duncan affirms, for "bold but responsible" change in the church. He agrees that anything on the human side can be changed —

— songs, hours, arrangement and length of services, for instance.

These are not what the self-styled change agents are trying to

change, he charges. "They are meddling instead with the divine side of the church."

He states that change agents have developed a "core gospel" and relegated certain other aspects of the divine side to the periphery. Using such thinking, they announce that worship led by women, the use of instrumental music in worship and other matters are peripheral.

Duncan then moves to naming specific people and publications holding to this view. He charges them with declaring that they are members of a sectarian group that has not really restored the church. If so, he says, they have the right to change whatever they wish.

He then affirms, "The church of which I am a member did not have its beginning with the American Restoration Movement. Not one essential characteristic of it began with

any person connected with that movement."

He says that he became a member of the New Testament church, not a restoration church. Then he asserts that change agents do not believe in the restoration of the church; that the restored church has never existed.

As we answer the question, "Shall We Restructure the Church?" Duncan notes that change agents generally have little respect for the principle of a pattern in the New Testament to follow in faith and practice.

The arguments for a need for change are based, he says, not on what will make us pleasing to God, but upon what will make the church more ap-

pealing to people.

Duncan affirms that our worship is to please God, not man. The Lord is our audience, not people. Unless our worship is both true and spiritual, it cannot please God.

This understanding of worship will not attract multitudes of people. Duncan reminds us, however, that God's message has very often not attracted multitudes of people, such as in the days of Noah and Jeremiah.

Changes being clamored for, he says, include divesting the New Testament of its authority. If it is no longer binding in authority, then there is no definitive standard to follow. If there is no rule of faith, we can doubt baptism as essential to salvation, question that the church is the one body of Christ and modify worship in any way we may choose, "to adapt to the times."

Changes that some are wanting to make are fundamental, he concludes. They would remove all of our distinctives as a body. "The end result ... would be that the church would blend in perfectly with the denominational world. This is exactly what the change agents want."

In all of the speeches I see much that is worthy of the most serious thought. At what point in the change continuum would the church no longer be the church? At what point would it lose its doctrinal identity, as described in the New Testament? At what point does change quit being change in the human realm and begin to be change in the realm that belongs exclusively to God? Are there some non-negotiables that can be modified only at our own peril? These questions must be addressed openly and honestly.

I also see in the speeches a strong tendency toward name-calling and accusing. Only the speakers and those who heard them know if this was done in a kind way or sarcastically. And only the speakers (and the Lord) know if they went first in every case to those they accused, in the spirit of New Testament teaching on dealing with differences between brothers in the faith.

In reading Alexander Campbell's debates, I have never found the least hint of name-calling or sarcasm. In fact, his atheist opponent, Owen, publicly praised him for his gentlemanly behavior and fairness throughout the debate. If we can learn to follow his example and the teaching of Christ on brotherly relations, rather than going for the "jugular," we will make more progress toward unity. — GS

## Analysis

smile, 'Well, I cannot please my friend, Mr. Campbell, nor do I expect to please him.' Mighty logic, indeed! Unanswerable argument, truly! Alas—as my friend would say—alas! for the cause that depends upon such logical legerdemain! [trickery, hocus-pocus, sleight of hand—CAC] (p.641); speaking of the clapping displays of an earlier debate, Campbell said, "As an improvement [in the Rice debate—CAC], I learn a laughing committee has been organized, with a clerical fogleman [guide or leader—CAC], at whose signal certain persons are to smile a little broad, and thus encourage my worthy friend!" (p.642). These examples of sarcasm could be mul-

tiplied in the Owen and Rice debates but also in the Campbell-Purcell and Campbell-Maccalla Debates, also before me.

Was this restricted to his debates? Absolutely not! Please see his name-calling and sarcasm in the following statement in the *Millennial Harbinger*, 1840, p. 93, "Since our debate, the Bishop has been to see the Pope; and, no doubt, has received his reward for his apology for the deformities of the Papal hierarchy."

Did Campbell ever call the brethren's names? Often. One example will suffice. Jesse B. Ferguson was a great gospel preacher in Nashville who later departed from the truth. Brother Campbell power-

fully—and by name—exposed him and his false teaching in the *Millennial Harbinger*. He cited the minutes from "Ebenezer church, 15th October, 1853," which stated, "...we have no affinity for his view on that subject [Universalism—CAC]." Campbell wrote, "That Mr. Ferguson should seek to retain any position amongst us, is irreconcilable with any other view than that he intends to create a party in favor of Universalism. He stated further that one has the liberty in this country to teach his own convictions. "But we must hold it incompatible with candor and honesty, guilefully to hold a place amongst us." He questioned "how any church amongst us" could use



him as a preacher (1854, pp. 54,55). Brother Campbell would have agreed with brother William Woodson about the "Change Agents"—"It is time for them to go."

Campbell said in the *Harbinger* (1854, pp. 222, 223) that from the "first development" of his doctrine, "we clearly saw that he was no longer at home with us. We have nothing personal with any one who changes his creed or his position." His next statement reminds us of Rubel Shelly's excellent article years ago, "Oh, For an Honest False Teacher!" (*Gospel Advocate*, May 6, 1971). Campbell said, "But we question both the honor and the morality of any one who disguises his intentions or his views, in equivocal terms or deeds, in order to occupy a false position, and to retain the confidence of those who have no fellowship with his doctrine or his spirit." He affirmed that to continue with Ferguson [or any other such false teacher] was to demonstrate "their attachment to a man rather than to the gospel which they once professed," and thus to have departed from the spirit and "have yielded to the flesh." Campbell continued to "claim the privilege of defending the Bible" against Ferguson's false teaching.

Like the Memphis School of Preaching, when we warned against the change agents and restructuring the church, brother Campbell was castigated when he exposed Ferguson. In an article entitled "The Fall of Mr. J. B. Ferguson," Campbell wrote,

"We were censured by a few old friends in Nashville, for our early expose of the apostasy of Mr. Ferguson, as clearly indicated to my mind then as it is now, so far, at least, as principle is concerned. We saw as clearly then as we do now, the gulf of skepticism into which he had fallen...Let us all be admonished from such displays of human frailty, and let him who thinks that he stands firmly on the Rock of Truth, take heed lest he fall" (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1855, pp. 636,637).

[NOTE: Do you see any name-calling

5. Have you ever called any names, brother Shipp? Indeed, you talked about the fifty-five speakers of the lectureship, you named the Memphis School of Preaching and Knight Arnold, you named specifically brother Bobby Duncan, and you did not come to even one of us. Really, you did no wrong in that, because the Bible has no such regulation. BUT, you did violate your own law you have made. Someone has said, "Thou that condemnest another, condemns thyself first?" (*Cf.*, Romans 2:1).

Brother Guy N. Woods said about those who would misapply Matthew 18:15-27,

It is disturbing that many brethren these days have no hesitancy in taking texts out of their contexts, and using them utterly without regard to the purpose that prompted the statements...

Even the most casual examination of Matthew 18:15-17 will show that our Lord had under consideration offenses of a personal nature, occasions where one brother has suffered injury of one kind or other at the hands of another brother in the congregation; it has not the slightest reference to, nor may it be properly applied to those instances where erring brethren have propagated false doctrine to the detriment of the cause of Christ itself.

It is a gross misapprehension of Matthew 18:15-17, to offer it as a rule of procedure in dealing with instances where false doctrine is being advocated to the disruption of the cause and to the destruction of the souls of men, and them that do so fall into grave sin themselves. (*Questions and Answers*, II, pp. 55-57).

"GOING FOR THE 'JUGULAR'"

"If we can follow his [Campbell's] example and the teaching of Christ on brotherly relations, rather than going for the 'jugular,' we will make progress toward unity," wrote brother Shipp. Why did "going for the 'jugular'" become a part of his analysis? Did he suspect, did he surmise that the fifty-five speakers showed a vicious, mean, bitter, ugly, unloving spirit? Let me assure him that not one of them was

unlike the Christ in attitude and spirit—or in doctrine.

Speaking of love, what did Paul say of love? "...thinketh no evil" (I Corinthians 13:5), What does this word "thinketh," or "imputeth," or "taketh not account of" mean? Does it not mean putting the best construction on brethren's actions, not surmising evil (I Timothy 6:4), not assessing improper motives and/or purposes on brethren's actions, charitable judgment? The Lord condemns uncharitable, unfounded, unsubstantiated, unrighteous judgment [including insinuations and innuendoes] (Matthew 7:1-5) and commands that we "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Writing an "analysis" in a religious paper does not nullify one's being governed by these principles of ethics and righteousness! All shall be judged by our deeds and words.

### CONCLUSION

How ironic it was for a letter to the editor to state in the same issue of the *Chronicle*, "Some may wonder, 'Is it conservative?' 'Is it liberal?' It's a newspaper, folks. Neither conservative nor liberal, it just reports the news." Boy, was his "testimony" wrong!

The purpose and intent of the Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship is scripturally and in love to follow the Biblical accounts of inspired writers as they preached the Word (II Timothy 4:2), as they were set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:16), and as they opposed and exposed false teaching, apostate brethren, and heretics (II Thessalonians 3:6,14,15; Titus 3:10; et al.). Such analyses as appeared in the *Chronicle* shall not divert us from this noble and scripturally-mandated purpose. [Signed] Curtis A. Cates.

—Memphis School of Preaching  
4400 Knight Arnold Road  
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

Now read what brother Wayne Coats, also a speaker on the 1995 Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, had to say.

## A REPLY TO GS OF THE *CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE*

Wayne Coats

In the June 1995 issue of the *Christian Chronicle* there is an analysis made of the 29th Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, signed, GS. Of all the speakers and subjects discussed during the Lectureship, GS analyzed a "representative speech" by Bobby Duncan who spoke on *Shall We Restructure the Church?*

The incredulity of GS is so completely glaring to even a tyro when he opines, "I also see in the speeches a strong tendency

toward name-calling and accusing. Only the speakers and those who heard them know if this was done in a kind way or sarcastically. And only the speakers (and the Lord) know if they went first in every case to those accused, in the spirit of New Testament teaching on dealing with differences between brothers in the faith."

I was one of over fifty speakers who addressed audiences of the MSOP Lectureship, and I would like for GS to be strong,

courageous, and a person of unwavering integrity long enough to answer a few simple elementary matters. As a speaker, I called names and made some accusations. Now pray tell why this is wrong for me to do this, but right for GS? GS accused some of accusing, and is he so blind as not to see that which is so obvious?

GS made reference to Bobby Duncan eight different times in his brief analysis. Shame, shame! He called brother Duncan's name. Did he go to Bobby Duncan, the accused, before he wrote his piece? GS accused others of calling names and set forth an opinion which he is unwilling to observe. Why? With such arrogance, whatever else GS says is sheer poppycock gone to seed.

So GS sees in the speeches "name calling and accusing" but he popped off without going to all those accused. Does he make laws for others which he is unwilling to observe? Please remember, "Larger boats may venture more but little boats should stay near shore."

Please let the reader take notice that another blow was landed when GS wrote, "And only the speakers and those who heard them know if this was done in a kind way or sarcastically." Well, I do not expect GS to apply the rule to himself. No, never, and of course not! When GS pops off about the speakers, how do we know whether he was kind or sarcastic? It matters not one whit to me what kind of speech the Chronicle writer uses. Maybe with Emerson he thinks, "Consistency is the hob-goblin of little minds." We have noticed for years that consistency in the thought process is something with which the liberal never seems to be concerned.

In my lectureship speeches I used kindness and also sarcasm and I beg, plead, implore and insist that GS move forward and make an attempt to show that accusing, along with sarcasm per se, is sinful. Moreover, it appears that GS has come to rely upon that liberal crutch which is a handy prop for religious cowards who refused to make any effort at defending the faith. Oh, but they can write about going to those accused, "...in the spirit of New Testament teaching on dealing with differences between brothers in the faith." Will someone please explain why this weak, sickly, foolhardy explanation has never been used by self-respecting brethren in days gone by? Why is it such a useful crutch for the far-out liberals? 'Tis easier for some to hobble on a crutch while fleeing than to stand and defend the truth of my God.

To attempt the use of Matthew 18:15ff to curtail the exposure of error doesn't make even good nonsense. The passage refers to personal matters between brethren. Up until the upsurge of liberalism in recent years, it just seemed that everyone knew the truth within the passage.

Will someone please try to inform GS that it is not "brotherly relations" but a disrespect for the authority of God's Word that is destroying the unity among God's people and that disrespect is nowhere demonstrated more openly than through the pages of such papers as the *Christian Chronicle*? "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth" (Romans 14:23)

—705 Hillview Drive  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122

**Addendum:** I challenge GS or any other person connected with the *Christian Chronicle* to meet me in either a public or written discussion as to the meaning of Matthew 18:15-17. [Signed] Wayne Coats

[EDITORIAL NOTE: For any wishing to trace the source of all the stir, we now have a supply of this splendid, 839-page, beautiful, hard-bound, gold-stamped book available for your order. Please send \$17.95 (plus \$2.24 postage) to **CONTEND-**

*ING FOR THE FAITH, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118 and ask for Heaven's Imperatives or Man's Innovations: Shall We Re-structure the Church of Christ?—Ira Y. Rice, Jr.]*

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# Notes & Quotes...

Roy Deaver, Wellington, Texas, re: the ROBERTSON COUNTY, (TENNESSEE) LABOR DAY WEEKEND LECTURESHIP, 1994, wrote: "It is always good to see all those faithful and deeply concerned brothers and sisters in Christ who come year after year; but it was especially wonderful to see the many new faces from new places.

"The great work and influence of this lecture-ship continues to grow. Thanks be to God, to consecrated gospel preachers, and to faithful brethren, that this is so...

"May God continue to be with us all, and to bless us as we labor together to the accomplishing always of the greatest possible good in his service."

[NOTE: Speaking of the ROBERTSON COUNTY (TENNESSEE) LABOR DAY WEEKEND LECTURESHIP, it continues to grow in size and strength with each passing year. The attendance for 1994 was half again larger than the year before. What a rallying ground for those of "like precious faith" to get together not only from middle Tennessee, but from other states near and far. Dates for the 1995 Lectureship have been set for September 1-4. I personally plan to be there and am encouraging all who still believe and contend for the faith to be there, too. Let us aim for an overflow crowd this year. IYR Jr.]

Wayne Coats, Mount Juliet, Tennessee: The only thrill some liberals get is reading *Contending for the Faith*. In this respect, I like to cause a few thrills.

Ted & Villa Harshbarger, Hobbs, New Mexico: We would like to have your comments on I Corinthians 11:5 and 6.

[NOTE: Regarding I Corinthians 11:5 and 6, of which you inquired, I know the various positions on this passage. Certainly, according to the custom at Corinth, it was considered shameful for a woman to pray or prophesy with her head uncovered; however, the coverings they wore were quite different from the doilies some contend for today. Rather, they covered the whole body, from the crown of the head all the way to the ground.

I have been to Corinth in person and have seen what they call "chadors," which many women there still wear. They wouldn't be caught dead in a doily! If modern women are unwilling to go "all the way" with a chador, like the Corinthian women of Paul's day, they do not understand the covering that Paul was writing about.

Dropping down to verse 15, a woman's hair is a glory to her. Also, it is given to her for a "covering."

Anyone seeming to be contentious over such matters needs to read verse 16. Neither the apostles nor the churches of God had such a custom as some are contending now. As long as a woman's hair is long enough and a man's hair is short enough not to be a shame, don't worry about it. IYR Jr.]

One esteemed church, who shall be nameless, wrote: It was sad to hear that brother Rice had been using women as translators while preaching the gospel, and his defense of said practice. Rather than go into a discussion on the matter, our decision was simply to discontinue our subscription to *Contending for the Faith*. Therefore, as soon as possible, remove our name as subscribers to your paper.

[NOTE: In my reply, I expressed regret for their decision--particularly because of their reason for doing so. If I truly believed that it is unscriptural to use women as translators, of course, I should share their feelings in the matter. If men translators are available, where

men are to be present in the audience, then it probably would be expedient to use men. However, when male translators are not available, I doubt that the passages some are citing have anything to do with whomever is doing the translating--only with the ones actually doing the teaching or preaching, the translators doing neither. However, this is not to belabor the point. Should they later see things differently, their renewal of subscription will be most welcome. IYR Jr.]

B. J. Foster, Rutherford Church of Christ, Rutherford, Tennessee: Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$300 to be used for special mailings...We at the Rutherford Church of Christ appreciate your continued stand for the truth.

Harold and Sarah Smith, Lynchburg, Tennessee: We will continue to give as we can to help out on special mailings... Keep up the good work as we continue together to contend for the faith and stand for the truth. God bless your efforts.

[NOTE: Thanking them for the \$15.00 they enclosed for our special mailings, I said that it is my opinion that we are beginning to make some headway calling brethren back to the truth who were following false teachers into error. It probably is too much to expect that we can convert the false teachers themselves--however, if we can save some of those following their lead, these will be as brands plucked from the burning (Amos 4:11). IYR Jr.]

Cecil Brandon, of Auburn, Washington, sent \$10.00 and later \$50.00 to help with expenses on these special mailings.

## TRUTH FOR THE WORLD MISSION FORUM

The fourth annual Truth For The World Mission Forum will be held August 25-27, 1995. This year's forum will be hosted by the Olive Branch Church of Christ, which meets at 9100 East Sandidge Road in Olive Branch, Mississippi. Ten speakers will address the theme, "Send the Light."

The mission fields of Eastern Kentucky, Guyana, Indonesia, Samoa, and Zambia will be featured as well as the media ministries, World Video Bible School and Truth for the World. Lloyd and Pearl Henson, longtime missionaries in Zambia, will be honored at a special dinner on Saturday afternoon, August 26. For further information, please call (601) 895-9740.

—Rod Rutherford

Truth for the World

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Much appreciation to the many faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who continue to support the special mailings we are sending directly to the families of churches who are seeking to lead the brotherhood into error. Houston McCorquodale, of Shepherd, Texas, sent \$25.00 and \$20.00; the Thorntons, of Kenai, Alaska, \$50.00; Samuel P. Hardin, of Anchorage, Alaska, \$20.00; Herbert and Betty Mitchell, of Seattle, Washington, several contributions of \$50.00 each; Douglas L. Moore, also of Seattle, \$50.00; Mr. & Mrs. Bethel Watts, of Tallahassee, Florida, \$25.00; Kenneth D. Cohn, of Spring, Texas, \$25.00 and \$50.00, Gary Blasingame, of Katy, Texas, \$15.00 and \$25.00; Anonymous, of Clovis, New Mexico, \$250.00, \$100.00 and \$50.00; William O. Puckett, of Artesia, New Mexico, \$50.00 and \$100.00; Bobbie McDonald, of Ruidoso, New Mexico, sent \$25.00 to fight

the bad guys; Clyde Lacquement, of Emmett, Idaho, \$50.00 and \$100.00; Eusebio M. Lacuata, of Cerritos, California, repeated contributions of \$10.00, \$20.00 and \$25.00; Martin/Evelyn Christensen, various amounts of \$45.00, \$50.00, \$35.00 and \$40.00; A. E. Stevens, of Dayton, Texas, \$100.00 and \$200.00; Leslie K. Page, of Highlands, Texas, \$20.00; Dalton & Willie Lee Ellis, of Hughson, California, \$200.00; G. A. Wakefield, of Madisonville, Texas, \$10.00 six or eight times; Howard Fulmer, of Barstow, California, \$25.00 and \$100.00; Cora Vaughn, of Redmond, Washington, \$10.00; Lester McCoy, of Beeville, Texas, \$25.00 each month. It all adds up!

Ted A. Norton, of Montgomery, Alabama, subscribed for five years; Gary Anderson, of Stockton, California, renewed for five years. So did Ralph Hartman, of Sayre, Oklahoma; Paul A. Crockett, Jr., of Obion, Tennessee; Irvn T. Higginbotham, of Hampton, Virginia; Jack Stewart, of Bakersfield, California; Edward Lee Davis, of Millbrook, Alabama; Reubin Crawford, of Jacksonville, Florida; Mary L. Crockett, of Memphis, Tennessee; Jerry Pritchett, of Chattanooga, Tennessee; Sherrill S. Creamer, of Childress, Texas; Guy Dickinson, of Casselberry, Florida; Warren Kniskern, Miami, Florida; Bill Miller, of Huntsville, Alabama; Roland O. Glover, of Garland, Texas; Joe E. Galloway, of Greeneville, Tennessee; James D. Hardison, of Toccoa, Georgia; and Clay A. Middlebrook, of Dyess AFB, Texas.

We also are encouraged by those who send in additional subscriptions, thus helping us build up our circulation for the truth of the gospel. For instance, Len Lee, of Bakersfield, California, turned in his own subscription and five more; C. E. Manning, Sr., of Pantego, North Carolina, renewed for five years, sent two more; David & Karen Adams, of Texarkana, Texas, renewed one year, gave \$20.00 toward special mailings; Fred R. Bogle, of Orlando, Florida, renewed his own and one more, sent four new; Georgia Hamer, of Giddings, Texas, renewed her own, sent five new; Bill Lyons, of Florence, Alabama, renewed his own and two more; William H. Fugerer, of Duneden, Florida, renewed his own, sent \$90.00 toward special mailings; Mrs. Gaynell Griffin, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed her own, sent one new; Benny E. Acock, of Corsicana, Texas, renewed his own and three more, sent one new; Maurice E. Woods, of Mountain View, Arkansas, sent two new; Clifford Eastep, of Southgate, Michigan, renewed his own and four more, sent two new; Robert D. Gustafson, of Grand Prairie, Texas, is like a one-man subscription campaign all by himself—in addition to the many others previously reported, he sent in 17 more—all new!

Doug Bullington, sent in two new; James Self, of Hereford, Texas, renewed his own, sent in one new; Harold G. Beale, of Panama, Canal Zone, renewed his own, sent five new.

Dr. & Mrs. Billy Wiseman, of Tipton, Georgia, renewed for five years, contributed \$74.00 toward special mailings.

## TEN GRADUATE FROM KIEV BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL

Through the providences of the Most High who rules in the kingdom of men (Daniel 4:17), the gospel of Jesus Christ is being preached and received throughout what former President Reagan called the "Evil Empire," the former Soviet Union.

The church began in the city of Kiev on September 1, 1991, when some 50 persons were baptized after being taught by brethren Ernest Burnette and Jim Waldron. A year later, in the fall of 1992, the Kiev Bible Institute was established.

We came and began to work with the Bible

school and Centre church in late August last year. This week, on Sunday, July 17th, ten students were recognized and honored as the first graduates of the Bible school. It was an historic event in the history of the church in the Ukraine in the 20th century. We give God the praise and thanks for making it possible.

The Kiev Bible Training School (or "institute," as it is called in Russian) exists in order to train men as evangelists and women as teachers (II Timothy 2:2). Those who graduated this week studied for two years, receiving approximately 1,730 class hours of instruction.

Donna and I have grown close to them over the past 11 months, as we have worked with them in special training classes and public teaching. This past year I also taught them seven books of the New Testament.

Over 100 persons were present for the graduation services in which three men (Vacilly, Pavel, Andre) and seven women (Elcha, Evelene, Maria, Cvetiana, Nina, Tamulu, Galena) received diplomas. It was an exciting day for everyone.

Most of the sisters who graduated are trying to find a school which will permit them to teach the Bible to children. We pray that God will open doors of opportunity for them.

The three brothers mentioned also are outstanding workers in the vineyard. Pavel, because of his work with the congregation which he started last summer in his home town, will not be studying for a third year in the school. Vacilly and Andre, members at Centre, will be studying in our third year program for evangelists. These two good men, plus one other second year student, are preaching and teaching at the congregation on the east side of Kiev this summer.

We anticipate having approximately 60 returning students. Four traveled for two days from Russia this week to come and speak with us about enrolling in the fall. We pray that God will give us many faithful saints to train for work in his kingdom. Beginning with the fall term, all students desiring to enter the school are required to have been a Christian for at least one year before they are allowed to take the entrance exam and course.—Roger Campbell, in Campbell's Ukraine Update for August 1994.

Alex B. Coloma, of the Philippines, is now a second-year student at Four Seas College, in Singapore. He writes: Seven months from now I should be able to use my knowledge already acquired from this college. I'm planning to have a pioneering work over Mindanao particularly in my home town.

My late father was not able to start the assembly there before and it is my personal conviction therefore to continue his unfinished work. It is sad to know that my family (seven souls) were not able to worship God every Sunday then until now because of the absence of the church in our place. I'm praying God's providence to help me materialize this plan and for its success.

I started to accumulate good materials now for my full time preaching in addition to the theory which I have been learning from my teachers here. Contending for the Faith so far is one of the papers I use to read and keep!

[NOTE: From the main thrust of his letter, it is clear that brother Coloma intends to evangelize the word upon his return to the Philippines. This is the intent of the training he now is receiving at Four Seas College. IYR Jr.]

Raymond H. Bush, of Athens, Alabama, renewed his subscription, saying, in part, ...I appreciate the good work you have done through the years and are still doing. I know it has been a difficult job for you, editing Contending for the Faith and seeing that everything is documented and right. I have observed the times that it was pointed out you were wrong, you were swift to correct this. I appreciate this trait in you. I know there are those who don't like what you are doing (and don't

have much use for you) but I appreciate your stand for truth and exposure of error. Don't put up your sword yet because the battle is still going strong because of the liberals among us...

[NOTE: It has been a long, long battle trying to hold the line for truth against the onslaughts of the liberals over the past 30 years, I replied, in part. I agree with you that now is not the time to put up our sword. We still appear to be gaining a few victories along from time to time.

When we started contending for the faith brotherhood-wide back in the 60s, I knew then that the battle would be long and that if I counted the appreciation of some as gain, I must count it all but loss if the truth survived this generation among the churches of Christ. Thankfully, there are at least some such as you who understand and appreciate what I have tried to do. A great many do not. But I believe the Lord does—and it is to him that we either stand or fall. IYR Jr.]

Eusebio M. Lacuata, of Cerritos, California, sent another \$30.00 toward special mailings, saying, It is indeed sad that instead of devoting your efforts in converting people who never obeyed the gospel, you now are devoting your time and resources in exposing the errors of brethren who have fallen away in an effort to win them back to the truth. You are doing a marvelous job even with your magazine alone!

[NOTE: We, too, think it is sad that we have to spend so much time, energy and money winning folks back to the truth; however, we are not neglecting world evangelism entirely. This year, so far, we have evangelized in China, Hong Kong, Cambodia and Russia. We return to Russia, Lord willing, this coming September—then, in November, back to Hong Kong and China, followed by efforts in Singapore, Cambodia and the Philippines. Pray for us! IYR Jr.]

"How sad that many young people are growing up in churches [in west Texas] and never have heard the things that are being preached in this lectureship."—Lynn Blair, June 22, 1994, Houston College of the Bible, Spring, Texas.

"Jesus and Paul did not preach sermons that got them fired; they preached sermons that got them killed."—Jim Moore, June 22, 1994, Houston College of the Bible Lectureship, Spring, Texas.

## The Zambia School of Biblical Studies

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?...?" Romans 10:14, 15a.

Under the direction of Brother Jerry Sullins, the Zambia School of Biblical Studies, located outside Livingstone, Zambia in central Africa, is preparing native African preachers to perpetuate the church in that area.

Brother Gordon Wonsey, a graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching, has determined to move to Zambia and help in that effort. He has worked with small congregations in the north for the past 25 years and is well qualified to teach personal evangelism.

Brother Wonsey and his wife will be making their first trip to Zambia in July with a *Truth For The World* evangelistic

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This letter is being written to inform those concerned that Gordon and Buelah Wonsey are to begin working with the Zambia School of Biblical Studies beginning in 1996.

The Zambia School of Biblical Studies was formerly the Botswana School of Biblical Studies began in 1988. In the past six years, thirty-two men from six African countries have graduated in the three classes of students. Each student received an Associate Degree of Biblical Studies for two academic years of studies. The studies included over forty Bible or Bible related subjects covering the same material a student would cover in a like institution here in the states.

Presently, Botswana School of Biblical Studies is relocating in Livingstone, Zambia.

Brother and sister Wonsey are greatly needed in Zambia. Gordon will assist as an instructor as well as be involved in numerous areas of needed mission work. Buelah will also be very involved in the training of women and in the teaching of children. I would like to commend this fine Christian couple to you for consideration of your support. Their record of work for the Lord in the past is impressive. Their faithfulness is unquestioned. We look forward to having them with us in Zambia.

We do hope you can help the Wonsey's in their desire to lead the lost to Christ in Africa. May the Lord bless you.

In Christ,

(Signed) Jerry R. Sullins, Director-Zambia School of Biblical Studies  
P.S. For further information you may contact me at 901-366-4656

"Humanism is just a euphemism for atheism."—Steve Ellis, morning service, June 26, 1994, Knight Arnold church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

campaign. He will be preaching in several meetings in the Copper Belt area of Zambia and also will be teaching in a seminar at the Zambia School of Biblical Studies before returning to the states.

They need \$6,000.00 to make the trip. The elders of the Goshen Church of Christ in Indiana are collecting the funds for the Wonsey's. If you can help in this good work, please send your contribution to the Goshen church to the attention of Keith Bessen (one of the elders and a former missionary to Zambia) at 61073 State Road 15 North, Goshen, Indiana 46526.

The Wonsey's will be moving to Zambia to start their permanent work there in January of 1996. If you can help them in any way, with a one-time contribution or a monthly contribution for their support while in Africa, please contact the Goshen church or Gordon Wonsey at 3131 Boxdale, Memphis, Tennessee 38118, Phone (901) 369-4339.

Dr. Alfred L. Burden, Jr., M.D., of San Antonio, Texas, enclosed a newspaper article from the *San Antonio Express-News* for March 25, 1995, saying,

"It is sad, but it seems that some members of the Oak Hills Church of Christ: no longer see the distinctive nature of the Church. I know of one young man and his wife who have recently left Oak Hills to go to Travis Park Methodist Church, a socially elitist group. He grew up in the Church and is the son of a conservative elder, but because of the false teachings that there are Christians in other churches as promoted by Max [Lucado] and others at: Oak Hills, no longer sees it is important to continue to worship with fellow Christians in the true Church. I am sure he is just one of many. You don't hear Max Lucado preach the importance of baptism either. As best I can

determine he does not feel it is necessary for salvation, but that is my opinion...My wife and I have even questioned between ourselves whether Max has been baptized himself. The damage such false teachers as this do is terrible, because they are really wolves in sheep's clothing, posing as faithful proclaimers of the truth while they spread their error and cause untold numbers to be lost.

"Keep up the good work of informing the brotherhood..."

[NOTE: "You probably are correct that some of the members of the Oak Hills church of Christ no longer see the distinctive nature of the Lords church," I replied, in part. "The young man you mentioned having left Oak Hills to go to Travis Park Methodist Church appears

to be a case in point. Max may not realize it; but he is setting up Oak Hills for a general hemorrhage of members to the denominations ere long. After all, why be concerned for the one true church if the denominations are just as good!

"In both our June as well as our July issues, we are giving Max the full treatment. He may be a wolf in sheep's clothing—but maybe we can lift the clothing a bit so brethren can see the wolf underneath..."

That knowledgeable readers may understand what the furor is all about, please read and study the accompanying article that brother Burden enclosed from the *San Antonio Express-News*, entitled, *Pair of Preachers Planning to Swap Their Pulpits April 2*, which we are photo-reproducing herewith. IYRJR.]

## Pair of preachers planning to swap their pulpits April 2

By Ron Wilson  
Express-News Staff Writer

Call it ecumenicalism.  
Call it a busman's holiday.  
On April 2, Oak Hills Church of Christ and Trinity Baptist Church will trade preachers for a day.  
What makes "Unity Day" special is that neither denomination has been known in recent years for opening its pulpits to preachers from outside the faith.

The Rev. Max Lucado, Oak Hills pastor, said Unity Day will be a time when he and his fellow preacher, the Rev. Buckner Fanning, underscore what unites their congregations in God's love rather than the denominational doctrines that keep them apart.

"There is so much disunity — in education, in politics, even with our neighbors," Lucado said. "This is a gesture of unity, a statement of acceptance."

Lucado said he and Fanning first discussed trading pulpits three years ago.

Then, while preparing a recent sermon series, Lucado said he was struck by the words of John 17:21 that call for Christian unity so the world may believe that Jesus was sent by God.

Swept by the power of the passage, Lucado went to church elders and said: "Now we need to take a step."

*"Whenever I see a man call God 'Father,' I see a brother."*

— The Rev. Max Lucado  
Oak Hills Church of Christ

They agreed, then Fanning agreed, and Unity Day was born.

Lucado will preach the 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. morning services at Trinity; Fanning will speak at Oak Hills at 8:30, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m.

Though the day's theme is unity, the pastors said, it's not ecumenicalism.

"Ecumenism has gotten a black eye," Lucado said. "Some people see it as compromise. This is not compromise. What we have in common is greater than our differences."

"Whenever I see a man call God 'Father,' I see a brother," Lucado said.

Fanning agreed: "(It's) unity of spirit, not unification of organization."

Fanning also downplayed criticism from fellow Baptists concerned about doctrinal purity.

"We expect some flak," he said.

"We've already gotten some of that flak. But the churches that are not inclusive... are the real losers."

Baptist pastors read the works of Martin Luther and John Calvin to prepare their sermons, Fanning said.

"And for them to say they wouldn't let John Calvin or Martin Luther preach from their pulpit is hypocrisy."

Fanning said his message to Oak Hills worshipers will be the "Power of love: Only love can change a life... only love can change a heart."

In his guest sermon, Lucado said, he will use the allegory of Christians serving in God's navy: Some serve below, some on the upper decks. When they walk around they see people with different clothes, with different views on how to get to land. But when it's time to fight, they stand shoulder to shoulder to get the job done.

"That's a great analogy," Fanning said. "As a former Marine who wasn't necessarily in love with the Navy, I can appreciate that."



**Boots & Mary Bacon**, Batesville, Arkansas: We've just had our 50th anniversary celebration on Saturday...Things have been moving too fast!

**J. E. Choate**, Nashville, Tennessee: I am convinced we have the proper handles to fasten to our liberal brethren who are coming from postmodern theology and postmodern denominationalism copied from the Community Church activities and modes of worship.

**Abigail Chew**, Singapore, Republic of Singapore: The college [Four Seas College] has a bunch of very, very good students this year. Really real good. They are Victor and Bonar,

from Indonesia, **John Yu** and wife from Taiwan, **Alex and George** from Philippines, **Jack-**

**son** (you know him) from China, and local part-timers. Wonderful!



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**Thursday, July 27th**

7:00 p.m. Acts: *The Lord's Church in the First  
Thirty Years* . . . . . Lindell Mitchell  
8:00 p.m. Jude: *Earnestly Contend For the Faith* . . . Bill Lockwood

**Friday, July 28th**

9:00 a.m. Hebrews: *Christ Our High Priest* . . . . . Joe Cox  
10:00 a.m. Ephesians: *The Plan of the Ages* . . . . . Tom Bright  
11:00 a.m. Philippians: *Our Joy in Christ* . . . . . Michael Mayo  
1:30 p.m. 1 John: *Walking in the Light* . . . . . Eddie Whitten  
2:30 p.m. Galatians: *The End of the Law* . . . . . John Moore  
3:30 p.m. Philemon, 2 John, and 3 John:  
*Words of Encouragement* . . . . . Gus Eoff  
7:00 p.m. 1 Peter: *Putting Them in Remembrance* . . . Ira Rice  
8:00 p.m. Revelation: *Then and Now* . . . . . Tom Bright

**Saturday, July 29th**

9:00 a.m. James: *Practical Christianity* . . . . . Tim Ayers  
10:00a.m. 1 Corinthians: *Problems in the  
Early Church* . . . . . Jerry Moffitt

11:00 a.m. 2 Corinthians: *Scriptural Corrective  
Discipline Works* . . . . . Darwin Hunter  
1:30 p.m. *The Limits of Our Fellowship* . . . . . Joseph Meador  
2:30 p.m. 1 and 2 Timothy: *Preach the  
Word and Live the Word* . . . . . Perry Cotham  
3:30 p.m. Titus: *The Importance of Church  
Government* . . . . . Carl Garner  
6:00 p.m. Question and Answer Session  
7:00 p.m. *The Church of God and Unchangeable* . . Gary Colley  
8:00 p.m. Colossians: *The All Sufficiency of Christ* . David Brown  
**Sunday, July 30th**  
9:30 a.m. 2 Peter: *Christians Must Answer  
The Scoffers* . . . . . David Brown  
10:20a.m. Romans: *Justification Through The Faith* . Joseph Meador  
5:00 p.m. Singing  
6:00 p.m. 1 and 2 Thessalonians: *Wherefore Comfort  
One Another With These Words* . . . . . Perry Cotham

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**Robbie Lee Goolsby**, Clinton, Tennessee: "Your issue of 'Contending for the Faith' about the Nashville 'Christian Jubilee, Inc.' was excellent. I gave my copy to a couple who had been attending in hopes they would cancel for this year. I let a preacher read it who attended last year and had plans to attend this year. After reading it, he said, 'No, I'm not going!' And he didn't. I didn't get to tell all the others I needed to as I had no copy. SO will you please send me some more copies. It's sad that every Christian doesn't get Contending for the Faith. As an example, I'm enclosing the Kingston Church Bulletin.

"I thank God constantly for all the 'good work' you and Vada do. I'm thankful that I can help your work."

[NOTE: On the front page of 'The Beacon,' the weekly bulletin of the Kingston (Tennessee) Church of Christ, in a column captioned, "NUNN'S NOTES" and signed "Danny," appeared the following words:

"Next week will be the sixth year for Jubilee, an event in Nashville that regularly draws upwards of 10,000 men, women, and children. It is filled with opportunities for spiritual enrichment and fellowship.

"We will have a good representation from the church in Kingston. All three ministers will be at Jubilee next Wednesday through Friday. I know several from the church who are going to attend also.

"I enjoy attending Jubilee because it is a coming together of Christians for fellowship, encouragement, and positive spiritual experiences. There is a certain uplift that comes of knowing one is part of a great brotherhood of Christ-seeking people.

"Jubilee challenges people to greater love for God, deeper faith in his Word, and broader vision for his church. The classes and lessons stimulate

creativity among those who attend.

"Jubilee helps create a public image of Churches of Christ as people who have something positive to offer to a struggling world. Some of our neighbors know us only from negative caricatures.

"One cannot attend Jubilee with an open mind and not come away better because of being with thousands of fellow Christians and being challenged by the lessons and classes. If at all possible attend part or all of Jubilee this year."

If all we had to go by was the description of "Jubilee," per foregoing, I reckon we all would be headed for their seventh event this coming July. Unfortunately, "the other side of the story" is that, from its beginning, this ill-conceived celebration has been THE MOST DIVISIVE EFFORT being made among the churches of Christ east of the Mississippi River.

To begin with, the very IDEA of "Jubilee," from the Bible standpoint, is an OLD testament, JEWISH celebration, having no relevance to CHRISTIANS under the NEW testament! Rather than inviting sound, faithful gospel preachers to speak, from beginning to end those sponsoring "Jubilee" each year have featured speakers known to preach and practice doctrines DIFFERING from the doctrine of the New Testament. Rather than being just a coming together of Christians, pure and simple, Jubilee now has evolved into a CORPORATION, with a BOARD OF DIRECTORS, fully the equivalent of the missionary society and other societies identified with the so-called Christian Church. The most compromising "CHANGE AGENTS" seeking to re-structure the churches of Christ from "thus saith the Lord" into just another denomination continue to be in primary control of this doctrinally-corrupt monstrosity. Those who seek INTER-denominational

fellowship completely out of harmony with the New Testament, are given credence and influence for their false teachings by being invited to speak on "Jubilee."

Danny Nunn evidently has no such doctrinal scruples. All he can see is the emotional enjoyment and the thrill of a big crowd, ignoring doctrinal violations in the name of something "positive." He can stigmatize faithful brethren as "negative caricatures" all he wants to; however, if "Jubilee" has its way, in just a few more years the church after the New Testament order no longer will have any viable existence fading into just another "precious memory." IYRj]

### Preacher Wanted

The Missoula, Montana Church of Christ is seeking a full time preacher. Missoula is a fast growing community of approximately 85,000 and is the home of the University of Montana. Our current attendance is about 100 with great growth opportunity. We need a spiritually sound man of enthusiasm to strengthen the congregation and evangelize the community. House and salary is negotiable. Please submit inquiries or resume, tape of sermon and picture of family, etc. to the elders, Missoula Church of Christ, 1528 South Higgins, Missoula, Montana 59801.

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**A. G. Guthrie**, Nashville, Tennessee: "We are very interested in the teachings of today that are facing the church. We are so glad that the teachings of Rubel Shelly are being exposed and others need to be... We are losing members for lack of study on their part and following along because they wear the name 'Church of Christ.' Elders are not grounded in the scripture, so denominational way creep in... We appreciate the stand your paper is taking."

**Alexander & Tatiana Nesterkin**, Murmansk, Russia: "Your letter of July 27th reached us on the 10th of August (so quickly). We are very glad that our three American brethren well got back. Of course, the journey was not easy. We needed their help and appreciate very much all they did for us."

"Will you please say hello **Cliff Lyons, Ron Cosby, Lennie Reagan**. We remember all of you and hope see soon again..."

"Our brethren coming in the beginning of September will be teaching student classes. You and **Keith Mosher** will teach teachers."

"About the flat which you bought probably soon (16th-18th of August) it will be repaired and cleaned..."

"All members Murmansk Church of Christ wait for you."

"Our best regards **Curtis Cates, Billy Bland, Bob Hawkins**... May God bless always you, your family, your country, (Signed) **Alexander and Tatiana**."

[NOTE: Both Alexander Nesterkin and his wife Tatiana are medical doctors and are

wholly devoted to the cause of Christ in Murmansk, Russia. IYRJR.]

**Dalton L. Wilson**, of Fulton, Mississippi, renewed for three years, saying, Keep up the good work. I pray that we are seeing brethren begin to take a stand against the false teaching that is coming from within the brotherhood.

**Anonymous**, of Victoria, Texas, sent another \$30.00 toward special mailings, saying, I count it a privilege to be able to help, though my efforts may be feeble... Do hope my bit can help. I admire you for your efforts.

**M. C. Brooks**, of Boerne, Texas, contributed \$250.00 to help us mail out *Behold The Pattern* to erring brethren.

**F. Kirk**, of Cleveland, Texas, sent \$50.00 toward special mailings.

# Directory

For advertising in this section See sidebar on page 2

## -Florida

Pensacola: **Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, Tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, **Michael Hatcher**, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

## -Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, **Wayne Coats**, preacher, Tel. (615) 758-7406.

## -Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., **Al Brown** and **David Brown**, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week of June.

## Darrell Conley to Debate Catholics

Each evening at 7:00 p.m., August 14-17, 1995, Monday through Thursday, at McAlister Auditorium, San Antonio College, Texas

**Darrell Conley**, preacher for the Northern Oaks congregation, San Antonio, Texas, will debate **Robert Narvaez, M.D.**, and **Mike Luther** of the Catholic "lay" organization called "Catholic Response." **Roy Deaver** will serve as **Brother Conley's** moderator.

### Propositions:

**Resolved:** *The church of which I am a member is the one true church of Christ in which alone is to be found salvation (and which recognizes the Bible as the only authority in faith and practice).*

**Affirm:** **Darrell Conley**                      **Deny:** **Mike Luther**

**Resolved:** *The Roman Catholic Church is the true church of Christ in which alone is to be found salvation (and which is infallible in teaching the truths revealed by Christ).*

**Affirm:** **Robert Narvaez**                      **Deny:** **Darrell Conley**



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Ed Floyd, minister, Mountain City Church of Christ, Mountain City, Tennessee: "Keep contending for the faith. You have done a lot of good over the years and you continue to do so. I shudder to think what the church would be like today, if not for men like you."

Charlie Andrew Brown, Tallahassee, Florida: "Please send me fifteen (15) copies of the November/1994 [issue] of Contending for the

Faith. Keep up the good work! I'm so pleased with your courage, of the opposition to Rubel Shelly and his crowd in the east Tennessee/southwest Virginia area..."

"[There is] no need for a unity movement among those who are equally concerned for obedience to the will of God."—Steve Ellis, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, September 11, 1994, Memphis, Tennessee.

Mr. & Mrs. Cody Burgin, of Baytown, Texas, sent \$500.00...Harold and Sarah Smith, of Lynchburg, Tennessee, enclosed \$20.00 "for mailing literature to our erring brothers and sisters in the church," saying, "you are doing a good work. Proud the Lord has blessed us as to how we can be a part of telling the truth and good news of our Lord and Savior."

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## WHY I DON'T HAVE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP With Denominational "Pastors" and Catholic Priests

Jerry Moffitt

Now wait, please! You will notice I didn't say we should not *love* them as all are to be loved (Matthew 5:44). Be certain that I didn't say we should be ugly or rude to them. Nor are we to conduct ourselves toward them in a haughty way, or refuse to pray for them, that they might come to the truth and be saved. In fact, we love them enough to want to study with them. Yet with all that being sincerely believed, there are some godly-felt reasons why I sincerely refuse to have fellowship with them. I know I may be accused of being unloving and mean-spirited, but due to love, I don't mind at all.

Please be warned, out of love I am going to be frank, candid and clear. Trying to lovingly please God, let me list some reasons why I refuse to join the ministerial alliance, participate in their Easter sunrise services, or join with them in their National Prayer Day, or fraternally exchange pulpits with them as **Max Lucado** did.

### IF I DON'T DRAW LINES I DISOBEY JESUS

Denominational preachers teach the doctrines and precepts of men (Matthew 15:7-9). I cannot believe that any preacher in the Lord's church would deny that. It is so easy to demonstrate and has been proved so often that it is fundamental and common knowledge. Regarding this very thing, Jesus said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. **LET THEM ALONE: they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit**" (Matthew. 15:13, 14).

Yet some brethren say, "We will not let them alone!" (And by the way, look again at Jesus' words. If some of our faithful preachers used such language as Jesus in the Bible they would likely be called unloving, mean-spirited, and plain ugly toward denominationalists.)

### IF I FELLOWSHIP DENOMINATIONAL PREACHERS I DISOBEY THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE APOSTLE JOHN

John said, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in

the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and **GIVE HIM NO GREETING: for he that giveth him greeting PARTAKETH IN HIS EVIL WORKS**" (II John 9-11). It is evident to me that the "teaching of Christ" is not only what he personally taught but includes that which he taught through his holy apostles and prophets.

Though it gives us no pleasure to announce it, we can't fellowship the Baptist "pastors." Among many other additions they teach "faith only," and "eternal security," and going beyond the doctrine of Christ "have not God."

We cannot fellowship the Presbyterians. Besides many other contradictions to God's word, they teach infant baptism, damn souls, go beyond the doctrine of Christ, and have not God.

We cannot fellowship the Christian Church. Besides an unscriptural teaching toward the authority of God's word, they teach instrumental music is acceptable in worship to God, hence they go beyond the doctrine of Christ and have not God.

We can't fellowship the Methodist "pastor." Besides much more false teaching and doctrines of men, they teach sprinkling for baptism, cause souls to be lost, go beyond the doctrine of Christ and have not God.

We cannot fellowship Pentecostal "pastors." They contradict the Bible on when miracles and spiritual gifts passed away, go beyond the doctrine of Christ and have not God.

We cannot fellowship the Lutheran "pastor." Among many other errors, they teach total hereditary depravity, go beyond the doctrine of Christ, and so they have not God. And on we can go with each cult and denomination.

John said of false teachers, that we should not even give them greeting. If we do, we partake of their evil works. We also disobey God.

(Continued on Page 3)



# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 8

August/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

*Contending for the Faith* was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

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Editorial...

## Max Lucado Continues Leading Naive, Gullible Brethren Into Apostasy, Refuses To Debate

In our edition for June/1995, *Contending for the Faith* front-paged an article by Staff Writer **Darrell Conley**, entitled, "TRAGEDY IN SAN ANTONIO," followed by an editorial by Associate Editor **David Brown**, captioned, "MAX LUCADO, PRINCE OF APOSTATES." Faithful brethren who did not see a copy of that issue need to read it; we printed extra copies for those wishing to order. (Please enclose \$1.00 per copy to cover cost of printing and postage.)

### CONLEY, BROWN NOT ALONE IN CHALLENGING

It needs to be understood that brethren Conley and Brown were not alone in challenging False Brother **Max Lucado's** erroneous course of action. Under date of April 14, 1995, brother **Bill Haberman**, Ph.D., Th.D., also of San Antonio, wrote to him as follows:

April 14, 1995

Max Lucado  
% Oak Hills church of Christ  
8308 Fredricksburg Rd.  
San Antonio, Texas

Sir:

Please find enclosed a copy of the paper I gave to Ron Wilson of the *Express-News*.

Since you show no intention to recant and repent, I in Christian love call on you to fulfill your obligation under I Peter 3:15 and the wise admonition of Proverbs 25:9.

I have tentative agreement with the San Pedro church to use their building for a formal debate with you.

We can agree to specific propositions and rules in future letters.

Your refusal will be taken as proof that your positions taken are indefensible. Remember the readers of the *Express-News* are now on the sidelines watching.

The fact that Oak Hills applauded Buckner is not justification of any thing. 50 Million Frenchmen can be wrong.

If you deem yourself incompetent to defend this [you can do as well as any one], I will consider a surrogate you judge capable.

Set for defense of the Gospel,

(Signed)

Bill Haberman

### MAX LUCADO'S RESPONSE

Brother Lucado's response to the foregoing letter was not long in coming. Under date of April 20, 1995, he replied as follows:

4/20

Br H—

Thanks for the invitation—but I have no interest in debating you—

Your brother—

(Signed)

Max

**SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS REPORTS CHALLENGE**  
Meanwhile, under date of April 15, 1995, the San

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH—August/1995

Antonio *Express-News* reported brother Haberman's challenge, as follows:

#### MINISTER SWAP SPURS DEBATE CHALLENGE

Members of a sister church say they've challenged Max Lucado, minister of Oak Hills Church of Christ, to a debate for straying too far from Church doctrine when he and Trinity Baptist pastor Buckner Fanning swapped pulpits April 2.

The swap was part of a special "Unity Day" to show that what Christians have in common is greater than their differences.

The representatives of Northern Oaks Church of Christ said they base their view in part on Ephesians 4:5, which says, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Baptists have one faith, members of the Church of Christ have another, said Bill Haberman of Northern Oaks Church of Christ.

"Max Lucado acts as though two faiths can be acceptable," Haberman said. "That can't be."

Lucado said he hasn't received any personal communication from other congregations, but: "If we had it to do all over again, I'd do it. We had a wonderful reception at Trinity and our church applauded Buckner."

Every Church of Christ congregation is autonomous.

The Bible requires sinners to hear the word of God, believe, repent, confess their sins and be baptized, then live a life obedient to the word of God, said Richard Langford, also of Northern Oaks.

"Baptists leave it all out except faith," Langford said, adding that the elders have no quarrel with Baptists. "Our heartburn is with Mr. Lucado."

#### HABERMAN'S NEWSPAPER AD

Brother Haberman waited a month, giving brother Lucado plenty of time to reconsider, then, under date of May 20, 1995; on page 5-H of the San Antonio *Express-News*, he published the following advertisement:

**MAX LUCADO  
AVOIDS**

**Proverbs 25: 9**

**Update on the Haberman-  
Lucado Debate challenge**

- 1) Lucado won't publicly discuss his doctrine and practice.

**I Peter 3:15**

- 2) Lucado offers no proxy who can defend such.
- 3) Dr. Haberman asks, "Is this because such is Biblically indefensible?"

Having waited a month, also on May 20, 1995, brother Haberman addressed your editor, as follows:

Contending for the Faith  
Ira Rice, Jr.  
2956 Allshore  
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

Greetings,

I assume that you heard of Max Lucado's pulpit swap with the Baptists. Enclosed is the article that we got printed in the paper. Since he went public in the paper, I felt at liberty to take in the dirty

laundry. Remember that was the reporter's article. I would have written it different. He made some mistakes, but for an unbeliever I think he did a good job for us. Our objection to Max was clear.

Also enclosed is a copy of Max's refusal to debate and an ad that we later had printed in the same paper. This was for closure with the readership of the paper.

I also enclose an article for your consideration. I tried to be as plain as possible. Wrote it on about a fourth grade level. I could have made it more complicated, but in this article I wanted to emphasize simplicity of truth.

Thanks for the time, In Him,

(Signed)

Bill Haberman

#### EDITOR'S RESPONSE

In my reply, under date of June 4, 1995, I wrote, in part, as follows:

Dear brother Haberman,

Having been to California ten days in a gospel campaign, I was a few days late receiving yours of May 20th; however, when I got home on Monday, there it was.

I do not know what it will take to persuade false brethren such as Max Lucado to debate. You surely gave him ample opportunity to accept your challenge. If all he can reply is "no interest," all we can do is keep on exposing him for the false brother he is!...

In the Cause of Truth,

(Signed)

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

#### CAN TWO FAITHS POSSIBLY BE ACCEPTABLE?

The merest tyro acquainted with Amos 3:3 should be able to understand that two CANNOT walk together *except they be agreed!*

Yet, from Lucado's public statements and actions, it is apparent that he does not understand this at all!

For a further study as to WHY this is impossible, please now read brother Haberman's article, under the heading, "MAX LUCADO, THERE YOU GO AGAIN!," starting on Page 7,

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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## No Denominational Fellowship

(Continued from Page 1)

How is it then that weak, liberal, compromising preachers in the church are willing to disobey God's word, and some weak brethren slander as unloving those who do obey it? I ask, how is it so?

(And please do not think I am merely name calling with my sharp and pungent speech. I am a simple person who likes to be frank and candid, especially when I suspect people will give me the benefit of the doubt. In such matters, there is no room for guile or finesse.)

We showed why because of certain false doctrines we cannot therefore fellowship even what some call mainline denominations. Now I want to come back to such scriptural commands regarding not fellowshiping denominations, but first, let's do a little honest reasoning:

If I get up in fellowship at a Prayer Service with Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran "pastors," doesn't it indicate to all that I believe they are Christians in good standing with the Lord? Could not some poor soul say, "Jerry serves with them. He would not do that if he thought their doctrines would damn one to hell. So I can join their churches and go to heaven." Would

not the same be true with a cordial exchange of pulpits with a Baptist?

Considering "sects of perdition" or "destructive heresies" (II Peter 2:1), is it not true that evil companionships corrupt good morals? (I Corinthians 15:33)? And yet by joint participation with false teachers our weak or unthinking preachers would leave the wrong impression, lull the unwary and unlearned, and stamp the approval of the Churches of Christ on religious false teachers and false churches.

Do we want fellowship at the price of damning souls? Do we really believe doctrine doesn't count with God—especially after reading II John 9-11?

These denominational preachers teach error which convinces people they are saved when they are not, and that they can never be lost again, though they can, or that they can have a second chance to save themselves down in Hades, or that they can burn out all their sins in purgatory, and other damnable doctrines. Would you understand any preacher who by his influence would guide unsuspecting brethren into their clutches by acting as if these false teachers are in no danger and themselves harmless and benign in their worship with them?

#### NOTICE SOME PRINCIPLES

It is clear—and I will accept a debate challenge if any preacher of good standing really wants to disagree—that denominational "pastors" and churches teach false doctrine which will damn souls. They oppose God and his clear teaching in the Bible. I would love not to say that, but when it comes to light and darkness, truth and error, they are on the side of the devil. I sincerely believe they are as the Holy Spirit said: "deceitful workers" (II Corinthians 11:13), "ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15), "grievous wolves" (Acts 20:29), who with "smooth and fair speech" (Romans 16:17) serve "their own belly" (Romans 16:18). They are "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Philippians 3:18), and substitute the pure word of God for their "philosophy and vain deceit" (Colossians 2:8). They are "evil men and impostors" (II Timothy 3:13), who ought not be fellowshipped, but "whose mouths must be stopped" (Titus 1:10). Their word will "eat as doth a gangrene" (II Timothy 2:17), and so they "overthrow the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:18). They "bring in destructive heresies" (II Peter 2:1-3), and so the faithful servant of Christ will "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3), and not be traitors to Christ by promoting and aiding the enemy. In the military they take you out and shoot you for such things.

Jehoshaphat helped wicked Ahab. Jehu the son of Hanani the seer said, "Shouldest thou help the wicked, and love them that hate Jehovah? For this thing wrath is upon thee before Jehovah" (II Chronicles 19:2). The problem we have, I believe, is not lack of love or fellowship; it is lack of strong conviction and enemy identification.

We have pointed out that we want to love all men, but we must regretfully, vigorously oppose some. Fellowship condones—and serving with denominational preachers stamps one's approval on them even while they are evil and enemies of the cross of Christ as inspired writ says. After all, will not people rightly ask, "Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Now let's look at some more scriptures which teach us Bible principles on fellowship.

#### AHAB AND BEN-HADAD

Ahab defeated the Syrian King Ben-Hadad because God delivered Ben-Hadad up. But after the battle with this enemy of God, Ahab spared Ben-Hadad and said, "he is my brother" (I Kings 20:32).

God by a prophet said to Ahab, "Thus saith Jehovah, Be-

cause thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people" (I Kings 20:42).

Are not these things written for us (II Corinthians 10:6, 11; Romans 15:4)? The fact is, denominational preachers are not our brethren; God has devoted false teachers to swift destruction (II Peter 2:1), and would not their punishment fall on you if you call them "brother" and let them go Scot-free religiously, with no opposition, no reproof, no condemnation?

#### KORAH, DATHAN, ABIRAM

Denominational preachers are false teachers. We pray some are not so rebellious toward God that by the power of God's word we cannot convert them. However it is as rare as an "ancient Egyptian find" to see such a case. When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled at the teaching of Moses, God said through Moses, "Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins" (Numbers 16:26). Was this not written for us (Romans 15:4)?

This is the attitude of God. But we have liberal preachers who want to have denominational high tea so they can rub elbows with them, rather than have a doctrinal festival where they can tutor and reprove.

I would love to study the Bible with these "pastors," and if you know of any that will do so let me know, and I will contact them. Teaching truth, however, is not the same as fraternizing with the enemy and getting "matey" with those who have rebelliously defected from truth. They have the same Bible we have, so there is no excuse for their heresy and their false teaching.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNICABILITY

False teaching is like the disease gangrene (II Timothy 2:17). It eats and spreads. Paul said, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (I Corinthians 5:6). He said, "Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Corinthians 15:33). David said Israel, "mingled themselves with the nations, AND LEARNED THEIR WORKS" (Psalms 106:35). No wonder we now have our own preachers who say baptism is not essential to salvation, that we have advocates of women preachers, organs, dedication of babies, penance, and such like.

Whatever happened to the mind-set, "Depart from me, ye evil-doers, that I may keep the commandments of my God" (Psalms 119:415)? Why is it now impolitic and politically incorrect to cry, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore I HATE EVERY FALSE WAY" (Psalms 119:104)?

One of the reasons I hate false doctrines and am a Christian adversary to those who have been a turn-coat to truth is because false teaching not only is like a damning disease; it is infectious and contagious. How can preachers and elders love so little as not to expose their brethren to it?

We have so many weak, bloodless, delicate and ungrounded preachers who are long on emotion and on cute little tales, and weak on truth and Bible knowledge. They seem to be dubious about doctrine, filled with self-doubt, perplexed about truth, and live and preach in a world of half-belief and uncertainty. Who clipped their wings? That's simply not the way of Christianity. Christianity is a religion of uncompromising conviction. I've never seen a false teacher yet who needed a silver bullet to bring him down doctrinally. God's word has anticipated every error Satan can think up.

In giving reasons why I don't fellowship denominational "pastors" in the Ministerial Alliance, or Easter sunrise services, or national prayer days, or neighborly pulpit exchanges, I men-

tioned that Jesus said to leave "blind guides" alone, that John said give them no greeting or you partake in their evil works, that they are false teachers and enemies of truth, that fellowship condones and participation stamps approval, that false doctrine not only damns but that it is contagious, and communicable to brethren. It is fraternizing with the enemy, and contrary to the attitude of a pious child of God to hob-nob with the wicked and those who by false doctrine are on Satan's side. I'm aware I'm using, as the Bible often does, frank, pungent language. It is out of love for the brethren, but it also is intentional to make the menace we face graphic and seen in its uncloaked reality.

If more brethren saw denominationalism unmasked it would force them, too, to the front line. They would no longer be weak, insipid, fence-sitting, excuse-making, non-partisans. At the first whistle they would go over the top with fixed bayonets, just like Peter, Paul, John, and Jesus. But let us continue to look at some commandments and Bible principles.

#### TO TOLERATE IS TO PARTICIPATE

There is no doubt that the Bible teaches the principle that acquiescence is complicity. God said, "When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, and has been partaker with adulterers" (Psalms 50:18). Was Pilate complicit in the death of Jesus (Matthew 17:17-26)? Proverbs 29:24 says, "Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and betrayeth it not."

In Bible times when a theft was committed, a solemn curse on the thief and all who knew of it but gave no evidence was pronounced. Solomon says that to stand by silently made one partner with a thief. Too, God said to Edom, "In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away his [Israel's] substance, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, EVEN THOU WAST AS ONE OF THEM" (Obadiah 11).

When my fellow preachers and brethren don't expose, mark, reprove and contend with a false teacher, they cannot say, "Well, I don't teach their doctrines so I am all right. I just enjoy their fellowship." No, you are *not* all right with God. When you give no evidence against them you are a *partner* with them. You are as *one of them!* They are a street merchant with death in the pot and you are complicit by being cheek by jowl with them in religious fellowship. How can that be love and compassion for denominational lost souls, much less new Christians and ungrounded saints? You are as guilty as are they. In the face of just that, how can a loving, committed Christian seek unity and fellowship with false teachers which without doubt denominational preachers certainly are, though we have no pleasure at all in saying it? We ask, "What communion hath light with darkness... What concord hath Christ with Belial" (II Corinthians 6:14-16)?

#### ALL CHRISTIANS ARE WATCHMEN

God commanded by the mouth of his servant Jude, "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to **CONTEND EARNESTLY** for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Paul said, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith" (I Corinthians 16:13), and "let us watch and be sober" (I Thessalonians 5:6), and "watch thou in all things" (II Timothy 4:5).

God told Ezekiel that when the sword came on the land the wicked would be taken away in his own iniquity, but regarding the watchman who sounded no alarm, the man's "blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezekiel 33:6). Paul said he was pure from the blood of all men for he "shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26,

27). Those Satan captures with false doctrine he puts to the sword. Truth and error are not just "to each his own," they regard eternal life and eternal punishment.

When souls are threatened by false teachers, it is no time for pink tea and fellowship. It is time to reprove (Titus 1:13), contend (Jude 3), and mark (Romans 16:17). Would not God say, "Thine eye shall not pity them" (Deuteronomy 7:16)?

Involvement is complicity (Psalms 50:18; Matthew 27:17-26; Proverbs 29:24; Obadiah 11). We are not to fraternize with the enemy; rather we are to be watchmen (Jude 3; I Corinthians 16:13; I Thessalonians 5:6; II Timothy 4:5; Ezekiel 33:6). If not, we can be guilty of the fallen's blood (Acts 20:26, 27). But let's say a little more.

#### THERE ARE CLEAR SCRIPTURES WHICH PROHIBIT SUCH FELLOWSHIP

Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and **TURN AWAY FROM THEM**" (Mark 16:17). The word for "mark" is *skopeo* which means to "watch" in the sense of a warning in this passage. Then Paul says "turn away from them." Why? They teach doctrine contrary to God's word and in doing so overthrow (*katastrophe*) whole houses (II Peter 2:6; II Timothy 2:14).

Of these that teach a different doctrine God said "turn away." Yet some of our preachers say "we will *not* turn away!" Now how are these preachers different from rebellious Israel? When preachers, under the permission of their eldership, disobey clear teaching from God's word can it not be said of them, "ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51)? What did Paul mean to elders when he said "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28)?

When *elders* watch—much less does the *flock* watch—their preachers have social and religious camaraderie and fraternization with those who stand against the truth in so many areas, I say those elders are *abandoning the flock* to ravening wolves and the preachers are *disloyal to Christ* and *traitorous* to the very word of God.

If they don't believe any longer in pure, undefiled, New Testament Christianity, without addition, without subtraction, if they don't believe undenominational Christianity is not only possible and right, but the only way to please Christ, I say they should quit their insincere hypocrisy, change the name of their church, and boldly announce publicly what they ignorantly but deep down think is honorable and right. I tell you, guile, duplicity, deceit, devious biding from within, playing the treacherous role of a fifth column in the Churches of Christ are not virtues from above. They are the vile weapons of the evil one who is beneath. I would rather die hard and be carried out of the battle on a bloody shield than love unity and compromise more than honor and truth. To all you who agree, rise up and do your part!

#### A SECOND DEBATE CHALLENGE

Brethren, in the Churches of Christ we are all aware of Jude 3 and God's command to contend. I am sorry brother Max Lucado refused brother Haberman's first debate challenge. I am proud of Bill for offering it and for there to be public mention of it and of Max's refusal in the local San Antonio papers. Since Max's plug for the Baptists was in the paper, a response needed to be there too.

Such ads, in my personal judgment, help to warn unsuspecting brethren, show the denominational world we have not lost our convictions, and teach all non-believers in the world who read

the paper that matters of religion are matters of life and death and worth a Christian "spate," even if it is among brethren.

I would prefer a public debate. However, some men feel uncomfortable with a public oral debate and prefer a written one. Brother Lucado is a writer, a very good one I understand. If his convictions regarding such fellowship with denominationalists are defensible, it will be hard to understand why he will not, in a short written discussion, express them. I will publish the debate in *Thrust Magazine*, and send it free to all elders and preachers who desire it. We will both conduct ourselves, of course, with good Christian deportment, and let the brethren take their Bibles and study. The discussion will be a learning tool. I will let brother Max publish the discussion for himself if he chooses, and I will agree to any of his suggestions as long as they help elicit truth and all is done fair and equal.

Out of all this we hope truth will shine and love prevail. Below are some rough draft discussion propositions. Max and I can work together amicably to improve them and arrange all other details.

Brethren, please let me ask something of each of you. This may seem new and fraught with danger to Max. I am sending him this package with a kind discussion challenge. Please write him, if you agree this should be done, and tell him why you desire such a study and why it can be a good thing and how we can make a positive experience of it.

#### POSSIBLE DISCUSSION PROPOSITIONS

RESOLVED: The Bible teaches we should engage without reproof of their doctrine in public acts of religious fellowship with denominational preachers.

AFFIRM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Max Lucado

DENY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Moffitt

RESOLVED: The Bible teaches we should reprove doctrinally denominational preachers instead of fellowship them.

AFFIRM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Moffitt

DENY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Max Lucado

May we let Jude have the last word, as he is carried along by the Holy Spirit: "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Surely Max believes this as much as I.

[Signed]

—Jerry Moffitt  
Post Office Box 1275  
Portland, Texas 78374

Please feel free to make copies of this material and distribute to all brethren .

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# Max Lucado, There You Go Again!

Bill Haberman

Max Lucado, preacher at San Antonio's Oak Hills church of Christ, has drawn censure among the churches of Christ.

Many members, recently, found fault when Lucado embraced the Baptist faith. He agreed to trade off pulpits with Buckner Fanning of the Baptist faith. He not only agreed to this. He announced that he initiated it.

He told the Baptist assembly there was no significant difference between the

churches of Christ and them. [Except maybe that a few worry too much about doctrine.] He said we are all in the Lord's "navy." We are all on the same ship.

Such public remarks are unacceptable to devoted members' Biblical understanding.

## LUCADO MAKES NO DISTINCTION

Lucado says both the churches of Christ's faith and the Baptist's faith merit equal reverence in the churches of Christ.

This is not possible. God says there is

## DOES 1+1 REALLY EQUAL 1?

Two faiths cannot be Biblically correct. Two faiths are not interchangeable in the Lord's church. II John 9-10 authorizes but one faith.

(Do not get concerned about this being exclusionary. Remember, the Bible teaches us that  $1+1=1!$ (?))

I am sure that Max speaks as an oracle of God (I Peter 4:11). However, he never really showed where the Bible teaches this.

## Pair of preachers planning to swap their pulpits April 2

By Ron Wilson

Express-News Staff Writer

Call it ecumenicalism.

Call it a busman's holiday.

On April 2, Oak Hills Church of Christ and Trinity Baptist Church will trade preachers for a day.

What makes "Unity Day" special is that neither denomination has been known in recent years for opening its pulpits to preachers from outside the faith.

The Rev. Max Lucado, Oak Hills pastor, said Unity Day will be a time when he and his fellow preacher, the Rev. Buckner Fanning, underscore what unites their congregations in God's love rather than the denominational doctrines that keep them apart.

"There is so much disunity — in education, in politics, even with our neighbors," Lucado said. "This is a gesture of unity, a statement of acceptance."

Lucado said he and Fanning first discussed trading pulpits three years ago.

Then, while preparing a recent sermon series, Lucado said he was struck by the words of John 17:21 that call for Christian unity so the world may believe that Jesus was sent by God.

Swept by the power of the passage, Lucado went to church elders and said: "Now we need to take a step."

They agreed, then Fanning agreed, and Unity Day was born.

Lucado will preach the 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. morning services at Trinity; Fanning will speak at Oak Hills at 8:30, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m.

“Whenever I see a man call God 'Father,' I see a brother.”

— The Rev. Max Lucado  
Oak Hills Church of Christ

Though the day's theme is unity, the pastors said, it's not ecumenicalism.

"Ecumenism has gotten a black eye," Lucado said. "Some people see it as compromise. This is not compromise. What we have in common is greater than our differences."

"Whenever I see a man call God 'Father,' I see a brother," Lucado said.

Fanning agreed: "(It's) unity of spirit, not unification of organization."

Fanning also downplayed criticism from fellow Baptists concerned about doctrinal purity.

"We expect some flak," he said.

"We've already gotten some of that flak. But the churches that are not inclusive ... are the real losers."

Baptist pastors read the works of Martin Luther and John Calvin to prepare their sermons, Fanning said.

"And for them to say they wouldn't let John Calvin or Martin Luther preach from their pulpit is hypocrisy."

Fanning said his message to Oak Hills worshipers will be the "Power of love: Only love can change a life ... only love can change a heart."

In his guest sermon, Lucado said, he will use the allegory of Christians serving in God's navy: Some serve below, some on the upper decks. When they walk around they see people with different clothes, with different views on how to get to land. But when it's time to fight, they stand shoulder to shoulder to get the job done.

"That's a great analogy," Fanning said. "As a former Marine who wasn't necessarily in love with the Navy, I can appreciate that."

"one faith" (Ephesians 4:5). The Baptists teach one faith. The churches of Christ teach another.

The last time I checked  $1+1=2$ . Max has some Biblical modern math to show me. I thank Max for correcting my pre-modern math.

I rejoice to find  $1+1=1$ . Now I see how Max has remained true to the Bible. There is now in the church one faith plus another faith which is one faith.

I speak as a fool (I Corinthians 11:23). One buys a pig in a poke if he trusts Max on this. The Bible does *not* teach  $1+1=1$ .

The Bible says evening and morning the *second* day (Genesis 1:8). There was one day. Then there was another day that was the *second* day.  $1+1=2$ .

Biblical faith stands *solo* in the Lord's church. There is only *one* faith. This is true whether Lucado allows place for two or not.

### ONLY ONE BIBLICAL FAITH

Once you believe, Baptists teach, you are saved and can never be lost. God requires nothing else.

For example: ask a Baptist if one must be baptized to be saved. He will say, if true to the Baptist faith, no. *Baptists'* faith system is an *only-faith* system. Other things are nice to do or better for you but *not essential to salvation*.

The churches of Christ teach that *faith only* is *inadequate* for salvation (James 2:24). This means that between us there are *two* faiths. They [of the Baptists] are faith only. Churches of Christ teach an *obedience* of faith (Romans 1:5).

The Bible teaches there is one faith related to the one body/church (Ephesians 4:4-5). Kindly and sadly I must say we are *not* of the same faith.

Saying—and acting as if—*two* faiths are acceptable, Lucado denies the unity of a singular faith (Ephesians 4:13). He ceases to contend earnestly for the singular faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

“Don’t the Baptists believe many things that we do?”

If I want to make a lemon pie, I look up Mom’s recipe. If I follow the recipe, I make Mom’s pie. However, if I change parts, it is not Mom’s pie. It is my pie loosely based on Mom’s recipe. It is *not the same pie*.

I may think it is better. I may think it is worse. It does not matter what I think about it. It is not Mom’s pie. It is another pie. It may be a lemon pie. It is not, though, Mom’s lemon pie.

### 1+1 EQUALS SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Put my pie on the table. Put Mom’s pie on the table. And there are two different

pies on the table.

Put two of Mom’s pies on the table. On that table there is Mom’s pie, nothing else.

Teach the obedience of faith in a church. Teach also faith only in that church. That church has two different faiths in it, not one.

1+1 equals a faith combination loosely based on Bible faith. One faith is good when you like it. Two faiths are good when you like them. One is *man’s* faith, *not God’s* “one faith.” It is faith as *you* like it.

Lucado and Fanning called the swap day “Unity Day.” Unity of what? It could not have been a day of *Biblical* unity—the unity of the *singular* faith. *Two* faiths were involved.

God says in his church there is “one faith”.

—2314 Wood Meadow  
San Antonio, Texas 78232



## Our “Copy Cat” Liberal Preachers And Churches Join Willow Creek Community Church Denomination

J. E. Choate

There are double-faced “change agents” now stalking the conservative churches of Christ. They fancy themselves to be the religious spokesmen for the “boomers” who make up the present middle age generation, who were born just after World War II, and the “busters” who are their grown-up children. The front cover of the April 5, 1993 *Time* carried the words—“THE GENERATION THAT FORGOT GOD.” The subtitle read: “The Baby Boom goes back to church, and church will never be the same.”

Churches of Christ across the country are under siege by liberal brethren who fill the pulpits, teach in the academy, and who write and edit religious papers. The sources of their liberalism are two in number. Both have been difficult to pin down, but that picture has dramatically changed the past five years.

The first group is positioned in schools identified with churches of Christ and religious papers. A number of these brethren and sisters subscribe to one form or another of modernist/liberal theology which started with the Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch in the last century. Modernism reached its zenith in the 1950’s in the dialectical theology of Barth and Bultmann.

Since then, postmodern theology is tied in with the Derridean philosophy called deconstruction/poststructuralism, and its inclusion into feminist, black, and gay liberation theologies. Postmodern theology developed over a thirty year period. This has become such a complex story that it can be told only in parts and degrees. Well-meaning brethren all across the country are caught up in this postmodern cultural rage without realizing that it forebodes increasing ills for churches of Christ.

One singular fact is outstanding in that our informed liberal brethren are agreed that what the Bible said to Christians in the first century may or may not have any transferal relevance to Christian living in the postmodern age. Some seem to be of the persuasion that they can hornswoggle their trusting brethren into accepting whatever they put into the theological trough.

The second group is much harder to define—especially in

churches of Christ. Such support the inclusion of women elders and preachers in the churches. Open fellowship is advocated. Instrumental music in the worship, the Lord’s Supper, and baptism are regarded as non-essentials to salvation, and the unfettered grace of God without prior conditions is preached, among other things. At the same time they profess undying loyalty to the churches of Christ which have cradled them since birth. They would vehemently deny any connection with postmodern theology.

### COMMUNITY CHURCHES AND THE WAL-MART-I-ZATION OF AMERICAN RELIGION

A new form of an American denomination is now full blown on the American religious scene wearing a common generic name—“Community Church.” They form the new megachurches not like the huge TV churches in the recent past; and they are not like the immense organized Protestant denominations.

The readers of *Wineskins* were first introduced to the “Community Church” concept by Max Lucado in the 1993 January/February issue of *Wineskins* titled: “A Dream Worth Keeping: Liking the Fruit, But Not the Orchard.” Lucado was saying in essence that he enjoyed preaching in well-furnished pulpits in churches of Christ provided by his conservative brethren, but he doesn’t like their traditions. However, he wants to sell them his books. In this article brother Lucado prays that God may help the traditional churches of Christ to be like the non-denominational Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago.

### THE WILLOW CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH “PARADIGM”

The Willow Creek Community Church is the ideal of our liberal brethren which draws them like a magnet to imitate their thriving religious enterprises. The information to follow is documented from four feature stories written by Gustav Niebuhr for the unimpeachable and venerable *New York Times* on April, 16,

18, 20, and 29. Niebuhr wrote without reference whatsoever to churches of Christ. The leaders and promoters of this American Protestant denomination seek to attract and to show the unchurched "boomers" and "busters" how "church" is done in the atmosphere of the market place.

The Willow Creek Community Church based in the Chicago area expects 27,000 people for its six services settling themselves in upholstered theater seats. They hear original contemporary music performed with all the pizzazz of a professional show with 16 vocalists, a ten piece band and three interpretive dancers.

The Willow Creek Community Church is the largest of its kind of some 400 community churches in this country and abroad. Scholars say the Community Church *paradigm* (model) is the most influential, largest, and fastest growing "denomination" today of all the Protestant churches. Gustav Niebuhr writes in *New York Times* that the megachurches are the "Wal-Martization" of American religion. The observation is made that many who will not go to class in Romans and Ephesians will go to a class on how to build strong marriages and to raise positive kids in a tough world.

The Willow Creek Community Church is best known for its week-end services for people seeking religious meaning without creeds, confessions or catechisms. They fill an auditorium of 4,500 seats, facing a stage where bands play rock and jazz with religious lyrics, and actors stage skits. It is a prelude to a sermon of Bible verses, theology and practical advice. A special service was planned just for the "busters" under the slogan "Where the flock likes to rock."

[The Willow Creek church is now assuming the form of a new fledgling denomination. Already 1,000 churches have contributed \$199 to belong to the Willow Creek Association. They receive a newsletter, discounts for Willow Creek's religious publications, and invitations to pastor's conferences. The association is hoping to pull two or three percent of the denominations within its orbits. We would like to know if the Woodmont Hills Family of God and the Hendersonville Community Church are association members. Their church bulletins and programs suggest the possibility.]

These megacommunity churches at their fanciest best feature aerobic classes, bowling alleys, counseling centers, multimedia Bible classes; big screens project Scripture verses and lyrics to pop-style religious songs that everyone in the congregation can see and follow. The scene rivals Sunday morning MTV services. The Woodmont Hills church of Christ in Nashville mimics some of the religious styles of worship format of the Willow Creek church.

## CARBON COPIES OF THE COMMUNITY MEGACHURCHES

The best and most readily available example of such a "copy cat" performance was rendered February 19, 1995 in the Abilene, Texas civic center. Lindell Mitchell describes in the May 1995 issue of *Firm Foundation* the "Seeker Friendly" Mission Church in Abilene who is reaching out to the unchurched. Read the article to believe what is going on in an area where once Don Morris preached the gospel to the unchurched of Abilene!

A growing number of churches of Christ in the Nashville area are "aping" the practices of such community churches as the Willow Creek and the Phoenix, Arizona Community Church of Joy. The area churches which come first to mind are the Woodmont Hills Family of God, and the Antioch and Donelson churches. The Fourth Avenue church of Christ in Franklin, Tennessee, an old and influential church of another time, is drifting into these shallow waters due to the influence of the

Willow Creek religious atmosphere promoted by their *avant garde* ministers.

There is one Nashville church of Christ which flaunts its use of the "Community Church" logo. The Hendersonville Community Church is a small "copy cat" model of the Willow Creek Community Church. The Hendersonville Community Church which began as a little splinter group after the minister of the Hendersonville church of Christ failed in his bid to divide and take over the church. There is another dimension to the story. The two top David Lipscomb University administrators accepted invitations to preach for the "rogue" Hendersonville Community Church which is not surprising.

The most popular David Lipscomb University Bible teacher whose classes are crowded with your children, conducts the favorite David Lipscomb University chapel assembly with the polished pizzazz of a combination of the Grand Ole Opry and a "Willow Creek" razzle-dazzle worship service. This same minister failed in a take-over of the South Harpeth church of Christ. He is now engaged to serve as the youth minister of the Hendersonville Community Church. Talk to the David Lipscomb University Senior Vice President for his rationale to justify these things since he is in immediate charge of all Lipscomb chapel programs.

### Postscript

What I and others with whom I have talked find so puzzling is that such brethren think us to be so naive and poorly informed that we can not track them like a full moon across a night sky to read clearly what they have in mind and where they came from.

And do the David Lipscomb University administrators, faculty, and personnel actually believe that they can use the name of David Lipscomb to endorse this form of contemporary church sectarianism with impunity. Why would they violate the charter principles which were handwritten by David Lipscomb when he gave all of his worldly possessions to the school which bears his name?

I pray that the David Lipscomb University board members will inform themselves of these matters, and bring to an end the influence of those who profess loyalty to the traditions of David Lipscomb's school. This article is written with an awareness of "poetic justice" that history will judge the professed friends of the school who would not stand up for its principles when the school was put under siege by brethren of obvious liberal persuasions.

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# WRONG IN DOCTRINE, RIGHT IN HEART

or

## *Marvin Marches To Victor's Trumpet*

Steve Miller

In a chapter titled, "By This Shall All Men Know!," under the heading of "The Important Thing!," in his book, *Don't Shoot! We May Both Be On The Same Side*, Marvin Phillips reveals a formula for seeing how we really ought to view ourselves in light of the Bible and the Christian Church. The following is found:

I suggest reading verses one through nine. [Matthew 15. SM] Jesus is concerned both by our hearts (intention) and His teaching (doctrine). The Pharisees had been so concerned with being right doctrinally. But their hearts weren't right. This made their worship worthless! In the matter of doctrine and heart there are only four possibilities for all of us:

1. Right in doctrine; right in heart!
2. Right in doctrine; wrong in heart!
3. Wrong in doctrine; wrong in heart!
4. Wrong (mistaken) in doctrine; right in heart (intention)!

Naturally number one is ideal. And it is that for which we must all strive. God will accept no less than this! But while we may all be right in heart, is there one among us who claims to be 100% right on all doctrinal points?

Position two is where the Pharisees were. Legalistically right in doctrine; but wrong in heart And Jesus said their worship was worthless!

Position three won't get it either! Heart not right; doctrine not right either!

Our only hope is in position four. Attitude toward God and His word right. We really want to honor Him and follow His Word accurately. But our humanity catches up with us! In our best efforts we err in so many ways! So our only chance of being saved is that God will see our genuine desire to please Him and follow His word. And that His grace will cover human error.

God must extend His amazing grace to save us! Why is it so difficult to extend it to one another? Are we afraid to assume someone is "saved" with whom we have a serious doctrinal disagreement? Then let's get out of the judging business altogether. Let's leave it to the only One qualified in the first place! (p. 121-122)

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE ABOVE

Marvin Phillips is so concerned about having unlimited fellowship with the Christian Church DENOMINATION that he is willing to compromise Bible doctrine in order to get it!

Wrong in doctrine; right in heart, will not get one to heaven. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Does this passage not teach us that we are to have our doctrine right? The apostle John recorded by inspiration, that we cannot fellowship those outside of the doctrine of Christ. (II John 9-11)

Wrong in doctrine; right in heart, will not please God; according to his word! (II Thessalonians 2:3-12; I Timothy 4:1-6)

Wrong in doctrine; right in heart, would describe many in the denominational world today. Is brother Phillips ready to fellowship them also?

### VICTOR KNOWLES & 'ONE BODY'

The editor of *One Body*, Victor Knowles, wrote an editorial in the Winter, 1994 issue of *One Body*, titled, "Please! Be Still!". Mr. Knowles takes "liberties" with the statement of Jesus in Mark 4:39, where Jesus said, "unto the sea, Peace be still." Victor

takes the statement "Peace be still!", and changes it to "Please! Be still!", and applies it to the discussion of what kind of music the New Testament authorizes.

The reader is encouraged to study the reasoning of Marvin Phillips in the above quotation from his book, and compare it to the following by Victor Knowles. After he paraphrases the scripture from Mark 4, he writes the following.

I know the story doesn't read exactly that way. But I believe that's what Jesus would say to us today over the kind of music to sing in His name—to His name. "Please! Be still!" Our squalling over music must appear squalid to Jesus. Our squealing is not appealing. It is time to stop rocking the boat over the kind of music with which one may or may not praise Jesus. Furious squalls over a *capella* or instrumental music, singing hymns and anthems or new praise choruses, does not praise Jesus. It pains Jesus.

Who is right in the continuing controversy over how one can praise God in song? May a congregation sing with the accompaniment of instrumental music? May a church sing the new praise choruses? Or must a congregation sing only a *capella* style? And sing only hymns and anthems? May I suggest that there are four possibilities.

1. I'm right and you're wrong.
2. You're right and I'm wrong.
3. We're both wrong.
4. We're both right.

Knowles seems to view the music controversy as just a matter

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of opinion. No matter how many "possibilities" Mr. Knowles suggests, the final answer as to what music God wants in our worship to Him, will be found in the New Testament. Brethren, the Bible is right!

In his article, Mr. Knowles makes a poor attempt at reasoning through the first three suggestions; and gives no scriptural argumentation. On the fourth point, he states,

**And what if we're both right? "Impossible!" you say. Not really. In disputes over opinions, Paul wrote in Romans 14, each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. In my mind, I'm convinced. In your mind, you're convinced. Who's right? We both are.**

Marvin says we can be "wrong in doctrine; right in heart" and go to heaven. Victor says we are both right on the music question. Marvin has compromised the Bible's teaching, and Victor has compromised the Christian Church's teaching in order to fellowship one another. Notice: (1) the truth is that the music question is *not* a matter of opinion; (2) Romans chapter 14 would not apply to the situation; and (3) whether man's mind is convinced or not, God's will is the final word!

Through the years, several debates have been held between gospel preachers and Christian Church preachers concerning the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. Boswell, Payne, Hunt, Dunning, Blakely, DeWelt, and others have failed to prove by the New Testament that instrumental music is authorized by God. Since they cannot give book, chapter, and verse for the use of the instrument in worship, they have tried to teach and preach that there is no authority in the New Testament for congregational singing.

Now their champion, Victor, says we are right for advocating and practicing congregational singing only, and the Christian Church is right in their use of instrumental music. He fails to understand the Bible on these matters. In understanding the Bible alike, we must recognize that we cannot both be right in our differing practices concerning music in worship. The Bible has revealed to us that congregational singing is the music that God

wants in our worship to him. (Ephesians 5:19) Since the Bible specifically states that we are to sing, everything else is excluded (mechanical instruments, humming, hand clapping, whistling, et. al.).

The late and scholarly Guy N. Woods dismantled Don DeWelt's arguments, and likewise, Victor Knowles, who wrote,

**"We have no authority in the New Testament to use mechanical instruments of music in worship; but neither do you have authority to engage in congregational singing; we are, in this respect, equal; let us both confess that we are all engaging in unauthorized practices; since both sides have abandoned the New Testament as the sole standard of faith and practice, let us unite on the ground that we may do anything we want to in worship without regard to divine authority, or New Testament teaching!"**

This, to many of us, is a totally unacceptable approach to unity. (*Gospel Advocate*. Vol. CXXVII No. 10. p. 296)

#### **MARVIN JOINS STAFF OF 'ONE BODY'**

Mr. Knowles has announced that Marvin Phillips has been added to the staff of *One Body*, saying,

**I'm tremendously pleased to announce that Marvin Phillips, a dear brother in Christ who preaches for the Garnett Church of Christ in Tulsa, OK, has agreed to be a staff writer for ONE BODY! His column will be called "Good News!" and will appear in our first issue in 1995. (*The Knowlesletter*. July, 1994. p. 2)**

Mr. Knowles calls Marvin "a dear brother in Christ." Marvin must glow when he hears such sweet talk, because he has stated, "Get all the fellowship you can get!" (*Don't Shoot*, p. 63)

It is tragic that we are losing men to the false idea of "unity in diversity." Brethren, this is the same message that Max Lucado, Calvin Warpula, and others have been preaching and practicing. In their minds, they are closing the gap between the church of Christ and the Christian Church, when in reality, they are closing the Bible on the matter!

—RD #3, Box 28

Cameron, West Virginia 26033



## **THE BIBLE AS MYTH: *The New Hermeneutics At Work***

Robert Lawrence

Obligation attends the wondrous skill of thinking and speaking. We see it in expressing the doctrine of the New Testament church: inspired writers recorded God's desire for earthly teachers in these terms, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:11) A clear-headed understanding of this passage without the use of the New Hermeneutics would be: if we assume the position of a spokesman for true doctrine, then we had better present our case with the same excellence of reason expected of the oracles of God. This is something not to be taken lightly.

It seems, though, that followers of the New Hermeneutics take lightly a responsibility to make themselves understood. It's as though they prefer a camouflaging abstraction with which to present their ideas—they bring to bear the euphemistic devices offered by the New Hermeneutics to achieve a purpose. It's fair to ask, *Why do these men do this?* The answer is quite simple: men such as this have an agenda. It's an agenda of change. And

what better way to bring off change than to hide their intentions under an avalanche of flawed logic?

Professor of Historical Theology Langdon B. Gilkey, in reviewing one aspect of the New Hermeneutics, summed up the questionable method of this collected work in the title of his article, "A New Linguistic Madness," (*The Journal of Religion*, University of Chicago Press, July 1964). And, indeed, the methods of practitioners of the New Hermeneutics go beyond the muddled thinking of its original authors. At the sacrifice of a logical use of language, the simple goal of these men is to blur a sane exchange of ideas by destroying common sense reasoning.

Semanticist S. I. Hayakawa made a vitally important point about the proper use of language when he compared it to a map. While growing up, we are given a verbal map of the territory of life. If that map compares favorably to the terrain, we will reach our goal. But if as children we are given a corrupted verbal map, one that does not compare to the terrain of life that it is reported to represent, then, in the end, we shall be lost.

#### **AN UNTRUSTWORTHY VERBAL MAP**

In an original affirmation of that idea, the New Testament



states, "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air." (I Corinthians 14:9) Although the text deals with the incorrect use of languages, it's still a good way to state the case against the New Hermeneutics: this method is an untrustworthy verbal map of the intended meanings of the Bible—too often it speaks into the air.

Interesting. But does any of this relate to what is presently happening in churches of Christ around the world? It does. History, then more or less overlooked, now serves as excellent evidence of the insidiously subtle introduction of the use of the New Hermeneutics into university teachings. First, let's get an important connection.

**Gerhard Ebeling**—a disciple of the Bultmann school of the New Hermeneutics—wrote, "The hermeneutic task consists for theology in nothing else but understanding the *Gospel* as addressed to *modern man*," (*Word of God and Hermeneutics*, 1959.) Summed up, Ebeling states that it is not enough to *demythologize* the gospel, but it must speak regarding the *existential* situation of our age. (For more on the presumptive theology of demythologizing the gospel, see **Rudolph Bultmann's** essay "New Testament and Mythology," first published in 1941; the English translation of his "Jesus Christ and Mythology," 1960; and **Gunther Bornkamm**, "Myth and Gospel: A Discussion of the Problem of Demythologizing the New Testament Message," all part of the larger work, "*Kerygma and History, A Symposium on the Theology of Rudolph Bultmann*." (New York: Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1962.) We should be appalled at the idea that the New Testament needs to be *demythologized*, as though it was at one time myth. But notice this:

#### MYTH HERMENEUTICS AT ACU

We can connect this background information with the eccentric theology taking root on the campuses of colleges that once were dedicated to sound doctrine. An incident in 1986 at Abilene Christian University had overtones of the mythology notion. As the university reported, *certain individuals* brought charges against two biology professors for introducing the idea of "myth" and "hymn" into the Genesis account of creation. Were these professors falsely accused? Let's see.

The investigators (a special committee of the Abilene Christian University Board of Trustees) determined that the use of the words, though ill-advised, did not teach organic evolution or deny the Genesis account of creation. It was a less-than-satisfactory investigation. We should not overlook the effect such a lesson achieved: the words "myth" and "hymn" were planted as seed of thought in the fertile minds of young college students to germinate.

It is fair to complete the picture. We should note the explanation of the use of the word *myth* as published in *ACU Today* (Spring 1986, Vol. 38, No. 4).

"The words 'myth' and 'hymn' in the margin of the copy of scripture were not saying that Genesis was either a fairy tale or a song. These literary terms have been used to describe the importance and the nature of the Biblical narrative. 'Myth' can be defined as a body of information essential to understanding a culture, whether the information is true or false. That is the way the term was used in this case."

If this is a valid definition of the word myth, then we can likewise view a literary account of who fathered us as "myth."

#### WAS UNIVERSITY'S EXPLANATION SOUND?

In this context, the word "myth" as a term of literature is decidedly out of place. To suggest that there is a connection between a word used in literature and its presence as a marginal note in the text of Genesis is to assign Genesis to the level of both myth and literature. You must remember that (according to the

explanation) we are free to accept or reject mythical works of literature as *true* or *false*, thus, by extension, university students might get the idea they are likewise free to do the same with the Genesis account.

Was the university's explanation sound? No. A forewarning telegram from a trusted friend is not merely a work of literature, nor is the Constitution of the United States. Likewise, neither is the Bible. The Bible is LAW, even if adherents to the New Hermeneutics cringe at that word.

The serious Bible student must ask, *In what way does the word "myth" describe the importance and the nature of biblical narrative?* A myth, by any common standard of usage, is merely a legendary narrative, usually of imaginary persons or things. Is Christ imaginary? Was God's creation a figment of human imagination? Surely we see in this episode in 1986 the influence of the New Hermeneutics before many of us knew to call it that.



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# CARROLL D. OSBURN: APOSTATE IN ABILENE

Stephen Wiggins

***“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” (II John 9).***

Professor Carroll D. Osburn contributes generously to ACU's headlong rush into apostasy with his recent volume, *The Peaceable Kingdom: Essays Favoring Non-Sectarian Christianity*. Whereas the subtitle touts the author as favoring a “non-sectarian” view of Christianity, within he belches forth an ecumenical stench that would make every demon in hell scream for joy. With language garbed in the scholastic parlance of his profession, he eagerly calls for nothing more than a mongrel unity with the common sects of society. He does so with such a rabid bark that one wonders just how drastic of a heresy one would have to teach to become an apostate according to ACU.

Under the caption, “2 John And Christian Fellowship” (chapter 4, pp. 71-92), the author pipes that II John 9 sees extensive use in “sectarian circles” as justification for breaking fellowship over a “wide variety of matters.” The “sectarian circles” he has in mind is the brotherhood of the churches of Christ as his primary target centers entirely upon shooting down faithful brethren therein. And, the “wide variety of matters” in which he charges the faithful with “arrogantly misappropriating 2 John 9 as a sectarian slogan to denounce as ungodly” are matters such as “whether the Lord’s Supper must be taken every Sunday, or whether instrumental music is used in worship,” “premillennialism,” “congregational organization,” or “whether baptism is ‘for’ or ‘because of’ the remission of sins.”

## LIMITING DOCTRINE TO DEITY

Rejecting a supposed “hermeneutical nightmare” that arises from seeing the “doctrine of Christ” as referring to “that body of truth first taught by Jesus and his apostles,” the Dr. opts for another choice—“only the *particular* doctrine in 2 John is intended as the basis for disfellowship.” In other words, “the text refers to deceivers who deny the incarnation, *i.e.*, they deny a particular doctrine about the person of Christ.” Thus, for one to use II John 9 as authority to withdraw fellowship over such matters as the use of instrumental music in worship, premillennialism, denial of the essentiality of baptism, or any other heresy other than “the doctrine of incarnation” is “arrogantly misappropriating” the text and to “do so without regard for the immediate context.” The Professor said so.

Under “conclusion”, the Dr. reminds his readers once more that “2 John 9 was never intended as a *carte blanche* for rampant sectarian disfellowship.” Rather, the results of controlled exegetical effort “demand an understanding of the verse specifically to the denial of the incarnation of Jesus” and nothing more. He further states that “the categorical extension of this text to other issues is unwarranted and any doctrine of fellowship based upon such uncontrolled ‘proof-texting’ is blatantly wrong.” That the reader may see for himself just what “other issues” the Professor has in mind when II John 9 is used for “rampant sectarian disfellowship” that is so “blatantly wrong,” I here quote his next paragraph in full.

**There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who are only beginners and have yet to arrive at Christian maturity (1 John 2:12-14; Acts 18:24-26; Rom. 14:1-23). There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on whether more than one cup in communion is acceptable, whether the communion bread is to be pinched or snapped, whether one can**

**eat in the church building, whether funds can be used from the church treasury to support orphan homes; whether the Lord’s Supper must be taken every Sunday, or whether instrumental music is used in worship. There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who believe that Christ is the Son of God, but who differ on eschatological theories such as premillennialism, ecclesiological matters such as congregational organization, or soteriological matters such as whether baptism is “for” or “because of” the remission of sins. Rather than arrogantly misappropriating 2 John 9 as a sectarian slogan to denounce as ungodly all those with whom one disagrees on the wider array of religious topics, one should remember the adage [sic] “Christians Only...Not The Only Christians.”**

## IS OSBURN TRYING TO DECEIVE US?

Several observations are now in order. Note how Osburn begins and ends his statements quoted above. He subtly digresses from matters of opinion and judgment to matters of faith and doctrine. He begins by stating “there should be room in the Christian fellowship” for babes in Christ who have yet to arrive at Christian maturity. But by the end of the same paragraph, he makes the same earnest plea for the same amount of “room in the Christian fellowship” for those who repudiate the scriptural frequency of partaking of the Lord’s Supper every Lord’s day; for those who presumptuously reject God’s divine pattern for worship by their use of mechanical instruments of music; for those who mar the autonomous nature of congregational organization; and for those who perpetuate such sectarian doctrines as premillennialism and noisy denials of the essentiality of baptism.

Brethren, I declare that such procedure is nothing short of deception—insidious, wicked deception. Osburn has one purpose in mind—and only one purpose—and that is to deceive gullible brethren into bringing about a conglomerated, pseudo-unity between the churches of Christ and the Christian Church, along with other sects of like stripe. Osburn knows this can be accomplished only by assaults upon and compromises with the fundamentals of our faith. Thus, his premeditated ploy is to begin by suggesting liberty among young Christians as they progress toward spiritual maturity. But see how he shrewdly comes to insinuate that this same liberty be extended toward those who wittingly deny the most fundamental doctrines of New Testament Christianity!

This is exactly how all the big-time liberals among us propagate their deliberate and compromising falsehoods. I have noticed it time and time again in the literature of Marvin Phillips, Jim Woodroof, and the likes. They begin with matters where there is certainly room for liberty, judgment, and opinion. But then they cunningly move to matters of religious practice that must be grounded in faith and truth, matters that most certainly *do* affect one’s fellowship with God and brethren. It is all part and parcel of the liberal agenda to reshape, redefine, and renew the structure and nature of the Lord’s church. Their wish is that the naive will not detect their underhanded maneuvers. But we know better.

## FREQUENCY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Osburn supposes “there should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on whether...the Lord’s Supper must be taken every Sunday.” And just who do you presume

within so-called Christendom this would include within the fellowship of the churches of Christ? Absolutely every denomination and sectarian in the world that professes anything akin to the religion of Christianity. The Baptists say "there is no scriptural rule as to the frequency with which it [Lord's Supper] shall be observed" (*Hiscox Standard Baptist Manual*, 92). All the sects say the same.

It is clear that Osburn denies that the Bible teaches a scriptural frequency for the Supper to be observed. If this be true, however, one is at liberty to partake once a month, once a year, once a lifetime, or whenever it fits one's fancy to do so. One might NEVER partake of the Supper and it would never affect one whit his fellowship with God or brethren! This must follow if Osburn and his Baptist brethren are right re: there being "no scriptural rule as to the frequency" with which the Lord's Supper be observed. Our wayward brother has drunken himself by sipping too long from the wine of sectarianism. We bid him sober up by reading where the Master broke bread and commanded "Do this in remembrance of me;" and likewise where the early church, under inspired apostolic direction, came together on the first day of the week for the express purpose of breaking bread (Luke 22:19; Acts 20:7).

Given Osburn's position, one could just as well argue, "there should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on whether the Lord's Supper must be taken *at all*." Now, take this logical conclusion and apply it to the frequency of every avenue of worship. See how his belly-serving liberalism cuts out every item of worship on the Lord's day? In view of this heretical position, I here challenge Osburn to cite one passage which obligates a Christian even to worship upon the first day of the week. By the use of his own twisted thinking I am able to rip every passage that he may offer from his clutch.

Will Osburn fellowship those who change the elements of the Supper, the bread and fruit of the vine, to some other items? If yes, then see the extremities this current liberalism in the church will take those who love to have it so? If no, *then where is the passage* which allows him to withhold fellowship from those who switch the elements of the Supper? By his own admission he can't use II John 9 and no other passage addresses this "particular" error on withdrawal of fellowship.

One of two things must follow: either (1) Osburn believes the observance of the Lord's supper *is not* an authorized act of worship and therefore may be dispensed with at one's will on Sunday when the saints gather to worship; or, (2) he believes the observance of the Supper *is* an authorized act of worship but still may be considered as nothing more than a dispensable item of religious practice that really makes no difference whether one partakes or not. Either horn exhibits that sickened disposition toward sacred truth that is characteristic of all liberalistic tendencies which seek to undermine the truth of our God.

#### WHAT ABOUT INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Osburn asserts "there should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on ...whether instrumental music is used in worship." This subject is really the crux of Osburn's whole barrage of foolishness and I shall here show why. The chapter I now am reviewing was originally an oral lecture "delivered at a Unity Meeting" on January 15, 1985 in Dublin, California, before an audience of Christian Church preachers and compromising traitors within the churches of Christ. This was ten years ago when Rubel Shelly and Don DeWelt were making music together dancing to the beat of a "unity/fellowship movement" that would see the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Church two-stepping arm in arm all in the name of merry love and mutual admiration.

We see now that piper Osburn was right there tooting the same tune with the best of the music makers. Of course, his kind of piety would never allow him to speak upon such an occasion without seeking to doctor up a bleeding wound that has caused division and untold heartache within the body of Christ for nigh unto 150 years. Thus his passing reference to fellowship and instrumental music in worship is buried smack dab amongst his concluding remarks as to how II John 9 may *not* be applied. The catch is that Osburn knew exactly what his audience wanted to hear on the subject. Like Ahab's 400 payroll prophets who declared only that which was favorable to the king, so Osburn delivered the message his listeners wanted to hear.

It is surely strange to see how Osburn can dismiss the scriptural frequency of the Lord's Supper from assembled worship by pointing to a *supposed* lack of biblical authority for its weekly observance. Yet, he turns right around and gets the instrument into the exact same worship assembly by refusing to point to the REAL lack of biblical authority for such innovations as mechanical instruments of music. Consistency, where art thou? Such is only a small sampling of the perverted ploys to which Osburn and his liberal likes are willing to stoop in order to beguile the hearts of the simple minded.

#### WHAT ABOUT ESCHATOLOGY

Osburn fancies "there should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who...differ on eschatological theories such as premillennialism." By "eschatological theories" he means all those concocted notions offered in the name of speculation that surround end-time events like Christ's second coming and the resurrection of the dead; all of which can be had for a dime a dozen at the local sectarian church of your choice.

At this point in reviewing all of Osburn's silly twaddle, I cannot help but wonder how much time the man has spent in reading his New Testament. Not that I wish to be unkind to the Dr., but his ignorance of such fundamental truths runs so deep and wide that one cannot help but wonder. But now to the point. Did the apostles make "room in the Christian fellowship" for those who differed on "eschatological theories" as Osburn would have us to do? Read and see.

**But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some (II Timothy 2:16-18).**

Here are some who had their own brand of an "eschatological theory" that culminated in denying a future resurrection. Inspiration tells all to shun such godless chatter as such theories have a decaying effect upon true religion as gangrene to the physical body. Paul further states that those who teach such theories have left the truth and thereby destroy the faith of God's people with their error. An interesting side note is that Hymenaeus was dubbed by the apostle as a blaspheming, shipwrecked apostate who had been delivered unto Satan, that is, *disfellowshipped* for his heresy (I Timothy 1:20). How different the truth does read from Osburn's ecumenical revised version!

Osburn suggests that one of the eschatological theories we should willingly fellowship is "premillennialism." From this, I wish to illustrate just how heretical our wayward sibling has become in the proposal he offers. The premillennial belief asserts that Christ initially came to this earth for the purpose of establishing a physical kingdom which he would reign over from the literal throne of David in Jerusalem. Since, however, he was surprisingly rejected by the Jews, he postponed his kingdom plans till his second coming and established his church instead, as a sort of substitute arrangement. Thus, Christ will appear in his second coming for the express purpose of inaugurating his

kingdom in which he will reign for a span of 1000 years.

If there is even any truth to the above theory, it follows that the kingdom is not yet in existence. But if the kingdom is not yet a reality, then there is no new birth today. For it is the process of the new birth by which one enters the kingdom (John 3:5). But if there is no new birth today, then there is no salvation from sin, as entrance into the kingdom is when one's sins are remitted (Colossians 1:13-14). Thus, if premillennialism is true—or at least an option worthy of fellowship—then Osburn is yet in his sins and of all men most pitiable.

#### LOSING GOD'S ECCLESIOLOGY

Osburn imagines "there should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on...ecclesiological matters such as congregational organization." As to just exactly what the Dr. has in mind here on differing views of "congregational organization" that should be fellowshipped, he does not choose to inform us. I cannot help but suppose, however, whatever it is it calls for a broadening of the scriptural organization of congregational autonomy where "elders in every church" are the designated leaders "exercising the oversight" with delegated authority under the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ (Acts 14:23; I Peter 5:1-4).

What other options are there? Is Osburn suggesting we accept the Alvin Jennings house-church concept, where one set of elders oversees a plurality of congregations? Does Osburn envision a Catholic-like hierarchy that has him as the first pope over a diocese of west Texas churches? Or does the Professor like the way that sectarian denominations are at liberty to do it any way they choose? Any suggestion the man may make is a cynical departure from the divine pattern of the ancient order. This teacher would do well to turn student and learn that all the history books testify that an apostasy in "congregational organization" was the very first wholesale departure from the faith following the end of the first century.

#### AND WHAT OF SOTERIOLOGY

Osburn's radical liberalism culminates with this concluding point: "There should be room in the Christian fellowship for those who differ on...soteriological matters such as whether baptism is 'for' or 'because of' the remission of sins." The allusion, of course, is to Acts 2:38 where the apostle Peter commanded his listeners to repent and be baptized "for [unto—ASV] the remission" of their sins. The point argued by Osburn is that it is inconsequential as to whether or not one believes and teaches the essentiality of baptism in gospel obedience. One is at liberty to teach that an individual must be baptized in water in order to be saved as Jesus and his apostles taught (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Or, one is at liberty to repudiate what both the Master and his inspired spokesmen preached and rather declare that people may be saved by faith alone, before and without water baptism. Osburn hallucinates that it simply does not matter. Either position should be embraced and fellowshipped all in the name of what he calls "non-sectarian Christianity."

Can we not see, brethren, that Osburn's modernism strikes at the very heart of the new birth, the very process by which an individual becomes a child of God? Jesus said one MUST be "born of water and the Spirit" in order to enter the kingdom and be saved (John 3:5; Matthew 19:23-25). Yet, if Osburn is correct, then *there is no water in the new birth*. This must follow if baptism is "because of" the remission of sins. Just how radically insane must a Professor become in his error before ACU will relieve such apostates from their teaching positions?

Osburn's compromising statement on the purpose of baptism also reveals the real intent of these so-called "unity" meetings between the churches of Christ and the Independent Christian

Church. It is clear that they have much more in their scope of fellowship than just these two groups. Every sectarian denomination within so-called "Christendom" that practices some form of water "baptism" allegedly does so either "for" or "because of" the remission of sins (e.g., Mormons, Catholics, Baptists, you name it) These are the very ones which Osburn calls upon us to extend the right hand of fellowship by deliberately ignoring the real scriptural design of Bible baptism. The fruits of this call, made by Osburn initially in 1985, are now seen ten years later as apostates Rubel Shelly and Max Lucado make it common practice to preach for and fellowship the different sectarian affiliations in the cities where they live. It is an ecumenical crusade in full bloom.

#### FACTS CONTRADICT ROYCE MONEY'S STATEMENT

In the preface of the book under review, Osburn says, the "Churches of Christ are in an era of transition from a sectarian past to an unknown future. Certain long-cherished views are passing from the scene and new views are coming to be accepted." Note carefully that he states: (1) the churches of Christ are in an era of transition or change; (2) this transition is *from a sectarian past to an unknown future*; and (3) that *long cherished views are passing and new views are coming to be accepted*. I wish to show here just exactly what Osburn means by a change from a "sectarian past" to an "unknown future" where "new views" will be accepted. Watch this.

The three primary distinctive marks of the churches of Christ which have been restored and distinguish us from sectarian denominationalism are the *worship* of the church, the *organization* of the church, and the *plan of salvation* by which the church is entered. Yet these are the *exact three categories* under assault by Osburn just reviewed foregoing. He seeks to pervert the worship of the church by his dismissal of the Lord's Supper as a weekly observance along with the introduction of mechanical instruments of music to accompany our singing. He attempts to mar the organization of the church by suggesting alternative ways of congregational organization. And he endeavors to destroy the plan of salvation by unabashedly ripping water baptism from the new birth.

This, my brethren, is the "transition" of the churches of Christ that Osburn has in mind. The "sectarian past" he mentions is nothing more than the very fundamentals of New Testament Christianity which our forefathers in the faith restored to belief and practice. It is these hallmarks of truth which serve as the distinctive marks of the Lord's church and thus distinguish her from all the sects round about. There is not one single thing that Osburn suggests we adopt and fellowship that has not already been repudiated and rejected as sectarian error by the great Restorers hundreds of years before. Yet this "return to Babylon" is the very "unknown future" and so-called "new views" that Osburn would have us blindly embrace. His proposals are nothing more than that same old worn out and oft refuted ecumenical acceptance of denominationalism.

In view of this, it is quite amazing that ACU President Royce Money could deliver a speech at the ACU lectureship in February 1993 (only one month after Osburn wrote the preface to his book) and make the absurd claim that Abilene Christian University "*stands where it has always stood—squarely in the broad middle of our movement to restore New Testament Christianity.*" But, according to Osburn, if ACU "has stood where it has always stood" then it must still be standing in that "sectarian past" having not yet made the "transition" to the "unknown future"! Not so. President Money seemingly has charted his course to defend the rank liberalism of Osburn and other ACU Bible faculty as long as he can dupe brethren into keeping the financial support coming in. But the fact is that if everyone believed and taught like Carroll

Osburn there would not even be a brotherhood of the churches of Christ! He truly has sought to put the Restoration Movement into reverse!

\* \* \* \* \*

The year was 1933. The place was Abilene, Texas. It was the first and only time that war-horse of a preacher J. D. Tant had ever attended the Abilene Christian College lectureship. On the day that he was to leave, Tant was standing on the steps of Sewell Auditorium, taking his leave of several of the brethren. Turning suddenly to J. P. Crenshaw and thrusting forward his hand for a final handshake, Tant said, "Well, brother Joe, I'm about to do something this day the devil himself has never done and wouldn't do."

Crenshaw stood for a moment in speechless astonishment, then with great curiosity asked,

"What on earth is that, brother Tant?"

"I'm leaving the city of Abilene. Goodbye." And with that Tant picked up his suitcase and walked down the steps toward the street.

Tant was right. The devil never has and never will leave Abilene. He remains there to this day working overtime to harvest a crop of apostates like Carroll Osburn who are doing their dead level best to rape the bride of Christ. May the God of heaven grant us the wisdom and the courage to stand up so as to be numbered among those who have not yet bowed a knee to the idolatrous gods of liberalism.

—208 East First Street  
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# WHO IS MY BROTHER?

Graham Cain

The word "brother" (*ADELPHOS*), is said to mean, "the disciples, and so by implication, all believers, Matt. 28:10; John 20:17" (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, W. E. Vine, p. 155). The word "believers" (*PISTEOU*), is defined by the same source, "to believe, also to be persuaded of, and hence, to place confidence in, to trust, signifies, in this sense of the word, reliance upon, not mere credence" (p. 116).

The question is when does one who has been a Christian reach the point of being unworthy of such a title? Or, does he ever reach such a position? We are all familiar with the argument that "once a child of God, always a child of God." This is because our children, regardless of how wicked they become are always our children. Are the two possibilities the same? Are they similar?

Please note the following. Every person is born once. Every person dies once. We know that some people are born the second time (John 3:3-7). If these continue faithful to their second birth, they will have only one death. But there is a second death. Revelation 20:6 speaks of a second death and it is referred to again in the 14th verse. This death will be reserved for, "the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). Yes, some that have been born twice will not be safe from the second death.

In I Timothy 1:20 Paul speaks of "Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." In II Timothy 2:17,18 he said, "And their word will eat as doth a canker of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already and overthrow the faith of some."

In II Timothy 4:14, 15 Paul refers to an Alexander again saying, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words." Then in verse 10 of the same chapter Paul said, "For Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world..." To see how this affects people read James 4:4 and I John 2:15. There are many other scriptures that could be cited such as Romans 16:17-18 and II Peter 2:9-22, and the like.

The question is, at what point would God and Paul stop calling men "brothers"? Are all men who have been baptized to be called "brothers" as long as they live, regardless of how they act?

I am aware of what Paul said concerning brethren in II Thessalonians 3:6, "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." Please read the following verses. When you get down to verse 11 you will find what "disorderly" meant. Then in verse 15 you will find these words, "yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." This does not sound like Hymenaeus and Alexander who had been turned over to Satan by Paul till they learned not to blaspheme. It does not resemble the two who were teaching error concerning the resurrection and overthrew the faith of some (II Timothy 2:17,18). And, finally, Alexander the coppersmith was not considered worthy of being called a "brother." Paul said the Lord would reward him according to his works and Timothy was cautioned to beware of this man also, because he had withstood Paul's words. (II Timothy 4:14, 15).

We have such men who have gone from the truth for a time that is just about as long as the ones in the Bible. They are showing no remorse or likelihood of changing. They make this perfectly clear in their speech, writing and actions.

Rubel Shelly and the Woodmont Hills church of Christ met with six groups of churches who were absolutely NOT churches of Christ. The date was April 10, 1994, which was "Easter." The churches were the Baptist, Presbyterian, United Methodist, Southern Methodist, Trinity Methodist and the Woodmont Christian Church. Shelly was the speaker. This is the type of gathering that there can be no excuse given for a genuine Christian to be meeting with and speaking for.

The reporting of this sinful act by one of our own brethren, had the part played by Shelly given and he was soundly criticized. But in the course of writing concerning this horrible act, the word "brother" was used eight times and applied to Shelly. Was it necessary to call Rubel Shelly "brother"? Is he a "brother"? There are many men in the same situation. Max Lucado, Marvin Phillips, Jeff Walling, Mike Cope, Larry James, Lynn Anderson, et. al. If all those who fit in this listing were shown, the number would be amazing. The apostle

John once said, "Whoever 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).

This would be ample reason to call such men by their proper names and not make matters worse by calling them "brethren" or "brother." I think it is about time we start calling them by what they are.

—2244 Mountain View Drive  
Hurst, Texas 76054

[NOTE: Although some of us may not be fully persuaded, re: brother Cain's thought-provoking article, foregoing, the fact is that he may have a point. When we consider the biblical chastisement the men he mentioned are refusing, it reminds us of Hebrews 12:5ff, which says, "...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Then of course there is II Thessalonians 3:15 which brother Cain was careful to mention.

It may be a case similar to Proverbs 26:4-5. Sometimes it would almost take a Solomon to decide which way to go. Whether to continue "brothering" those who refuse chastisement, in the event the above-mentioned passage applies, or to discontinue doing so on the basis of Hebrews 12, each of us will have to be persuaded in his own mind. IYR Jr.]

## WHAT IS IT WORTH TO YOU?

If you knew you could preserve your congregation against apostatizing into Liberalism, what would it be worth to you? Here is a suggestion:

If you asked us to send one copy of William Woodson's paper-back book **Change Agents and Churches of Christ** to each family in your congregation, This would cost you \$8.50 each (postage and handling included). Our congregational rate for mailing **Contending For The Faith** to each household for one year is only \$7.00. If you invested \$15.50 for this combination to be sent to each family, you might be surprised the difference it would make.

Please let us hear from you. Address us **Contending For The Faith, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.** —The Editor

# Notes & Quotes...

**David Hurlocker**, minister, Church of Christ, 502 West 12th Street, Post Office Box 572, Emporia, Kansas 66801-0572: "Dear Sirs, I would call you brothers but do not believe you would consider me to be in your brotherhood. I do not want your tabloid to be sent to me. I did not request your October 1994 issue or any other for that matter. Please remove my name and this church from your mailing list."

"The reason for this action is simple. There is no information in this issue that I wish to read or have our congregation read. I believe it is important to be true to the Bible. We must speak 'where the Bible speaks.' But your writings do not do this. You seem to be focused on running down all who are not on your approval list."

"This running down of brothers for the sadistic pleasure of a warped sense of faithfulness is not a following of the Biblical teaching to be faithful."

"With the limited time for reading our members have, it is important to be sure what we encourage them to read will be better for their faith. Your writings do not fit this standard."

"Please consider changing your format to something that would encourage the brotherhood instead of running it down. (Signed) David Hurlocker, Minister of the Gospel."

[P.S.] While this letter is not intended for publication, feel free to do so. If you do, send me a copy of that page so I can see your editorial comments. DH

[NOTE: "...My secretary already had deleted your address from our list as you requested." I replied, in part. "You mentioned that you would call us brothers but that we probably would not consider you to be in our brotherhood. I found this remark curious to say the least. What brotherhood are you in, if not the churches of Christ?"]

So-called "unity in diversity" is like an orchestra in which each player plays his own music and there is no conductor. Rather than harmony, all we can hope for is dissonance. Well, brethren, this is just not good enough and is hardly the unity for which Jesus suffered and gave his life!

**Howard P. Ballard**, Helena, Oklahoma: "Christ is the head of his church. The church is his bride. He has but one bride. The church has but one husband (II Corinthians 11:2)."

"We know when and where the church had its birth, but all other churches are of men and had their birth way later...I think people should know when and where the church was born—the place—what Pentecost means."

"Opinions are like noses—everybody has one and it ought to be kept out of other people's business."—**David Baker**, Monday, June 20, 1994, Houston College of the Bible Lectureship, Spring, Texas.

**Wayne Price**, preacher, Church of Christ, Post Office Box 760, McLoud, Oklahoma 74851: "I am needing some help in lining up speakers for our '96 lectureship here at McLoud. Our theme this year (1995) is The Church Christ Built, and were following that next year with the theme: Why I Left...I"

"We have thus far lined up seven speakers treating the following subjects: Why I Left Pentecostalism, Why I Left the Nazarene Church, Why I Left the Christian Church, Why I Left the Catholic Church, Why I Left the Baptist Church, Why I Left the Methodist Church, Why I Left the Presbyterian Church."

"We would like to line up three more speakers treating subjects other than those listed above. Could you help us out? Any faithful preacher who is a former member of a denomination not mentioned above would be acceptable, and especially some of the various cults (Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, etc.). Please send me the name(s) and phone numbers of such preachers if you would."

"We think these two lectureships are timely, and that all emphasis on getting back to identifying the Lords church in an age of religious confusion is definitely needed. Hope you can help us out with such information as requested..."

P.S. Our '95 lectureship is September 8-10, and the 1996 lectureship is set for September 6-8."

**Aaron Nicholas**, Stamps, Arkansas: "I have been in touch since 1973. That is when I subscribed for brother Rice's paper, Contending for the Faith (Jude 3)."

"His paper has been true to its title since the day it began and here it is some twenty-odd years later and still going strong as ever."

"Back in '73, I had no idea I would be writing my good brother in 1995 at the age of 88... Brother Rice is not that old. He had done something not many brethren have done I doubt; he has flown the deep waters 70-plus times. If the Lord wills, I say he will fly many more times by the time he gets my age."

"[While I have this opportunity, I want to encourage every Christian to order brother Rice's paper...The price is just \$10.00 per year. Some papers that give the world news are priced at \$6.00 per month! CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH gives the Gospel News at \$10.00 per year.]"

"And be sure to order brother Goebel Music's

book, 'EASY TO READ VERSION (OR EASY TO MISLEAD?).' You must read this book or you will never know what the WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATION CENTER has done and is doing to the brotherhood and to the church of Christ which he purchased with his own precious blood. Brother Music's friends set the price of his book at \$39.95, but listen to this: Brother Music says "I want every member of the church to have my book for the price of ONLY \$6.00 plus \$3.50 for wrapping and shipping." (I call this giving his book away. Get this book and read it and you will see what I mean.)

Brother Music has spent many, many hours of sleeplessness that he really needed for his own health's sake; but he spent them documenting the proof of this book..."

[NOTE: All orders for brother Music's book-"EASY TO READ OR EASY TO MISLEAD"-should be addressed to him personally: Goebel Music, 5114 Montclair Street, Colleyville, Texas 76034-5401.

As for subscriptions to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, these should be addressed to BIBLE RESOURCE PUBLICATIONS, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383. Single subscriptions now are \$10.00 per year; three subscriptions are \$27.00 per year. Please help build our circulation!!YRJR.]

Mable Best, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, continues to support our work \$15.00 each month, as she has for many, many years. "My prayers are always for the work you are doing," she wrote.

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## DIRECTORY

For advertising in this section, see Masthead, page 2.

### —Florida

Pensacola: **Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526, Tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

### —Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436

Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, Wayne Coats, preacher, Tel. (616) 758-7406.

### —Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., Al Brown and David Brown, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week of June.

**M/M Herman S. Carter**, Allen Park, Michigan: "You are so right, people cannot be warned that simply will not READ."

**Alexander and Tatiana Nesterkin**, Murmansk, Russia: "About Church of Christ here in Murmansk. There are seven men in our congregation—Bob, Ivan, Alexander, Peter, Ilya, Sasha, Sergei.

We appreciate Bob's work here in Murmansk and different supports of all American Christians. Bob works with a zeal. Every one of his lessons and preaching he prepares thoroughly. So we advance little by little in our study of Bible. Bob is a good example of Christian life. In word and deed he follows Holy Bible...

"You cannot recall Ivan because you did not make the acquaintance of him. After lectureship this February, he continued his study of word of God with Bob and became a Christian. He will be 55 years old this September. In past he was a communist. He regrets about two things: in the first place, he wishes he had thought of God before; secondly, that he bought Niva (Russian jeep) only one year ago...

"What about Peter? Do you recall him? Now he leads us in singing.

"Sergei is the youngest one. His family is not Christian. The majority of his friends reject God. So we take care about him.

"We read attentively what happened with Bi Tong-shing. We should like to emphasize your wise attitude to baptism..."

[NOTE: "When Bob [Hawkins] was here," I replied in part, "he brought me two complete sets of the BASIC BIBLE COURSE in Russian. How wonderful that Russians now can read and study it in their own language! As I recall, this is the 15th language into which it now has been translated. Brother Joshua Gootham, of Kakinada, India, has asked permission to translate it into two more of the 45 Indian languages. It already had been translated into the Telegu (Indian) language more than 30 years ago, where it has been widely used ever since.

"Tell Ivan that I look forward to meeting him in September. Perhaps he can give me a ride in his Niva! I cannot recall Peter, but it is good to know that he now can lead the singing at Murmansk. I hope for the day that the musical side of our worship in Russia will be far advanced over what it is now.

"It is important to me that you continue to encourage Sergei. With his family not yet being Christians and the majority of his friends rejecting God, he will need all our encouragement.

"Thanks for letting me know that you agree with my refusing to over-persuade Bi Tong-shing. When he finally was baptized (April 8th), it was his own decision. Now he is helping us find others in his acquaintance. Eight of us will be visiting him in Fado, China, at the end of November, Lord willing. We now think as many as five more from there will be going to Four Seas College, in Singapore, to study Bible with us for from two to three years, starting in January. At least we can teach them openly in Singapore without government interference. Tong-shing's son continues to be one of our best students at FSC..." IYR.Jr.]

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"We have to change our hearts; God is not going to change his word."—Gary Colley, the night of May 27, 1995, during the California Campaign and Gospel Meeting, at Hughson, California.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Marlin L. Harless**, Bim, West Virginia: "The Church of Christ at Bim, West Virginia, wishes to contribute to this noble and worthy cause! We believe you are doing a good work. May God continue to bless you in exposing sin and error in the brotherhood!"

[NOTE: "What a pleasure it was to find your lovely card in our mail, enclosing the

check from the Bim Church of Christ in the amount of \$1,020.00 to help in our long-running battle against doctrinal error in the brotherhood," I replied in part.

"Please convey our deep appreciation to the Bim brethren for having this substantial part in this regretful, however necessary, work. It is our conviction that there is no other way to preserve the cause of truth among the churches of Christ in our wayward generation. We have reason to believe that the work we are doing in this regard is having a strong effect." IYR.Jr.]

**Dee Ellis**, Lubbock, Texas: "God speed and our prayers go with you daily."

**Jesse E. Cochran**, Mount Vernon, Washington: "Enclosed find \$50.00 for special mailings. It is good to know that not all have stopped their ears or closed their eyes to truth. Keep up the fight!"

**Dr. Lloyd J. Earles**, Hawaiian Gardens, California: "In this age of liberalism in the Lord's church, yours is a welcome voice."

**Jerry M. McIntosh**, Piedmont, Missouri: "I was reading Contending for the Faith and I noticed the editorial staff...It got me to wondering if Bill Coss could be the preacher that I used to know back in Chicago a number of years ago. Would there be any way that I could get in touch with him—that is, if this is the same one I knew, if you can help, I would deeply appreciate it."

[NOTE: "Yes," I replied in part, "the Bill Coss you inquired about is the preacher who used to preach in Chicago a number of years ago. He now is in poor health and confined to a wheel chair; however, I am sure he would be happy to hear from you..."

There could be others who would like to send cards or letters of encouragement to brother Coss. Address him: Bill Coss, Cedar Grove Park, Lot 5, Maylene, Alabama 35214 or telephone him: (205) 664-4538. IYR.Jr.]

**Earl E. Black**, Huntington, West Virginia: "Enclosed you will find an article from our local newspaper, the Herald-Dispatch, concerning one of our local churches of Christ. Thought you might be interested in knowing it.

"Read the article by Wayne Coats, 'Some History in Review.' I would be interested in knowing the salary of the 'heads' of this operation, 'Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.'"

[NOTE: I was indeed interested in the newspaper clipping that brother Black enclosed. Headed "Covenant Players Performing Tonight," the article mentioned that "The performance is by Campus Light, a ministry of the Norway Avenue Church of Christ and the United Methodist Student groups."

Two questions: 1) Why should ANY church of Christ have such a performing "ministry" to begin with, and 2) why should ANY church of Christ have ANY connection with ANY denominational group? In the light of II Corinthians 6:14-17 and related passages, it makes no SCRIPTURAL sense whatsoever. IYR.Jr.]

**Jimmie B. Hill**, Crossville, Tennessee: "Greetings to you from beautiful Crossville, Tennessee. I am no longer with the church in Orlando but now working with the brethren at the Lantana church of Christ here in Crossville. The church I was with in Orlando decided to uphold the modern dance and all who participate in it and, not being able to persuade them of its sinfulness from the word of God, I departed (it was a mutual decision, if you know what I mean). All things are going very well at Lantana."

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When **Basil D. Schilling**, of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee, died in May, Garland Elkins was invited by the family to preach his funeral. Having been born in October, 1899, brother Schilling was 95 years of age at his passing.

"Brother Schilling was a happy man," brother Elkins observed in his sermon. "The devil does not have any happy OLD men."

Funeral services were conducted May 18, 1995, at Memphis Funeral Home with burial in

Memorial Park Cemetery, both in Memphis, Tennessee.

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**Joseph D. Meador**, Austin, Texas: "I am pleased to report that Southwest School of Bible Studies is expecting another record enrollment this coming August. This will be our third consecutive year of beginning classes with a new record student enrollment."

**Shelby Roberts**, Hollywood, Florida: Contributing \$15.00 to our work, he wrote, "We had brother Danny Morris back from Indiana for our gospel meeting in May. Great. One Catholic baptized; one restored. All is going OK here at Hollywood Hills."

\*\*\*\*\*  
"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them."—Ray Bradbury as quoted by Misha Besson in Seattle Times.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Byron Beasley**, minister, Star church of Christ, Lometa, Texas: "I received your letter some time ago, and needed to wait until my Social Security check came in so I could send you some money on that mailing. [NOTE: \$40.00 enclosed. IYR.Jr.] I bought 22 copies of BEHOLD THE PATTERN and have passed out nearly all of them where I thought they would do the most good.

"I am nearly 85 years of age and I am still preaching for a small church just 22 miles from where I live..."

"I have read BEHOLD THE PATTERN and started back over it again. I surely think brother Music did a great service to our brotherhood in his book. One young man going to SUNSET. I tried to get him to consider SOUTHWEST at Austin. His foster father said he didn't want to be a preacher, he wants to be a missionary. I said he needs to be sound in doctrine whatever he does. I'd like to know how a man missionary thinks he can do anything in a missionary field without being a preacher. We don't need men missionaries that can't teach God's word; and if he can teach it and convince people of their need, he is a preacher.

"I appreciate your work so very much and wish I could help you more than I do. I am enclosing check in the amount of \$40.00 to help with mailing."

**Kevin & Pam Pullen**, Tyler, Texas: "Please take us off your mailing list. You are wasting your money."

[NOTE: They said it; I didn't. IYR.Jr.]  
**C. B. Short**, Dallas, Texas: "Hard to tell the beneficial effect of Ira's mailings concerning the venom of liberalism among us, but one thing for sure is this: with nothing at all being done by any faithful Christians, nothing WILL result but evil, will it? Little wonder that Jude was led to demand a CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH 2,000 years ago!

"I enclose check for \$100.00 again. See that it is used strictly in the interest of TRUTH, will you? I know Ira stands as nearly as humanly possible for furtherance of the gospel of the Lord, and, be it here OR abroad, I leave it in his capable hands to make honest and proper decisions concerning funds he receives—of course, through your oversight to a great degree, also.

"This wild proliferation of 'versions' currently being perpetuated is finding support in the very one place it should never occur, but where it seems is found the avid, unthinking support of such stuff as the 'New International Version'—about as much a misnomer as possible!...With the passing of so many of our stalwarts across the old Jordan, it continues to be more and more serious that all each of us CAN do MUST be done.

"I just finished reading Ira's *Axe On The Root*, numbers one and two, this week, and even 30 or more years ago this liberalistic thing was almost out of hand. What would it NOW be had not he and others concerned then been heard? Frightening!"

**Donna Carnall**, Cherryvale, Kansas: Keep spreading the truth to all who'll listen.

# So... You're Interested in Being A Man!

Dave Dugan

Currently there is a nation-wide trend to promote being manly through books, tapes, seminars, and TV programs which are being sold throughout the United States. Some men in the Lord's church are being attracted by slick and catchy themes that are playing on their guilt. There are those who are telling men how they are to think and how they are to act—at the same time charging them anywhere from a few dollars for a few hours in a seminar to hundreds of dollars for special schools that run for several weeks.

I agree that some men need to hear messages on the role of men, as God would have men live; but let's do it from the scriptures and not from those using pop-psychology.

These so-called experts are selling the "spiritual empowerment of men" (see that catchy expression?) trying to convince men to make themselves into one that is a "strong, authentic, healed man" (careful here!) who can handle the everyday "pressures and stresses of everyday life" and who has the answers concerning "money, time, relationships, integrity, anger, pride... and much more."

The man who attends one of these seminars and reads these books, according to the advertising, will be able to "...love your children unconditionally [better watch this term], communicating, disciplining, letting go [watch out here] and instilling values". You will receive the overwhelming endorsement of such men as **Billy Graham, Chuck Swindoll, Charles Colson, Steve Farrar, or James Dobson** who are not even Christians!

## CHRISTIANS TAUGHT BY NON-CHRISTIANS

An increasing number of our so-called Christian colleges and local congregations are inviting men in to present programs and seminars on the subject of being a man, manliness, and masculinity. But we find

that these men are from denominations (Matthew 15:9). Plus, these seminars are going farther and farther away from God's word (Colossians 3:17; II Timothy 3:16, 17) as our guide for spiritual life and touting the works of men.

These seminars are led by men who are NOT Christians and are false teachers (I John 4:1; II John 9-11). But we have brethren that are disregarding these important truths and are damaging the purity of the church. Some holler, let us do or use any method to accomplish the work or mission of the church; but this is merely a cover for the liberal mind to bend, twist, and abuse the scriptures.

When any effort is made to present the gospel's teachings on any matter, it must be done with God's approval (i.e., the scriptures...Colossians 3:17). When we see blatant association with denominations and false teachers, we must speak out (Romans 16:17). Men desperately need to hear the gospel, but NOT "...ANOTHER GOSPEL..." (Galatians 1:6ff)!

Our example in spiritual life and living is our Lord (I Peter 2:21). Our Lord is an example in manliness. Let's look: He "...increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). He cared for his family, leaving his mother in the care of the apostle John (John 19:26ff). He was humble in all ways, showing his humility and servanthood by washing the feet of the disciples (John 13). He was fully obedient to God's will and NOT his own (John 4:34). He learned through suffering (Hebrews 5:8). He loved others and was friendly to others yet he was always obedient to God (John 14:15, 15:14). He was willing to suffer and die for ALL men (Matthew 1:21; I Timothy 1:15, 2:4). He always spoke the truth and brought us the essence of truth (John 8:32). There is more, but you get the point.

## OUR LORD TEACHES MORE

In addition to leaving us a beautiful example of manliness, our Lord instructs all those who are in Christ to listen to and be obedient to those who would write the New Testament (Luke 4:32; John 12:48-50; Hebrews 1:1,2; Jude 3). When they lived and wrote by inspiration, they directed both men and women to put on the "...fruit of the Spirit...", which includes "...love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Galatians 5:22ff). Plus, all are to put on the Christian graces outlined by Peter "...giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (II Peter 1:5-7). Paul addressed the proper care for each mate in marriage by saying, "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. For the HUSBAND is the head of the wife, even as CHRIST is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body...HUSBANDS, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it" (Ephesians 5:21ff emphasis mine DCD).

All Christian men should spend their time studying God's word (Acts 17:11; II Timothy 2:15; 3:16,17) to determine how they are to conduct themselves as GOD'S men. THEN, work with all diligence to apply the scriptures to one's life. We need to bring about pure thinking (Matthew 5:28; Philippians 4:8ff), continually examining and correcting (I John 1:7-10), pushing out the world (I John 1:15ff), and allowing the word of God to dwell within us and applying its teachings. Paul simply says "do" those things that the Christians had "...both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me..." (Philippians 4:9).

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## THE JOKE OF THE CENTURY

Wayne Coats

Under date of July 7, 1995, brother Neil W. Anderson (President/Publisher of the *Gospel Advocate*) sent a batch of materials by mail in which he announced a gala affair celebrating "140 years of service to churches of Christ," by the *Gospel Advocate*. Brother Anderson wrote that William Lipscomb and Tolbert Fanning founded the *Gospel Advocate* "...with the hope of rendering some good service in the cause of truth."

When the *Gospel Advocate* began in 1855, liberalism was on the rampage. The Missionary Society had been organized in 1849. A public announcement of mechanical instruments of music being used in worship was made in 1851. Congregations were being divided. Discord, strife, ill-will and all the attendant evil results were widespread. Digression was marching with but few dissenting voices. Please note carefully where brother Tolbert Fanning wrote in October, 1855. "I determined by the help of the Lord, to give the subject of cooperation a thorough examination." Why be so thorough? The Missionary Society was operating as a gangrene and cancerous growth. Brethren Lipscomb and Fanning did not cover or compromise with the false teachers of their day. There were issues, problems, troubles and disturbances to be addressed—and the reader of those early issues of the *Gospel Advocate* will clearly see that brethren Fanning and Lipscomb were not just trying to render good service, but they were doing battle with the enemies of the church.

For over a century, the *Gospel Advocate* was in the forefront as it stood against the purveyors of error. Such issues as fellowship with the digressive, premillennialism,

church cooperation and other threats to the unity of God's people have been given "a thorough examination." It is my blessed privilege to have and to read all those old Advocates and to be profited thereby.

### WHAT ABOUT RECENT YEARS?

What has been the policy of the *Gospel Advocate* regarding the troubles, divisions and discord which have resulted from all the liberalism brought into congregations within recent years?

It is a well known fact, indisputable, undeniable and unanswerable that the present *Gospel Advocate* has absolutely encouraged liberalism rather than giving it a "thorough examination." I went to see brother Anderson (the President/Publisher) after brother Guy Woods was so disgracefully demoted as the *Gospel Advocate* editor. I begged brother Anderson to please turn the Advocate around.

Shortly before brother Woods passed away, he came to visit me. He later called and asked me to come to his office, which I did. Various and sundry matters were discussed relative to liberalism, compromise and general weakness which prevails.

When Andre Resner wrote his infamous article about *Christmas at Matthew's House* which appeared in *Wineskins*, many papers, bulletins and articles were published replying to Resner. Those who have more influence with brother Anderson than I should try to get him to inform his readers why a strong reply to the Resner article was not permitted to appear in the *Gospel Advocate*. Is it a "brotherhood journal?"

As to the "...publisher serving churches of Christ with books, curriculum, magazines, videos and more," as stated by brother Anderson, will someone please get

brother Anderson to explain why some congregations returned the Sunday School materials to the Advocate because they were rife with error? Please get brother Anderson to explain why the Advocate curriculum was/has been the same as that used by the Baptists and other denominational churches! [I have copies of those materials and so do others. This can be proved beyond doubt.]

### WHY DOES ADVOCATE PEDDLE ERROR?

Maybe brother Anderson would like to discuss all the liberal modernistic and false teaching which the *Gospel Advocate* is peddling. When visiting the *Gospel Advocate Bookstore*, look at the display of liberal and denominational writers. No way did "our founders" encourage the liberal element, and brother Anderson knows better than to infer such antics. [The bookstore is reeking with the works of liberal writers. Take a look for yourself!]

To attempt a comparison between a July 30, 1995 *Gospel Advocate* rally in the old Ryman Auditorium with the N. B. Hardeman meetings in the Ryman Auditorium not only is misleading, but it is downright sick! Brother Hardeman had conviction, courage and a love for truth as he preached those great sermons in the long ago. The burning issues of the day were discussed. That was the very purpose of those meetings. What is the Advocate saying that would help to put the hamstring on the liberals? Its editor can write for *One Body*, a digressive Christian Church paper and palaver about how we ought to receive one another. Its editor can join in with the digressives at Joplin, Missouri. The Advocate has supported the notorious *Nashville*

(Continued on Page 3)



# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 9

September/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

## EDITORIAL STAFF

Tim Ayers	Darrell Conley	Bill Lockwood
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## SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$10.00; Three Years, \$27.00. Club Rate: Five One-Year Subscriptions \$40.00. Whole Congregation Rate: Any congregation entering each family of its entire membership with single copies being mailed directly to each home receives a \$3.00 discount off the Single Subscription Rate, i.e., such whole congregation subscriptions are payable in advance at the rate of \$7.00 per year per family address.

## EDITORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

ALL COMMUNICATIONS received by *Contending for the Faith* and or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor Ira Y. Rice, Jr., 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.

## ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

*Contending for the Faith* was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

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

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be cancelled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE ASSOCIATE EDITOR to Bible Resource Publications, P. O. Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383-2273. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

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## Editorial...

### Is 'Advocate' Now Becoming A Missionary Society, Too?

When the *Gospel Advocate* was founded in 1855, it was just six years from the innovation of the first "Missionary Society" among churches of Christ—one of the two principal wedges which divided the Restoration Movement into the churches of Christ and the so-called Christian Church.

In the early days of the *Advocate*, one of the principal things it opposed was the introduction of man-made "societies" to do the work which Jesus Christ intended for the church to do. For 140 years, nominally at least, this has been the position of the *Gospel Advocate* of Nashville, Tennessee.

#### WORSHIP AS A "GUEST OF THE...ADVOCATE"?

Imagine my astonishment, when, under date of June 30, 1995, the *Gospel Advocate* sent me an invitation to "Worship at the Ryman Auditorium," in Nashville, the Sunday night of July 30, 1995, as a "Guest of the *Gospel Advocate*"!

Truly, in the invitation, it was stipulated there would be "No Collection" taken; however, on that same line, it said, the "Lord's Supper" would be "Available."

By what authority did the *Advocate* organize a "Worship" service at the Ryman Auditorium—or anywhere else! Is not worship a function of the church? Is not the Lord's supper a function of the kingdom of God?

#### ARE THE ADVOCATE AND THE CHURCH THE SAME?

I don't know about you, but I see a distinction between the church, a spiritual institution, and the modern so-called *Gospel Advocate*, a business institution which calculatedly makes merchandise of the brethren. And when Jesus Christ said he would not drink of the fruit of the vine "until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," I am certain he did not mean as "a guest of the *Gospel Advocate*"!

If what happened on July 30, 1995, at the grand old Ryman Auditorium was not tantamount to the *Advocate* usurping a function of the church, what was it? We have known for a long time that the once "Old Reliable" no longer is reliable to take a stand for the truth. But how inappropriate it was for the *Advocate* to celebrate its 140th year by becoming what it formerly fought for more than a century!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

[EDITORIAL NOTE: If you have not done so already, please now turn back to Page 1 and read what brother Wayne Coats had to say about "THE JOKE

OF THE CENTURY." Brother J. D. Tant used to say, "Brethren, we are drifting." In Neil Anderson's and the Gospel Advocate's case, they have already drifted.—The Editor]

### Preacher Wanted

The Brush Church of Christ is seeking a full time minister. Community of approximately 4,500. Must be doctrinally sound and meet with the public and evangelize. House and salary. Send resumé and picture to:

Brush Church of Christ, Box 602, Brush, CO 80723

## JOKE...

(Continued from Page 1)

Jubilee in former years. Check for yourself.

When blunders are made we need to admit them and try to do better. I see no evidence that the *Gospel Advocate* will take a firm stand against anything. We are told

that the main speaker for the big Ryman Auditorium service will be, "Neil Anderson, President of the *Gospel Advocate*," as people "worship at the Ryman." I do not doubt that some few will "worship at the Ryman," but I choose not to be found at the worship. It would do as much good to be found in Dan or Bethel with Jereboam and

his altars. It is a joke for brother Anderson to try to ride into the Ryman Auditorium on the coat-tails of brother N. B. Hardeman and the great *Hardeman Tabernacle Meetings*. Some jokes are not worth very much.

—705 Hillview Drive  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122

## PERSONAL FAITH

Joe W. Nichols

### Just how personal is our Faith?

Some would have us to believe that one's faith is ultra personal—something that has to do with the believer and God. Those espousing such are encouraging spontaneous outbursts in worship services without regard for others, decency and order. "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace" (I Corinthians 14:33); he requires that "all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40). Even during the period of miraculous gifts exercised in the assembly of the saints, "the spirit of the prophets [were] subject to the prophets" (I Corinthians 14:32). The encouraged practice of "spontaneous worship" would agree more with Calvinism and Pentecostalism than with the New Testament where the believers practiced a mutual *faith*.

We understand that without *faith* one cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6); *faith* comes by hearing and reading God's Word (Romans 10:17, John 20:30-31); *faith*

without works is dead, and by works *faith* is perfected (James 2:14-26); and religiously whatsoever is practiced without *faith* is sin (Romans 14:23, II John 9).

**But, can the saved exercise faith without orderly interaction with others of like faith?**

A look at the first converts of Acts 2 satisfies the question:

1. Verse 41—"They then that received his Word were baptized: and there were ADDED UNTO THEM...about three thousand souls." Those being saved were added to a collective body.

2. Verse 42—"They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching AND FELLOWSHIP [joint-participation, jn], IN THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE PRAYERS." Their faith was exercised in a systematic interaction with other believers.

3. Verse 44—"And ALL THAT BELIEVED WERE TOGETHER, and HAD ALL THINGS COMMON [be-

longing to all, in contrast to one's own, jn]..." A shared, mutual interaction of those of like faith.

4. Verse 46—"And day by day continuing steadfastly WITH ONE ACCORD [harmony and agreement, jn] in the temple..." Certainly not spontaneous actions carrying each one in separate directions, but a *faith* that brings believers together in unison.

5. Verse 47—"And the Lord added to THEM [footnote—ASV, TOGETHER, jn] day by day those that were [being] saved." A *faith* in conjunction with others of like faith.

**Faith was not meant to be a private matter just between the believer and God:**

1. We are to assemble with the brethren (Hebrews 10:25; I Corinthians 11:20).

2. We are to involve ourselves in five divine authorized acts of worship in a decent, orderly way, avoiding confusion (Acts 2:42, 20:7; Colossians 3:16-17; Ephesians 5:19; I Corinthians 16:1-2).

3. We are to exercise our individual talents to benefit the whole body (I Corin-

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thians 12:12, 14-27; I Corinthians 14:12).

4. As an organized body (elders, deacons, teachers, members) we are to function in saving souls through evangelism, edification and benevolence (Ephesians 2:10; I Thessalonians 5:11). Paul said of the church at Thessalonica, **"For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, BUT IN EVERY PLACE YOUR FAITH TO GOD-WARD HATH GONE FORTH"** (I Thessalonians 1:8).

5. Christians are to love and care for one another in exercise of *faith* (I John 4:7-21; Galatians 6:1-2; Romans 12:9-16, 14:10-22).

**In Conclusion**, the words of Peter might best express the mutual interaction of those of *faith*: **"to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Savior Jesus Christ"** (II Peter 1:1). As Noah and family worked together in preparing the Ark to their salvation, so we through our Savior Jesus Christ work in respect to the Church which God designed unto our salvation. A person who separates religiously from the church and its activities **has left the Faith!**

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## DISTILLED TRUTHS

Earl Gieseko

If you should have a discussion with about any member of a denomination, you would probably hear him say, "Well, our 'pastor' uses the same Bible your preacher does, and preaches the same truths." These "pastors" in denominational, or manmade churches, do preach some of the same truths gospel preachers do; for any truth from the Bible is truth, regardless of who teaches it. An *atheist* can teach truth. A *Jew* can teach truth, just as long as it is from the inspired writings, and it is without additions or subtractions. Anyone who teaches that it is a sin to lie is teaching truth. Anyone who says that Jesus Christ is Lord is teaching truth.

Is there any difference in the teaching of a gospel preacher [ignorantly called by some, a church of Christ preacher] and the teachings of denominational preachers? *Certainly!* Else there would be no manmade churches. All would wear the names designated in the New Testament if all preachers taught just what the Bible teaches. You cannot find the terms Methodist, Presbyterian or Baptist *ever* applied to members of the church of Christ in the New Testament. If so, give me the verse. Not ten or five: **JUST ONE!**

What is the difference in manmade churches and the church we read about in the New Testament? These preachers and their denominations they are affiliated with, have what may be called, **"DISTILLED TRUTHS!"** These manmade churches run the Bible through their own distilleries. The various filters through which it is run result in only the truths coming through which are allowed by their manmade creeds. These **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** come from the Catholics', the

Presbyterians', the Baptists', the Methodists', the Pentecostals' private distilleries.

While all may distill *some* of the truths, the individual filters in their distilleries result in *different* truths as the by-product. For example, the filters of the Methodist filter out immersion while the "brew masters" add sprinkling. The Baptist filters let immersion through while filtering out the remission of sins in connection with baptism. Some Pentecostal filters let immersion and remission of sins through, but filter out the three persons of the godhead; thus, they baptize in the name of Jesus only!

These **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** are subtly saturated with individual condiments by each manmade religious group from their own creeds so as to cause those who imbibe these **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** to become Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, or Pentecostals, depending on which distillery they get their **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** from.

Not to be outdone, some of the preachers in the churches of Christ, have gone degree crazy, and have gone off to drink of these **"DISTILLED TRUTHS,"** happily provided by schools of theology. They have, or are, receiving degrees from schools which train denominational preachers. These schools do not change their creedal teachings just because a student is there from another religious group such as the church of Christ. They assume that if a preacher enrolls in their school of theology, then they must be interested in a large dose of their brand of **"DISTILLED TRUTHS."**

While some may drink the **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** from denominational filters and not become "intoxicated" by the brew, such is not true for all who go there. While I am not anti-education, nor am I opposed to advanced degrees [I have two degrees from a major university], I think some of "our preachers" have surely been drinking from the wrong fountains. God said: **"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water"** (Jeremiah 2:13). If you know anything about cisterns, you know that they contain polluted water. Rain water is usually run off the roof of the house, and stored in a cistern until used. The water is never pure.

Some of our brethren are drinking from polluted cisterns containing manmade doctrines. Some of our preachers are advocating all-grace and no-law. Some have started to teach and preach what denominations have taught for generations. Manmade churches have taught for years that there is absolutely nothing one can do to be saved. In other words, you could not obey the gospel and be saved if you wanted to. Does it strike you as being a little strange that Peter commanded just the opposite on the great day of Pentecost when Luke recorded: **"And with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, Save yourselves from this untoward [crooked] generation"** (Acts 2:40).

If, as some among us are teaching, one's salvation is all grace without obeying anything, why would Peter make such a statement? Because Peter is right and today's advocates of all-grace and no-law are guilty of being false teachers, whether in the church of Christ or in manmade churches! Let the chips fall where they may! **"Let God be true and every man a liar"** (Romans 3:4).

It is evident, as I travel, preach and talk to brothers and sisters in various states, that local churches and elderships have installed their own machines locally in order to produce their own **"DISTILLED TRUTHS."** Their filters are producing **"DISTILLED TRUTHS"** which do not allow any "negative" preaching to seep through. Some also are filtering out the whole truth on divorce, as well as unscriptural marriages following divorce. For generations, many churches have filtered out the truth on the church administering discipline to unruly members. Along

with this, many have filtered out the truth concerning the wrath and severity of God. Only the goodness and love of God has been allowed to trickle through, thus failing to teach a balanced view of the nature of the godhead.

Certain periodicals among us have installed their own filters in order to have their "DISTILLED TRUTHS." Some of these papers which were once edited by men who were set for the defense of the gospel, have become "fluff filled." They seem to be catering to the liberals and denominations rather than appealing to those who still attempt to, "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). These never confront the error which is facing the church. Some of these hold lectureships where some of the speakers are either outright

liberals, or they are in sympathy with such liberals as **Rubel Shelly** and **Jeff Walling** as well as with such endeavors as the so-called "Jubilee," held in Nashville each year by liberals and false teachers.

It is far too late to say: "We are drifting." The real question today is: "Who are the ones who have *not* drifted?" With colleges and preacher-training schools teaching outright error, is it any wonder churches of Christ have become so splintered? I want to be a part of the 7,000 who will not bow the knee to the image of Baal (Romans 11:4).

Let us never turn from the source of living waters. Let us reject every man-made creed, whether taught by denominational preachers, or those who still profess to be gospel preachers. Let us

ever keep in mind that a "little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Let us not be fearful of being called "legalist" by those who are liberals. As I continue to study the scriptures, there is nothing more evident to me than the fact that *God is a legalist*. Every saint needs enough legalism to be *sound* but not enough to be *silly*. Jesus clearly stated: "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" (Matthew 7:21). Each member of each congregation needs to read and heed the admonitions of Jesus, Paul, John and other inspired writers as they warn us again and again against embracing false teachers and their false doctrines.

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## "THAT WILL I SPEAK"

Jerry C. Brewer

Jesus' preaching elicited opinions from his hearers that he was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the other prophets (Matthew 16:13-14). In order to understand the kind of preacher he was, one needs to look at the preaching of these men. John was beheaded because of his devotion to the truth (Matthew 14:1-12). Elijah stood, in the might of God, against the false prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18:20-40). Jeremiah, in the face of hostility and danger to his own life (Jeremiah 26:8-11; 37:15-16), thundered God's awful warnings to a wicked and backsliding Israel and the sinless Son of God was crucified because he spoke the truth (Matthew 26:1-4; 27:23-26). They were men of conviction and devotion to God's word. They spoke his message without fear or favor and were willing to accept persecution and death for their preaching.

Amid cries for "change" and led by those who know better, the church in many places across the land is in a headlong plunge toward the abyss of apostasy. Our current state is a result of watered-down preaching by weak-kneed appeasers who have lost all courage of their former convictions. They have sold out to Satan and his denominational agents, perverted the gospel to their own ends and would rather climb a tree to preach sectarian lies than stand on the ground and speak the truth. Having more concern for "unity-in-diversity" than for "the faith once delivered," they've rejected the spirit that animated the preaching of Jesus, John, Elijah and Jeremiah.

### TRUTH, UNDER GOD, WILL TRIUMPH

But imbibing that spirit, the restorers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries turned their world upside down with a clarion call to return to Biblical principles, rejecting human creeds and speaking where the Bible speaks (I Peter 4:11). Without the material advantages we enjoy today, they were willing to give themselves wholly to the cause despite their lack of earthly comforts. Earl West draws their magnificent portrait in *The Search For The Ancient Order*.

**They loved liberty and were willing to sacrifice everything for what they believed to be true...At first their views were peculiar to most hearers. Consequently, they invoked study. Moreover, with the clergy of the day they were greatly abhorred. Nobody**

accepted then the gospel message because it was popular, for it wasn't. There was that courageous love for the liberty of the gospel, free from human creeds and from the authority of council that gave the impetus for men to submit to the living oracles. Once converted, they worked intensely to convert others. They were convinced they were right and would have others to be. The whole restoration movement soon took on the color of belligerency and aggressiveness. These pioneers believed in their cause, and they pressed on, wilting before no tribunal, but with the profound conviction they had the truth and that the truth, under God, would triumph (Vol. I, p. 127).

### THE KIND OF PREACHING NEEDED

While we do not place the pioneers on the same level as men of inspiration, we admire their fervor and its consequent results. Like Jeremiah, the fire of Jehovah's truth burned in their souls and they were not able to contain it (Jeremiah 20:9). The above quotation from West offers us some lessons about the kind of preaching necessary in these uncertain times. The gospel, which swept the frontier like a prairie fire, consumed the hearts of its hearers. It wasn't one of compromise and those who proclaimed it were willing to sacrifice for it. Such should be the conviction of every man who mounts a pulpit today.

West says the pioneers' preaching was peculiar, invoking study by their hearers. What is distinctive about our preaching today? Do hearers leave the assemblies and search the scriptures after we have delivered the message? I fear that too much of what we call gospel preaching today is designed to soothe the psyche instead of pricking the heart. There is no need to study the scriptures when preachers deliver entertaining, "feel-good" sermons that could be preached from any denominational pulpit in the land with the approval of its hearers. What incentive do hearers have for Bible study if our message is one of flattery and praise?

True gospel preaching will bring opposition from many who hear. Jeremiah suffered opposition (Jeremiah 26:8-11), and Ahab accused Elijah of "troubling" Israel because of his preaching (I Kings 18:17). Jesus incurred the wrath of the Pharisees but did not shrink from a scathing denunciation of their ungodliness (Matthew 23). How unlike those among us who strike hands with preachers

of denominational error! Jesus was ignorant of the concept of "unity-in-diversity." So was Paul. His preaching brought a Jewish plot against his life (Acts 23:1-12); and West says the clergy in the days of the pioneers "abhorred" them and the message they preached.

#### CONSIDER MICAIAH'S EXAMPLE

Micaiah is a sterling example of the kind of preaching needed in pulpits across the land. Ahab and Jehoshaphat made plans to war against the Syrian king at Ramoth-Gilead. Jehoshaphat asked Ahab to inquire of the Lord concerning their effort. When Ahab brought four hundred false prophets to speak their "feel-good" words to the kings, Jehoshaphat asked for a "prophet of the Lord."

**And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil (I Kings 22:8).**

Jehoshaphat insisted that Micaiah be consulted about their proposal and the messenger who was sent to fetch him and gave him some advice about the prophecy he should deliver.

**And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spoke unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. And**

**Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak (I Kings 22:13-14).**

Micaiah could have stood before the kings, clasped hands with the false prophets, raised them above his head and given his blessing to their words. Having done so, he would have received the praise of the false prophets, the blessings of the kings and achieved "unity-in-diversity" with them. But he refused. He spoke the truth, incurring Ahab's wrath and suffering imprisonment. He was a man of conviction in whose soul burned a love for Jehovah's word.

The ancient gospel will bring not only the same salvation today that it brought then, but vitriolic opposition to those who love it and proclaim it. When the heat of battle bears down upon us we must not falter. With our faces set toward Jerusalem and our minds set for the defense of the gospel, God's servants must:

**"...preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come (has come JCB) 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 (II Timothy 4:2-4).**

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## IN DEFENSE OF PROOF-TEXTS

Steven D. Cline

In certain quarters of the brotherhood there are those "who seem to be somewhat" among us (Galatians 2:6), who, with insistent voices, are saying that we have to stop using proof-texts. They tell us that this is not the way to teach the Bible.

Just what is meant by their contention? Do they mean that we must cease *misusing* the Bible to prove a point, or do they mean that we must stop using proof-texts in a perfectly legitimate way?

I am very well aware of the risks involved in trying one's hand at proof-texting. It is tempting to rip a verse or passage violently from its context, maliciously mutilating, molesting, mauling and mangling it to say something that it does not. As various examples, one can "prove" that the earth is a flat square (Revelation 7:1), that one will be happy if he kills children (Psalms 137:9), that a man is supposed to stand over the kitchen sink and wash the supper dishes (II Kings 21:13) and that a husband can scripturally call his wife a heifer (Judges 14:16-18)!

Such is not really *proof-texting* at all but rather a study in absurdity. It is an empty excursion in eisegesis, a meaningless meandering, an irresponsible sojourn, a thoughtless plunging into Holy Writ by the unlearned and unstable

who rampantly ravage, rape and wrestle the Divine Message to their own destruction (II Peter 3:16). The Sword of the Spirit must not be wielded in such a sloppy, shoddy manner. And if the foregoing type of mistreatment of God's word is what my friends mean when they say proof-texting is a "silly game of scissors and paste" that we need to stop, then I hereby declare that I endorse their statement, as should *all* faithful brethren. *Never* should we brutally butcher the scriptures.

But somehow, I think that those who look with disdain on proof-texting do not have such misuse in mind. Rather, I have an idea they mean that we should relinquish and discard the true, respectable and honorable practice used by Christians for generations in teaching the word. The reason I say this is because proof-texting is deplorable to the proponents of the New Hermeneutics, which, as its fundamental teaching, says that the Bible is subjective and one can interpret it any way he pleases.

#### JESUS USED PROOF-TEXTS

I hope, in some small way, to persuade that we *can* and *should* use proof-texts. I will prove from certain texts (that are *themselves* proof-texts) that we may use proof-texts. If that statement sounds redundant, let me re-express it. I will show that Jesus

and his divinely inspired followers used Old Testament passages as proof-texts in their teaching and preaching.

First and foremost, consider Christ himself. He had the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34). Numerous times we see Jesus using proof-texts.

One time was just prior to his public ministry. He was being tempted of the devil in the wilderness. The old serpent, the father of lies, his Satanic Majesty, misapplied scriptures in order to induce Jesus to sin. The *devil* was guilty of the silly game of scissors and paste. But Jesus boldly answered Satan by the *correct* use of scripture. Before he quoted the Old Testament passages in rebuttal to Satan, he prefaced them by stating "**It is written.**"

Another time that Christ made use of proof-texting was in his answer to the Pharisees on the question of marriage, divorce and remarriage in Matthew 19:3-9. "**Have ye not read...**" said Jesus. Just *what* was the sinless carpenter doing but employing the technique of proof-texting?

Among other instances of our Lord proof-texting there are Matthew 13:14,15; Mark 12:35,36; Luke 4:16-21; 6:1-5; 24:27 and John 7:37,38.

#### PETER USED PROOF-TEXTS

Then there was that great and powerful sermon proclaimed by Peter in Acts 2. Al-



most half of his recorded sermon comes from Old Testament texts. He used these passages to show the Jews assuredly that God had raised the crucified Jesus and made him both Lord and Christ (verse 36).

Some would have Peter to abandon the proof-text. But here is something strange: The ones who ring forth this advice are *uninspired* men, whereas Peter and the others on Pentecost were *inspired* (John 16:13) and *they* freely used proof-texts. Who, then, sets a better example for us? Is it not self-evident?

#### WHAT OF STEPHEN, PHILLIP AND PAUL?

Of course, there is the account in Acts 7 of the noble and fearless Stephen who used proof-texts to show that Jesus was the Christ. His whole sermon, in fact, is one long proof-text. Then we read of the Ethiopian treasurer in Acts 8. The Ethiopian was reading from Isaiah 53:7,8 and Philip used the same passage and "**preached unto him Jesus**" (v. 35). Proof-texting? What else?

Did not the peerless apostle Paul publicly convince the Jews by the

*scripture* in Acts 18:28 that Jesus was the Christ? Did not the Bereans in Acts 17:11 use the art of proof-texting in their daily search of the scriptures to convince themselves of the truth? Are we not to "**prove all things; hold fast that which is good**" (I Thessalonians 5:21)? Would not the use of proof-texts be included in this verse?

When you were converted to Christ, did your teacher make use of proof-texts? My teachers did. I did not obey the gospel immediately upon hearing it as did the 3,000, Lydia, the jailor and others in the book of Acts. Rather, over a period of a month or so, I inquired diligently concerning the faith. I asked, sought and knocked (Matthew 7:7,8). My questions were answered with book, chapter, verse... proof-texting! I am thankful this approach was used with me, yet prominent preachers tell us today that is *not* the way to teach. Is there a better way? What wins more souls... pointing out scriptures or expounding unto the lost vain philosophies and opinions of men?

I maintain that it is *proper* to use

proof-texts when kept within the perimeters of sound hermeneutical principles. Using proof-texts is *not* a *quaint, archaic, moldy, musty and rusty relic of a by-gone era*. Rather, it is a *viable and valid method* to be utilized even in *today's* high-tech, state-of-the-art, computerized, ever-changing world. The proper handling of proof-texts is a tried and true method that has brought precious souls to the crimson blood of the suffering Savior, despite the disclaimers of those who shun it and admonish us to do so. Why abandon it? Why dispose of it as if it were yesterday's garbage? Why back away from it as if it were a contagious disease?

It is my hope that those popular, personable and likeable friends of mine who urge us to quit using proof-texts will realize that great men of the Bible, including Jesus, were *not* reluctant to use it when needed. Then "**looking unto Jesus**" (Hebrews 12:2) as their example, perhaps they will return to "**thus saith the Lord**" preaching.

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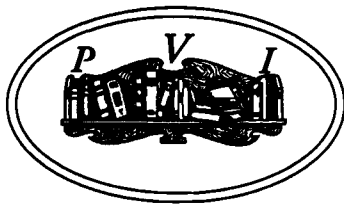
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# ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF LIBERAL CHANGE

Wayne Coats

According to a report given in the April 20, 1995 *Nashville Banner*, entitled, "8 Churches to Hold Joint Service," the reader learns a bit more about the aim, purpose, and effort of the liberal element to affect a change among the people of God.

From day one, faithful brethren have tried to get church leaders in the Nashville area to open their eyes as to the nefarious schemes of the liberals and modernists. We have not succeeded in raising the dead, and, of course, we shall not succeed. A minuscule number are beginning to wiggle and twist a little—and then, of course, there are those who are extremely cautious and careful in choosing the places where they become courageous enough to move a little.

## SOME BACK AWAY FROM RUBEL

It is a shame that some of the erstwhile fellow-travelers and bosom buddies of Rubel Shelly have begun to back away from their brother. Why now? Why so long in deciding which foot to stand upon? Why forever halting between two opinions?

How long must sensible people support, coddle, and compromise that which is false to the core? When does error cease damning men's souls?

For some years the false teaching and wrongful leadership of brother Shelly has been too obvious for any inquisitive person not to see. In spite of this, he has been welcomed with open arms at David Lipscomb University and in several middle Tennessee congregations.

Brother Shelly has not changed one iota. The same spirit of unbelief, modernism, compromise, and repudiation of the Bible has been a part of the Shelly program for years.

## WAS ECUMENICAL WORSHIP MOVING?

The ecumenical worship of "Eight Hillsboro Road Churches" in Nashville, which was held at Woodmont Baptist Church and included Methodist, Presbyterian, Christian Church, and Woodmont Hills Church of Christ must have been a moving experience.

Do you think these brethren and congregations who have supported the Shelly agenda during the past few years but now are "crawfishing" will publicly repent? Thyatira suffered Jezebel, who called her-

(Continued on Page 10)

## Topic: Religion

# Congregation Seve

By Carolyn Jenkins  
World Religion Editor

A once-prestigious south Tulsa church has voted to renounce the Church of Christ doctrine, which, among other things, bans instrumental music in worship and limits church offices to men.

Founded in 1978, Southern Hills Church of Christ, 5150 E. 101st St., at one time counted as members many prominent and affluent Tulsans, who left as newer members began advocating controversial changes in traditional church doctrine.

Membership dwindled to about 200 from more than 450 a few

[The above article by World Religion Editor Carolyn Jenkins first appeared in the July 22, 1995 edition of the *Tulsa World*, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and is reprinted here by special permission of the *Tulsa World*.]

## FURTHER FRUITS Of 'Change Agent' Syndrome

The central theme running through *Contending For The Faith* from its beginning more than a quarter of a century ago is that we cannot change the doctrine of the church without changing the church. Once we change the doctrine, we still can call it the church of Christ; but calling it that will not make it so.

Those who have read and studied the history of "change agency," as recorded on these pages over the past 25 years will have no difficulty understanding the accompanying article by Carolyn Jenkins, World Religion Editor, as it originally appeared in the *Tulsa World*, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, under date of July 22, 1995. Entitled, "Congregation Severs Ties With Church of Christ," Ms. Jenkins' insightful report could hardly have summed up any better the sad story of Southern Hills' departure from the churches of Christ. Please note, in her lead paragraph, that she tied the whole thing to Southern Hills' renouncing "the Church of Christ doctrine." Note further, in her second paragraph, her reference to "many prominent and affluent Tulsans, who left as newer members began advocating controversial changes in traditional church doctrine." After dwindling from a membership of more than 450 down to "about 200," the remaining members "voted to sever ties with the church of Christ..."

### SOUTHERN HILLS NOT ALONE

But Southern Hills is not the only church to have suffered from doctrinal changes—especially over the past 25 or 30 years. Those who read my *Axe On The Root* books—Volumes I, II and III—during the second half of the '60s could see them developing even then!

Then, starting in the '70s, *Contending For The Faith* called attention to the many, many doctrinal departures being espoused especially through our supposed-to-be Christian colleges. We showed how academic accreditation had become the primary source of infiltration by Liberalism and Modernism. How a blind eye was turned to such false teachers as George Howard and John McRay who, even then, were leading our lambs doctrinally astray at David Lipscomb College—but were kept on anyway for their doctor's degrees!

We showed how something called Campus Evangelism actually was just a means of infiltrating the churches with false doctrine by Jim Bevis, Dudley Lynch, Wesley Reagan, Charles Shelton, Don Finto and others. By now, of course, most (if not all) of these have left the churches of Christ entirely; but because so many followed their Pied Piping so long, it was not before they had done incalculable doctrinal damage to those that were left. Bevis and Finto invented unto themselves their own churches; however, at last report, Reagan had gone with the Methodists!

Such names as Abe Malherbe, Gary Freeman, James L. Atteberry and the "Harding Nine" came on the scene in the early '70s seeking to draw away the disciples after their own perverse doctrines (Acts 20:28-29), none of which names we ever hear much about any more.

Pat Boone, Clint Davidson, Ben J. Franklin, Dean Dennis and others tried pulling the churches of Christ into Pentecostalism (also in the '70s). They cut quite a swath—especially

years ago. Last Sunday members of the Church became a congregation.

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# Elders Ties With Church of Christ

Today, the remaining members voted to sever ties with the Church of Christ theology and independent congregations.

present, it will be the Southern Hills Church, said an, head of the volunteer team.

of the shrinking membership, greatly reduced congregations must be able to survive, said members, another member on the transition team.

said three options were presented to the congregation.

remain as a church at the current location while deciding to do.

sell the property and move to another location immediately.

sell the property and dis-

posed members voted on the option.

1, who described himself as an unofficial spokesman, said the steering group will determine the value of the church.

member said that the current five buildings, formerly the Christian Center, was valued for \$1.85 million in 1986. The Southern Hills Church of Christ congregation is on 2816 E. 51st St.

about \$800,000 is owed to the 51st Street property and probably be sold for \$1 million. Should the church band, its bylaws and charter require that the proceeds from the sale go to some charitable or approved by state.

n said most of the re-

young people—at that time, too, long since are

men as Roy Osborne, Phillip, Landon Saunders, Chalk and others sought to change churches this way and that; most brethren (then) resisted efforts. Nevertheless, the church refused to be apostasy continued.

EDITORS DIDN'T HELP

editors of our gospel papers did not firm, we easily could have dined the tide of digression

remaining members had struggled for some time with the doctrinal direction of the church.

"We've come to the point to make a decision. I think we have to settle on a direction and build the membership," he said.

He added that the current congregation had "been operating under an assumed relationship with the Church of Christ, its style of worship and how the leadership is handled. Some felt the ties with the Church of Christ were too confining. It was tying some down and keeping others out. Now the body is wanting even more freedom in worship, women's roles — things of that nature."

Each Church of Christ is autonomous and operates under a governing board of elders.

Southern Hills' five elders, its deacons and senior minister, Terry Bell, resigned, but will continue to work in the same capacities, Workman said. They have just "given up their titles," he said.

The membership voted to retain Bell, who agreed to stay at least through the transition, Workman said.

Bell, in a prepared statement, said:

"This is one of the most exciting events that I have ever seen transpire in the life of a church. It is similar to a caterpillar becoming

then threatening our Lord's body. However, when such editors as Reuel Lemmons (Firm Foundation), James L. Lovell (Action), and several others wavered in their loyalty to gospel truth, their influence was on the side of error.

For example, Lemmons ignored all their false teaching, editorializing that "Campus Evangelism" was just "Penetrating the Campus;" that Don Finto—based on the numbers following his lead—"must be doing something right;" and defending Chuck Lucas and his "Crossroadism" at every doctrinal turn of the road. No matter how much error was taught, Lovell, likewise, refused to see it, endorsing the wrong and condemning the right. This was bad enough—but when elders and preachers, too, were taken in by such wrong representations, they made it hard indeed for the truth to survive among the churches of Christ.

## FALSE WORKSHOPS AND JUBILEES

Aiding and abetting all this error—brotherhood-wide—were such false-

ing a butterfly. Yes, there are risks, but the potential for good far outweighs the danger. Everything is being reconsidered in this venture — even the location of the church."

Workman said David Webb, youth minister, had not resigned, but agreed to step down if it would be in the best interest of the church.

Workman said the reorganized church has "notified the Church of Christ of its decision" and Bell said the decision was to remove "official affiliation with the denomination of the Church of Christ."

Former members questioned how such action was taken, since the Church of Christ has no umbrella organization or conference to notify. Congregations are connected only by common doctrine and a relationship with church-supported colleges and universities.

Workman said he did not know specifically who was notified; that Bell and his wife, Jan, had mailed letters.

The Southern Hills Church of

ly, so-called "Soul-Winning Workshops" such as the one by Marvin Phillips ("Tulsa Workshop"); the "Greater Northwest Evangelism Workshop" sponsored by the Lakeview Church of Christ, in Tacoma, Washington; and the "Nashville Jubilee," sponsored by Steve Flatt (Madison), Rubel Shelly (Woodmont Hills) and Walt Leaver (Antioch)—all of the Nashville, Tennessee area.

The principal thing that all of these major events have had in common is their insistence on featuring false-teaching "change agents" on their programs—change agents such as Marvin ("Don DeWalt Is My Brother") and "I Expect To Meet Him in Heaven") Phillips, Rubel ("Not One Whit") Shelly, Max ("Calling Denominational Preachers 'Reverend' and 'Father'") Lucado, Jeff (Instrumental Music Makes No Difference) Walling, Randy (Quit the Church of Christ, Started His Own Church) Mayeux, Lynn ("Big Sick Denomination") Anderson, Calvin (Enjoying Communion With The Christian Church) Warpula, James (Church in Transition) Woodroof, Joe (When Rubel Catches Cold, He Sneezes) Beam, Mike ("Porcupines in November") Cope and countless others like-minded. Talk about a doctrinal conglomeration!

Christ was established when trustees of the then-20-year-old Southside Church of Christ on 51st Street transferred its assets to the new church. Cleve Rodgers, Frank Cheatham and Roland Beustrung were the original Southern Hills trustees, but the three are no longer with the congregation.

When the congregation outgrew the facilities, including a new \$250,000 educational wing, it made plans to move. The members in 1986 bought Life Christian Center from Victor Savings & Loan Association, which had foreclosed on the property after the Life Christian church and school were closed.

The 51st Street site was sold to Christ Presbyterian Church and the funds, plus a mortgage, were applied to the 101st Street property.

## HIGHLAND/MEMPHIS' NATIONAL CAMPUS MINISTRIES SEMINAR

Following closely behind the "Workshops" and "Jubilees" drawing the disciples away from the one true church into their own perverse things are the so-called National Campus Ministries Seminars, the latest of which was the 39th Annual National Campus Ministries Seminar sponsored July 31-August 3, 1995, by the Highland Street Church of Christ, of 443 South Highland, in Memphis, Tennessee.

The sad fact is that, over the past four decades, the so-called "Campus Ministries" have been a principal "hot bed" of false teaching—brotherhood-wide. It has gotten so bad, in fact, that to employ a so-called "Youth Minister," trained by them, is almost certainly to lose most of our youth from the churches of Christ—and those who are left are so weakened and corrupted doctrinally as to be of little or no value to the one true faith.

Among the known teachers of error who were featured at Highland/Memphis were Joe Beam, Stanley Shipp, Jeff Walling, Gayle Napier, Jerry Jones and Milton Jones. Beam teaches that there are saved Christians in the denominations; Shipp that Holy Spirit miracles continue; Walling that instrumental music accompaniment in church worship makes no difference to him and you don't have to belong to the same church as your parents; Napier that sound doctrine among the churches of Christ fosters incest; Jerry Jones (though he renounced his former

## FURTHER FRUITS

(Continued from Page 9)

Bostonism), never yet has renounced his former Gainesville, Florida type of Crossroadism; and Milton Jones is the author of "DISCIPLING: The Multiplying Ministry," the principal book which led the Boston/Crossroads church into its devastating "discipling" error.

There is just no way for brethren and churches thus to compromise with such influential teachers of error by thus featuring them on Seminars

of this type and the church not be affected. Those who refuse to be warned can look forward to the same thing happening to them as already has happened to the former Southern Hills Church of Christ in Tulsa.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

*MUCH APPRECIATION to the several of our readers who saw the accompanying article as it appeared under date of July 22, 1995, in the Religion section of the Tulsa World and were thoughtful to relay it to us for re-publication here.—The Editor*

ing their offspring to Lipscomb! I ask, in heaven's name, for what purpose? Is it in order to follow Lipscomb professors who follow Rubel who will lead them into cultism and sectarianism—and ultimately into eternal torment?

A large segment of the Lipscomb student body sallies over to sit at the feet of Shelly, their shepherd. There they learn what is wrong with the "old traditional churches" back home. They learn how to ridicule, degrade, deprecate, and make fun of the church of Christ. The King has never had as many court jesters in Nashville who can join together in making sport of the bride of Christ.

### WHAT EFFECT ON STUDENTS?

One cannot help but wonder about the results of that great ecumenical service and its effect upon Lipscomb students.

Will they choose to join the Belmont United Methodist Church, Calvary United Methodist, St. Paul Southern Methodist, Covenant Presbyterian, Trinity Presbyterian, Woodmont Baptist, Woodmont Christian, or Woodmont Shelly's Church?

There is not a dime's difference in any or all of them when it comes to respect for the Bible. In fact, there is within walking distance of Woodmont Baptist Church the Universalist-Unitarian Church.

I hereby challenge the Lipscomb professors who follow Shelly to set forth reasonable, cogent argument as to why they and their students should NOT join the Unitarian movement. That would be expecting too much of professors who are inebriated with ecumenicity!

—705 Hillview  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122

## Many Now Ordering Woodson's Book On "Change Agents"

It is rather astonishing how many of our readers have ordered brother William Woodson's new book on "Change Agents and Churches of Christ" since we called it especially to your attention in May.

Those who are following these "Change Agents" (especially in the "Nashville Jubilee," the "Tulsa Workshop," and "GNEW"—the "Greater Northwest Evangelism Workshop") all need a copy of this important book better to determine where their present direction is leading them.

In hardback, "Change Agents and Churches of Christ" is \$14.00 per copy—plus \$2.00 for postage and packaging. In paperback, send just \$6.95—plus \$2.00 for postage and packaging. All such orders are payable in advance and should be addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, 2956 Alishore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.**

## ANOTHER EXAMPLE

(Continued from Page 8)

self a prophetess (Revelation 2:20). She led God's people astray—and, for them, it was repent or perish (verse 22). Some would rather go to hell than to admit and repent of their affinity with modern Jezebels.

### SOME AT LIPSCOMB FOLLOW SHELLY

When Rubel's church is worshipping

with the sectarians in Nashville, we can correctly conclude that his followers also are sitting in the cheering section.

Some of the Woodmont Hills elders are faculty members at Lipscomb and several of the Lipscomb staff are followers of Shelly. What convictions do they have regarding the truth of God? To all such people, the church is just another denomination among denominations. (And to think that I actually meet parents who brag about send-

# DIRECTORY

For advertising in this section, see masthead on page 2.

### —Florida

Pensacola: **Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Tel. (904) 455-7595. Minister, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

### —North Carolina

Rocky Mount: **Church of Christ**, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

### —Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, Wayne Coats, preacher, Tel. (615) 758-406.

### —Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday:

9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., Al Brown and David Brown, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

### —Wyoming

Cheyenne: **High Plains Church of Christ**, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, Tel. (307) 634-3040.

### HOW ABOUT LISTING YOUR CONGREGATION IN OUR GROWING DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES?

*A common complaint often heard among "us" nowadays is how hard it is to find a sound congregation for Lord's Day worship when traveling. Formerly, almost anywhere you saw a "Church of Christ" sign, you could feel assured that the doctrine of Christ was both believed and practiced there. Not any more. With all these "change agents" wreaking their doctrinal havoc practically brotherhood-wide, you never know now what you will find.*

*Contending for the Faith is happy to undertake the listing of sound churches especially for the benefit of traveling brethren. You might be surprised how many faithful Christians will seek out such churches with which to meet. For advertising in this section, please see masthead on Page 2.*



# FROM LUGWRENCHES TO RATTLESNAKES (A Review of the Lockwood-Garrett Debate)

Clay Browne

During the third annual Portland church of Christ lectures in Portland, Texas, the elders and the lectureship director, Jerry Moffitt, scheduled a debate to take place between the disputants Christian Garrett from Jonesboro, Arkansas, and Stephen Wiggins from Burkburnett, Texas. At the last minute, Stephen Wiggins had to cancel due to family complications and Bill Lockwood took his place.

Bill Lockwood was scheduled to moderate for Stephen Wiggins, so Stephen and Bill thought it would be best for Bill to take Stephen's place, and I took Bill's place to moderate for him. The debate took place on May 6-9, 1995; and each day consisted of two hours of debate format. The discussion was to be over the subjects of the Godhead and Holy Spirit Baptism, respectively.

The first day Mr. Garrett was in the affirmative on the Godhead question. He contended that the Godhead consists of *only one person*, namely, Jesus. This doctrine is commonly known as the "Oneness doctrine" or the "Jesus only doctrine."

As is typical with any false teacher they took scriptures out of their context making the text say exactly what they want it to teach. Garrett tried many times to use scriptures that teach about the oneness of deity in contrast to idol worship to prove his proposition.

One scripture that was referred to over and over again was Deuteronomy 4:39. All one has to do is to read the context to see that the writer is contrasting idols with the one true God. This scripture and many other scriptures that were used were pulled completely out of context every time that Garrett tried to prove his proposition. There is not one of these scriptures with which we do not agree!

Lockwood made it clear every time he got up that he agreed that there was just one God. Garrett would never listen to reason and scripture.

Bill had two sheet charts that hung on both sides of the baptistery throughout the debate. One sheet chart that Lockwood referred to time again was the chart that had the definition of God listed on it. Garrett completely ignored the definition of deity that had been

obtained out of many lexicons.

Every time that Garrett found a verse that mentioned God he automatically assumed that it meant the Godhead consisted of only one person. But by his refusal of the clear teaching of brother Lockwood he went away believing this damnable heresy.

This false teaching of Pentecostalism teaches that every time the Son of God is mentioned in the Bible, this refers to the *flesh* or *humanity* of Christ. This is why they say that Christ could pray, because he was human. Garrett would claim that Christ while on earth was "more than just a man," yet he really never explained what he meant by this.

Bill pressed him on the issue of the cross and the humanity of Christ because Garrett's hero, Marvin Hicks, made a major blunder in the 1975 debate between himself and Guy N. Woods. Hicks claimed that when Jesus cried out "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," that is when God's Spirit left Jesus—that he then was merely a man that hung on the cross. To this Garrett denied that Hicks had uttered these words because he could see the implications of his false doctrine.

Lockwood's mentioning the Woods-Hicks debate of 1975 proved to be memorable his whole debate with Garrett and set the stage for fireworks later on. After running out of steam during his affirmative, Garrett thought he would put a negative spin on the debate that took place between Woods and Hicks. Garrett had the audacity to blame members of the church in Kennett, Missouri for loosening the lug nuts of Hicks' car and trying to kill him by this means.

Keeping his part of the debate on a lighter tone, Lockwood began his first affirmative speech of the second day using a lug wrench as a pointer. Everyone in the auditorium enjoyed the humor. Bill's affirmative of the second day was to prove that the Godhead consists of three separate and distinct personalities. This he did with more scriptures than could be written down. Garrett would not listen to reason and scripture. His spiritual blinders could not be removed in order for him to see the truth.

On the third day of the debate, Garrett's responsibility was to uphold that

Holy Spirit baptism is for everyone today and so also are the gifts that follow Holy Spirit baptism. This he did not do. He used passages in Acts and in the gospel of John to try to prove his points, but none were ever proven.

Once again Garrett took these passages out of context and tried to apply them to us today when passages such as John, chapters 14-17, applied to the apostles and ended with the apostles. (Many of our brethren make this same mistake when talking about the Holy Spirit and its operation on us as Christians today.)

Bill said many times throughout this topic of the debate, "This is not about argumentation, this is about demonstration." He also mentioned that the apostles never had this type of debate with anyone because they could *demonstrate* their gifts that were given to them by the Spirit. This was really the bottom line of this debate and it is any time our brethren debate such people as the Pentecostals. There would be no debating on this topic if these people could demonstrate their ability!

In keeping with the humor along with the seriousness of the discussion, it was arranged for Bill to have a live rattlesnake on the stage during the discussion of the Holy Spirit and gifts. Bill strategically placed the snake in some plants that were just to the right of the podium close to where Garrett was sitting. He would very seldom look at Bill while he was talking, but when Lockwood mentioned that he had a rattlesnake up there in the bushes this got Garrett's attention. Bill reached into the plants and pulled out the rattlesnake that was housed in a three liter Coke bottle and taunted his opponent to come up and handle the snake like he could if he truly had what the apostles had.

Garrett got up out of his seat and tried to get up on the stage with Bill—at the same time trying to get the snake out of the bottle to throw it on Bill. Lockwood had a wooden pointer that kept Garrett from getting to him. Garrett finally sat down and Bill placed the container housing the snake onto the table where he was sitting.

The audience got a charge out of this because the point hit at the very foundation of the Pentecostals' beliefs. These people



truly do not believe what they preach or Garrett would have been perfectly willing to demonstrate his ability to handle the snake. Just on this one point, their religion goes down in flames. Bill sustained the proposition that Holy Spirit baptism is NOT for us today and ended by showing

the numerous scriptures that were never answered by the opposition.

The debate ended on a good note with brother Lockwood and Mr. Garrett agreeing to meet in the near future in Oklahoma for a debate on similar topics.

The elders, brother Jerry Moffitt, and the

members of the Portland church of Christ should receive much appreciation for their stand for the gospel and their willingness to have these types of forums where the gospel can truly shine.

—201 Krenck Tap #3  
College Station, Texas 77840

## Many Continue Helping 'Contending For The Faith' In Special Ways

Clay J. Browne, of College Station, Texas, renewed his own subscription, sent one new, and added \$8.00 toward our "special mailings." Gene S. Brown, of Roanoke, Texas, renewed for one year, sent one new. W. M. Postlethwait, of Huntington, West Virginia, renewed his own, sent one new. Mrs. J. E. Carr, of Decatur, Alabama, renewed two for three years each. Ray Vance, of Stollings, West Virginia, renewed for three years, sent "extra" for postage. Louise Blackburn, of Metter, Georgia, renewed, saying, "Appreciate 'Contending for the Faith.' It's not easy, but we have to 'keep on keeping on'." Lura Simmons, of Lindsay, Oklahoma, renewed for three years, saying, "I really do enjoy the paper." Donald Wright, of Ceredo, West Virginia, renewed for three years, added \$25.00 for "special mailings." Mrs. Ann Williamson, of New Caney, Texas, renewed her own, sent one new. Wes Arable, of Charleston, Mississippi, sent two new. Harold Smith, of Lynchburg, Tennessee, sent \$10.00 for "special mailings" together with her renewal, saying, "As we can we will continue to support your efforts in supporting the truth of God's word. Our heart breaks each time we read Contending for the Faith on the error being taught and practiced in the 'so called' Lord's church. We know God is grieved and Christ is being crucified over and over. We are proud of men that speak out. Keep the faith. We pray for the ones teaching error that God will let them live to correct their teachings and the ones that are following them that they will return to the truth." L. B. Sutton, of Nashville, Tennessee, renewed for three years, saying, "Thank you for standing for the truth." Russel & Grace Thompson, of Mesa, Arizona, together with their renewal, ordered ten copies of our issue for August/1994, saying, "This is the most excellent issue in exposing the false teachers in our brotherhood. We are so thankful we were converted out of denominations in the early '50s when the Lord's church had its identity and did not have the false teaching that you exposed in that issue. We appreciate 'Contending for the Faith' so much." Harold Baugh, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed his own and five more.

Cecile Butler, formerly of Wewoka, Oklahoma, now of Oklahoma City, let us know that her husband C. D. Butler is now deceased, saying, "I really enjoy the Contending for the Faith and I don't want to miss an issue." Irene Johnson, of Seattle, Washington, renewed two, sent eight new. Leon & Donna Taylor, of Tempe, Arizona, renewed for three years, saying, "Keep up the good work. We surely enjoy the paper... We are sure you will continue to defend the word of God." Donald R. Wilson, of Coaltic, Indiana, renewed his own, sent five new. Richard C. Haase, of Medon, Tennessee, renewed his own and four more, sent one new. Ernest L. Bentley, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, renewed his own and two more for three years each, sent five new, enclosed \$100.00, saying, "Use the extra for 'special mailings' or wherever needed most." Sydney & Mary Emma Pepper, of Athens, Alabama, renewed their own and three more, sent two new. Julius Coleman, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed three, added \$52.00 saying, "We enjoy your paper very much and appreciated your keeping us updated on false teaching. You may apply the remaining \$52.00 on your work in Russia." Darrell Hanson, of Stephenville, Texas, renewed two, sent nine new. Mrs. Harold Caplinger, of Akron, Ohio, renewed two. Silas

Heady, of Gallatin, Tennessee, renewed for three years, saying, "I look forward to reading your magazine each month. It keeps us informed about what's going on in the church nationwide." B. G. Brown, of Porterville, California, renewed for three years, saying, "Thank you, Brother Rice, for your firm stand against false teaching. It seems the Lord's Church is being put under constant attack by false teaching. It is in our congregation here in Porterville, also." W. L. Hettick, of Carthage, Mississippi, renewed his own, sent one new. Mikey D. Reddell, of Voca, Texas, enclosed \$20.00 with a gift subscription, saying, "Use remainder any way you choose. You are doing a great work. May God bless your efforts." [NOTE: We used the extra \$14.00 on "special mailings."] Houston McCorquodale renewed for another year, saying, "Thank you for your fight against error." Ray Weddington, of McMinnville, Tennessee, subscribed, saying, "Thank you for your fine publication and firm stand for the truth." W. B. Foster, of Columbia, Tennessee, renewed for three years, saying, "I appreciate Contending for the Faith very much." Cuba Wisenbaker, of Valdosta, Georgia, renewed, enclosing "extra" to help with our expenses. G. Dudley Stout, of Lodi, California, renewed his own, sent five new.

Gerald W. Ellis, of Warner Robins, Georgia, sent three new subscriptions. Eddy Gilpin, minister, Munford, Alabama, sent two new subscriptions, saying, "We are grateful for your publication and the work involved in the same. We look forward to receiving it on a regular basis." Lewis McClure, of Madison, Tennessee, subscribed, saying, "Keep up your good works." Raymond D. Moran, of Springdale, Pennsylvania, renewed his own, sent one new. Isidro Morales, Jr., of Lockhart, Texas, subscribed, saying, "I really enjoy reading 'Contending for the Faith.' I, too, want to stand firm in the truth of the gospel." Sylvia Rhodes, of Athens, Texas, renewed two. Loyal W. Hill, of McMinnville, Tennessee, renewed, saying, "I appreciated brother Rice and the paper so much for standing for the truth and the church. Keep the good work going."

Harold Littrell, of Paragould, Arkansas, renewed, saying, "I am very thankful that Contending for the Faith is to continue and that brother Rice will get to be senior editor while he is still able... I, too, obtained 'Axe on the Root'—all three volumes—in 1970, as I recall. I subscribed to Contending for the Faith and have continued subscribing to it these years since... I am greatly indebted to Ira Rice for keeping me, and those of the brotherhood who would listen, posted on the inroads of 'Crossroadism' and liberalism in general. I really appreciate the great work he has done toward keeping the church pure and the doctrine uncorrupted... I want to encourage you in every way that I can..." J. Edwin Davis, of Ruston, Louisiana, subscribed, saying, "Keep up the good work." Virginia W. Thomson, of San Mateo, renewed her own, sent two renewals—one for five years. Don Moore, of Artesia, New Mexico, contributed \$50.00. One lady in Texas renewed, saying, "I'd decided to drop it, but have reconsidered." Edward Anderson, of Livingston, Tennessee, renewed, saying, "I am also enclosing a check for \$10.00 to help send the Contending For The Faith to people in error."

"Keep up the good work!" John M. Hamilton, of Shadyside, Ohio, renewed his own, sent one new. John N. Galloway, of Hattiesburg, Missis-

issippi, renewed his own, sent one new—both for three years each. Joe Rosa, of Denmark, South Carolina, renewed two. Leo Bearden, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, renewed for three years, added \$34.00 extra, saying, "Rest to help fight false teaching." Bill Hobbs, of Fort Worth, Texas, enclosed \$1,000.00 "to assist in the special mailings of Contending for the Faith." Jerry C. Robinson, of McKinney, Texas, subscribed for three years, saying, "I enjoy Contending for the Faith very much. Thanks." Denver Black, of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, renewed for three years, added \$50.00 for special mailings. David H. Thornton, of Cary, North Carolina, sent five new subscriptions. Bonnie Ausbrooks, of Portland, Tennessee, sent three new subscriptions. Jesse Whitlock, minister to Central church of Christ, of Ardmore, Oklahoma, renewed three. Mr. & Mrs. Randy Daugherty, of Corsicana, Texas, wrote, "please take us off of your mailing list. We DO NOT wish to receive anything you publish." Jeffie Gammons, Jr., of Duck River, Tennessee, renewed his own, sent one new. William F. Wilson, of Milan, Tennessee, renewed for three years, saying, "I really appreciate your stand for the truth and the great work you and your family have done in the mission field for many years. May God continue to bless you in Contending for the Faith and in your travels to the Far East and Russia." Carol J. Young, of Limestone, Tennessee, renewed for three years, gave \$34.00 "to be used where most needed." Clyde E. Bowen renewed for three years, sent "extra" to help.

Joe & Elea Robertson, of Blytheville, Arkansas, subscribed, saying, "We appreciate the good work that you are doing for the brotherhood and for your efforts to further the cause of Christ." Jean Faber, of Woodsfield, Ohio, sent a gift subscription, saying, "God bless you as you fight error and espouse righteousness." Francis E. Davis, of Neenan, Wisconsin, renewed for another year, added \$10.00 for "special mailings." So did Mrs. Louis Teasley, of Nashville, saying, "Thank you for your dedication and your hard work." Opal Baker, of Lovelady, Texas, sent two new subscriptions. So did Gary Wheeler, of Wichita, Kansas. Ruth Snell renewed for two more years, sent one new. Mrs. H. R. Scott, of Nashville, Tennessee, sent a three-year gift subscription, saying, "I'm really enjoying my subscription. Wish we had more like this one in the brotherhood. The church has to take a stand against this error. I can remember hearing brother N. B. Hardeman and Foy E. Wallace proclaim the truth and stand up for it." Mary & Tom Hendrix of Mount Juliet, Tennessee, renewed for three years, added \$9.00 to use "in whatever way you need to," saying, "God bless all your efforts to spread the gospel." Al Macey, of Honolulu, Hawaii, renewed for three years "with a warm aloha." W. R. Craig, gospel preacher, of Piedmont, Oklahoma, renewed his own, sent one new. Edna Demonbreun, of Nashville, Tennessee, sent one gift subscription. Ernestine Manning, of Winter Haven, Florida, wrote, "I have read your paper and would like to get it." Loyd Koch, of Arkansas City, Kansas, renewed for three years, saying, "We appreciate the information on the issues facing the church, and the stand for following the scripture that is presented in the paper." R. C. Raymer, of Anchorage, Alaska, sent three subscriptions. Pine Lake Church of Christ, of Niceville, Florida, sent two subscriptions. Richard H. Feltner, of

Thomson, Georgia, sent a three-year gift subscription. Ed Allard, Jr., of Mansfield, Georgia, wrote, "It is good to know that you will continue to edit *Contending for the Faith* and arrangements have been made for it to continue." Echlin Paine, of Toledo, Ohio, sent two subscriptions. Edwina Winningham, of Livingston, Tennessee: "I enjoy [*Contending for the Faith*] very much and always read it and give it to a friend. She

reads it and passes it on." Wayne Simpson of McMinnville, Tennessee, renewed for three

years, sent one new subscription, added \$3.00 extra."

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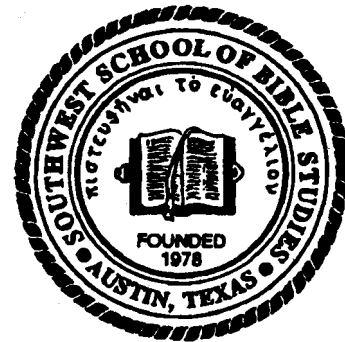
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# Notes & Quotes...

## Beeville Completes Eighth Annual South Texas Summer Lectureship

What amounted to a survey of the entire New Testament was conducted, July 27-30, 1995, by the Adams Street Church of Christ, where Joe Cox preaches in Beeville, Texas. It was their Eighth Annual South Texas Summer Lectureship—their best attended yet—and it was wonderful!

Under the general theme of "The Eternal Purpose of God which He Purposed in Christ Jesus Our Lord," brethren Lindell Mitchell and Bill Lockwood led off with "The Book of Acts—The Lord's Church in the First Thirty Years" and "The Book of Jude—Earnestly Contend For The Faith," respectively, on Thursday night, July 27th.

On Friday, July 28th, Joe Cox spoke on "The Book Of Hebrews—Christ Our High Priest;" Tom Bright on "The Book of Ephesians—The Plan Of The Ages;" Michael Mayo on "The Book Of Philippians—Our Joy In Christ;" Eddie Whitten on "The Book Of I John—Walking In The Light;" John Moore on "The Book Of Galatians—The End Of The Law;" Guss Eoff on "The Books Of Philemon, 2 John and 3 John—Words Of Encouragement;" Tom Bright on "The Book Of Revelation—Then And Now;" and Ira Rice on "The Book Of I Peter—Putting Them In Remembrance."

Saturday speakers were Tim Ayers on "The Book Of James—Practical Christianity;" Jerry Moffitt on "The Book Of I Corinthians—Problems In The Church;" Darwin Hunter on "The Book Of II Corinthians—Scriptural Corrective Discipline Works;" Joseph Meador on "The Limits Of Our Fellowship;" Perry Cotham on "I and II Timothy—Preach The Word And Live The Word;" Carl Garner on "The Book of Titus—The Importance of Church Government;" Gary Colley on "The Church Ordained Of God And Unchangeable;" and David Brown on "The Book of Colossians—The All Sufficiency of Christ." A panel discussion by various speakers on a multiplicity of questions was conducted between the afternoon and evening sessions.

Closing out the lectureship, on Sunday, July 30th, David Brown and Joseph Meador, speaking, respectively, on "The Book Of II Peter—Christians Must Answer The Scoffers" and "The Book of Romans—Justification Through Faith," during the morning worship. Then, after an hour of congregational singing at 5:00 p.m., Perry Cotham delivered the final lesson on "The Books of I and II Thessalonians—Wherefore Comfort One Another With These Words."

Wayne Coats, Mount Juliet, Tennessee: "You have been known to print some of the most disturbing, distressing, distasteful, disrupting, damning and disconcerting articles to have ever appeared in decent publications.

"People have maligned, mocked, massacred your name and consigned your bones to the buzzards, but still you somehow prevail..."

"Imagine Neil Anderson trying to ride into the Ryman on the coat-tails of N. B. Hardeman. Whew! The entire episode stinks to high heaven. Some folks think you and I do, too!"

Chuck Denham, Benicia, California: "I'm enclosing a small donation [\$50.00] toward mail-out costs. Keep up the good work in warning folks about the false teachers out there."

Frank E. Werner, of Van, Texas, enclosed \$10.00, saying, "Keep up the good work on exposing these fake teachers."

Vadrew McKeoran, Middleton, Tennessee: "I think this is an excellent publication."

Perry Cotham reported at the Beeville Lectures in July that the church now has been planted in every province of India.

Brock Hartwigen, minister, Apex, North Carolina: "I am constantly amazed at the number of preachers who do not read *Contending for the Faith* or who haven't read it in years yet are experts on what is wrong with it. In a morbid way they are funny when they criticize and attack the paper and you for criticizing and attacking. When I ask them for documentation for their allegations that you don't have documentation they cannot produce any. Yet they cannot see their inconsistency in this matter. When they find out that I have had some articles printed in *Contending for the Faith* they look shocked. Keep up the good work."

[NOTE: "Like you," I replied in part, "I, too, am perplexed how many who never read *Contending for the Faith* for themselves are just sure what we report is wrong and without documentation! If they would but READ it and check out our documentation, surely they would learn better.

"Many years ago (1960, as I recall), my family and I stopped by a church in Holland. I had just brought out my book, *We CAN Evangelize The World*, the year before. I never had met the preacher who spoke on that occasion. He preached a good sermon. At the door, on my way out, he smiled broadly, saying that one of the reasons he had gone to Holland as a missionary was to prove me wrong in what I had written in that book. 'And did you prove me wrong?' I asked. 'No,' he replied, 'you were exactly right in everything you said.'

"If those who criticize and attack *Contending for the Faith* would be just as honest and forthright as that erstwhile enemy had been, they might, like he, become our friends. But they never will know if we really are wrong in what we publish until they try to prove it. Truth has nothing to fear from its critics. Where is their proof!" IYR Jr.]

\*\*\*\*\*

## Doing Things Exactly Right

The theme of a series of five lessons preached by Jimmy Pettigrew, of Valley View, Texas, July 28-30, 1995, with the Sadler Street Church of Christ, in Troup, Texas, was "Doing Things Exactly Right."

The lesson topics were as follows: Friday night, July 28, "Doing Things Exactly Right." Saturday night, July 29, "Jesus, the Misunderstood Man." Sunday morning and evening, July 30, "Supreme Love;" and "Looking In God's Mirror;" and "What Must I Do To Have Eternal Life?"

\*\*\*\*\*

## Roger Campbells Encouraged By Positive Signs Amid Setbacks

Some who never have done missionary work themselves seem to think that it is "all positive." A lot of it is; however, Satan is out there, too, doing his best to disrupt the work of the Lord.

In their Campbell's Ukraine Update for July-August/1995, we noted an example of this in the work the Roger Campbells are doing in Kiev, Ukraine. They said, in part,

"We rejoice with you in the knowledge that we serve a risen Savior who is King of kings and Lord of lords. It is wonderful that many of you who read our reports are so enthusiastic about preaching the gospel in the whole world, and we thank God for our cherished fellowship with you in this work. Satan is ever busy trying to keep men from following the way that leads unto life (Matthew 7:13,14), but we thank God that '...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us' (Romans 8:37). More than a

few obstacles and difficulties have been cast before us in the last month, but much has happened to cause us to be grateful to the God of heaven for 'good things' amid such trying times...

"Last month we told you that the Centre congregation was forced from its place of meeting without explanation. As we told you, we found another location, but lo, the first of July we were forced to leave there after only four weeks. The reason given was not credible. It is a ploy of Satan. We were notified on a Tuesday that we could not even meet back there again the next Sunday. We thank God that for the past three weeks we have been able to meet with the Left Bank congregation. This past Sunday there were 145 present at our combined assembly. A building was located today for the Centre church to use, if the brethren decide to take it. In the meantime, we are meeting indefinitely with the Left Bank church on Sundays and have our own separate study on Wednesdays. Please pray about this, as it is not good for the church's stability for us to be moving to and fro...

"For three years now men have been training in the Bible school. One graduate started a congregation in his hometown south of Kiev two summers ago. For some time now we have kicked around the idea of encouraging other men to get out and get some new works going. But when, who, and where? Just recently, after much prayer and discussion, it seems that these matters are beginning to fall in place. This week we had a meeting with brothers who desire to work either as evangelists or serve as helpers in establishing new churches. For me it was the most thrilling occasion that I have known of since we came to the Ukraine 23 months ago. What excites me the most about it is that I see in these Ukrainian brothers a real desire to go out and do this work. In our meeting it was decided that, if God wills, in early September new works will begin either in Kiev or within two hours of it. Four—four new congregations is the number that we are all shooting for! The best part? They will all be started and carried on by Ukrainian brothers, not foreigners. The 'lead' men in each team going out to start these churches are all graduates of the Bible school. We remain convinced that we are on the right track by trying to carry out the instruction of II Timothy 2:2 and train faithful men to teach others. Lord willing, the new works will be on the north side of Kiev, in Boris-pol and Yagatine to the east of Kiev, and Erpene just to the west of Kiev. Please pray for these men who will be working together in these churches: Vacily and Ivan, Cergey and Arteom, Anatoly and Konstantine, and Vladimir and other brothers from the Centre church. The Left Bank and Centre churches will be losing some of our best men to these new efforts, so please pray that God will bless the members who remain at these two original congregations."

\*\*\*\*\*

## 'The Christian Scholar' Reprinted

When mention was made several months ago of *The Christian Scholar*, an extraordinary book by J. E. Choate and Adron Doran, the supply was completely exhausted.

"The Gospel Advocate has reprinted 500 copies of *The Christian Scholar*," brother Doran advised, under date of June 15, 1995. "I have bought all 500 copies. I am giving 12 copies each to 16 Christian colleges with the understanding they will sell them for \$15.00 each and put the \$180 in scholarship funds.

"I wish you would mention the fact that copies can be ordered from me at \$15.00 per copy plus \$1.25 for postage. Many have inquired since you wrote about the book in the March 1994 issue."

Please address your orders to Adron Doran, 111 Woodland, Lexington, Kentucky 40502.

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"As much as we need gospel preachers, we desperately need men who will serve as elders."—Carl Garner, South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

# FOURTEENTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES

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# STUDIES IN MATTHEW

NOVEMBER 12-16, 1995

## FOURTEENTH ADL SCHEDULE STUDIES IN MATTHEW

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12**  
 The Book of Matthew—An Introduction  
 Mitchell, the Men  
 Jesus Teaches in Parables (13:1-58)  
 John Baptized and Various Travels and Miracles of Jesus (14:1-15:39)  
 Summary Miracles and the Call of Matthew (6:1-9:38)  
 Answering False Doctrines: Are we forbidden to judge at all or one about anything? (7:1-17)? Was the ability of a man to work miracles dependent upon the faith of the church on Peter (28:13-18)? Did Jesus promise to build His church on Peter and did He give him more authority than the other apostles (18:15-19)? Must one go to false teachers privately before exposing their publicly-taught false doctrines (18:15-17)?  
 Jesus Chooses and Commissions the Apostles, Elders John (10:1-11:30)

12:00 PM Lunch Break  
 2:00 PM Tim Ayers  
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum  
 Lindell Mitchell  
 3:45 PM Dinner Break  
 5:00 PM Dinner Break  
 7:00 PM Dinner Break  
 8:00 PM Garland Elkins

## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

9:00 AM Oran Rhodes  
 10:00 AM Darrell E. Beard  
 11:00 AM Tom L. Bright  
 12:00 PM Lunch Break  
 2:00 PM Roy C. Deaver  
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum  
 Mac Deaver  
 3:45 PM Mac Deaver  
 5:00 PM Dinner Break  
 7:00 PM Dinner Break  
 8:00 PM James Meadows

Jesus Enters Jerusalem in Triumph, Cleanses the Temple (20:1-21:48)  
 Does Jesus Value a Kind Attitude Above Faithful Obedience to Him?  
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic  
 The Great Sermon on the Mount—Part I (6:1-48)  
 Jesus' Teaching on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage (25:1-75)  
 Difficult Passages: What is "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" (12:31-32)? Did Jesus hide the Truth from certain ones (13:10-15; cf. Luke 10:21-23)? Did Jesus forbid withdrawing from ungodly brethren and command us to leave them alone till "The Judgment" (13:28-30; cf. 18:15-17)? Is "made themselves eunuchs" literal or figurative? If figurative, are "born eunuchs" and "made eunuchs by men" also figurative? If not, why not (18:12)?  
 Is Matthew Part of the New Testament?  
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic  
 Jesus' Final Confrontation with the Jews and His Judgment Upon Them (22:1-23:39)  
 Jesus' Discourse on the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming (24:1-51)

## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Jesus Confronts His Enemies and Works Many Miracles (12:1-50)  
 Difficult Passages: Were Hosea 11:1 and Jeremiah 31:15 specific or only incidental prophecies of events surrounding Jesus' birth (2:15, 17-18)? Where is the Old Testament prophecy that Jesus would be called a "Nazarene" (2:23)? Do we have "guardian angels" and are angels still with us (4:9, 11; 18:10; cf. Heb. 1:14; cf. 1:7)? When did demon possession begin and end, and how did it relate to disease, what was its purpose (4:24; 8:28-34; 9:32-33; 12:22-28; 43-45; 15:22; 17:15-20)?  
 The Life and Work of John the Baptist  
 Answering False Doctrines: Was Isaiah 7:14 only an incidental prophecy concerning the Virgin Birth (1:22-23)? Was (fe) Holy Spirit baptism for all, since John promised it to more than the apostles alone (3:11)? Is baptism in fire part of Holy Spirit baptism (3:11-12; cf. Acts 2:3-4)? Should the law/prophets be obeyed in the kingdom/church (6:19)?  
 Did the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 Constitute the Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World and Have the Resurrection and the Judgment Already Occurred?  
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic  
 The Church Promised by Jesus and His Transfiguration (18:1-17:27)  
 Jesus' Teaching on Offenders, Offenses, Forgiveness, Divorce, and Riches (18:1-19:30)

9:00 AM Lynn Blair  
 10:00 AM Don Tarbet  
 11:00 AM Goebel Music  
 12:00 PM Lunch Break  
 2:00 PM Tommy J. Hicks  
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum  
 Curtis A. Cates  
 3:45 PM Curtis A. Cates  
 5:00 PM Dinner Break  
 7:00 PM Bobby Liddell  
 8:00 PM Terry M. Hightower  
 9:00 AM Wayne Price  
 10:00 AM Joseph Meador  
 11:00 AM Marvin Weir

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

12:00 PM Lunch Break  
 2:00 PM Michael Hatcher  
 3:00 PM Discussion Forum  
 Gary W. Summers  
 3:45 PM Gary W. Summers  
 5:00 PM Dinner Break  
 7:00 PM Dinner Break  
 8:00 PM Darrell Conley

Difficult Passages: Will there be equal or degrees of rewards and punishments (20:9-15; cf. 10:40-42; 11:22-24; Luke 12:47-48; Heb. 10:26; cf. 10:26-27)? How is the apparent discrepancy resolved concerning the number of blind men healed at Jericho (20:29-34; cf. Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43)? Did Jesus send for the disciples bring Jesus ride on, and Zechariah prophesy two animals or one (21:1-7; cf. Mark 11:1-7; Luke 19:29-35; Zac. 9:9)? Who was the "Zachariah" the Jews killed (23:35; cf. 2 Chr. 24:20-41; Zac. 1:1)?  
 Jesus' Last Passover, the Lord's Supper, The Jews Arrest and Try Him (26:1-75)  
 Answering False Doctrines: Was the church established while the Lord was on earth (18:17)? Do Jesus' warnings about travel and tribulation and such like refer to the "tribulation" (24:9-21, 29, 40-41)? Do we have signs by which we can predict the time of Jesus' Second Coming (24:4-44)? Are we accountable to the Great Commission, since it was originally given to the apostles and they fulfilled it (28:18-20; cf. Rom. 10:16; 16:26; Col. 1:6, 23)?  
 The Lord is Raised, Commissions the Apostles (28:1-20)  
 Is Open Division in the Church Over Liberalism Inevitable?  
 Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic  
 The Great Sermon on the Mount—Part II (7:1-29)  
 The Book of Matthew—A Summary

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**Glendale Church Hosts 16th  
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What a pleasure it was to take brother Alexander (Sasha) Agafonov, of Murmansk, Russia, to the 16th Annual All-Night Singing, the Friday night of July 21, 1995, hosted by the Glendale Church of Christ, near Newbern, Tennessee. Unquestionably, it was some of the finest gospel singing ever!

Brethren Kevin Beard, local minister, and Todd Walker, of Paducah, Kentucky, were co-hosts for the occasion. We all sang from 8:00 p.m. to 9:45 p.m., paused approximately half an hour for refreshments; then those who could stay sang on into the morning hours as long as they could hold out.

A gospel meeting was scheduled the following week, July 30 through August 3, with brother Curtis A. Cafes, Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, doing the preaching.

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"When Paul said that Christ is the end of the law, he is not saying that Christ ended all law, but that he is the objective standard of the law...God's word is the objective standard."—Joseph D. Meador, South Texas Summer Lectureship, Sunday morning, July 30, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

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Mrs. Max R. Crumley, Sr., of San Jose, California, is one of our much appreciated sisters in Christ. She, like we, has a hard time understanding why some among us cannot distinguish between what the church should be doing and providing worldly entertainment.

In a recent letter she related being assigned to teach a children's midweek class, being forewarned, "No one wants this group because they are unruly, etc.; hope you can do something with them." She was then handed a load of "gimmick" material to use to see if she could corral the students and just maybe teach them something.

"On one such occasion," she said, "a young smart-mouthed teenaged girl walked into the room the first night, discovered I was to be the teacher, and said, 'Why are you here?' My reply? 'I'm here because I know more than you do; please take a seat.' She sat down in the floor! In a moment she discovered the passage of scripture I had put on the board to be used as a basis for our lessons that fall. 'That's archaic,' she said. 'When are you going to get modern?' (She had an NIV book.) Her father was the regular preacher at that congregation at that time. Needless to say I was never able to completely polish up her manners, but she really learned a lot of spiritual lessons from my old archaic Bible—even made herself a fairly nice note book on the lessons before the year ended.

"On a more recent occasion, I was assigned

a class of combined 3rd, 4th and 5th graders and given a room with walls almost completely covered with pictures, decorations of all kinds, plus sayings, etc. I removed it all, then placed a King James Bible on the table at each chair.

"When the students arrived and it was time to begin our study, one child looked disturbed and said, 'Where's our lesson books?' I said, 'Right in front of you, on the table.' Still disturbed, she said, 'But that's just the Bible!' I assured her in all kindness that she would love that 'lesson book' before the year was over. I wish I could give you a detailed account of how that group progressed in first hand knowledge and love of their 'lesson book' that year. It was a thrill to observe! At the end of the year, they knew they would be going on to other study classes the next fall, but wanted me to with them. The highest of compliments! But, brother Rice, it's wasn't just me—they had fallen in love with that 'lesson book' on the table before them that first night.

"Older children don't need a bunch of distractions on the wall, a bunch of parties, etc., as bribes, in order to hold their interest and keep them coming to class. That's why we are disgusted with this 'soul lift' stuff people are resorting

to in order to 'reach the young people before we lose them.' But enough—must close before I get wound up. We enjoy the 'Contending For The Faith,' but are so sad about the 'falling away' of so many of the brethren and congregations! God have mercy on us. Keep the faith and carry on in the Master's service!"

Albert F. Robinson, Bowling Green, Missouri: "Keep up the good work of contending for the faith in *Contending For The Faith* and through every avenue you can. The time is short!

"You will be hated by many even as you have known for many years. Those contending for the faith today are few and far between. Your paper is greatly needed."

Herman & Cathy Carter, Allen Park, Michigan: "Majority of church groups in Detroit Metro Area think 'if it's OK at Michigan Christian College, it's OK with us.' But not so with us."

Ernie & Martha Bentley, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, sent me a lovely card for my 78th birthday, saying, "Getting to 79 means getting to 78, then being very careful."

[NOTE: "I wonder just how careful I'll have to be to reach 79," I replied, in part. "That's how old J. D. TANT was when he died." IYR Jr.]

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## Historical Backgrounds of Restoration XII

J. E. Choate

### INTRODUCTION

The reason for this article was prompted by the substance and direction of Restoration XII which convened November 1994 on the Abilene Christian University campus. The historical reality is that three such "unity meetings" have taken place in this century to heal the divisions caused by the forced introduction of unscriptural innovations.

Is it that our liberal brethren think that we labor under an even greater lack of knowledge of Restoration history than is equal to their lack of information and the calculated use of disinformation? Carroll Osburn makes an uninformed statement in *The Peaceable Kingdom* that—"Instrumental music will remain an issue, but it certainly is not deserving of center stage, and never was." The truth is that instrumental music has been an issue among the Disciples since 1827 when Alexander Campbell first addressed the subject of music in church worship.

Christian unity is the ideal for which Christ prayed. And our liberal brethren would sacrifice that unity for some vague concept of "unity in diversity." The handling of this concept by the "Restoration Forum" promoters adds up to "chaos in confusion." Robert Richardson in his *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* phrased the Restoration motto and principle to achieve Christian unity as stated in 1809 by Thomas Campbell in the home of Abraham Altars. The famed motto reads—"WHERE THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK, WE SPEAK; AND WHERE THE SCRIPTURES ARE SILENT, WE ARE SILENT."

It is a well known story that on New Years Day 1832 in the Hill Street building in Lexington, Kentucky that the disciples of Stone and Campbell joined forces to form the "church of Christ" patterned after the apostolic scriptural model.

A knowledge of the historical antecedents of the "unity meetings" over the past 86 years will enable us to understand the major strategies of contemporary "change agents" as they mount their campaigns to divide and destroy the prevailing unity in churches of Christ everywhere.

### FOUR UNITY MEETINGS IN THIS CENTURY

The high hope and prospects there would be abiding unity among the Disciples on that New Years day in 1832 were dashed thereafter time and time again. And by the turn of the century the

Disciples were divided even beyond the bounds of civility as noted in 50 years of church divisions and numerous lawsuits.

The course of history of the Digressives in this century is marked by "unity movements" to heal and to repair divisions in the church which the "innovators" have created. It seems that such unity movements serve as confessionals for the Digressives to confess their sins and seek to redress them by means of unity meetings. A typical example of this is the emotional confession of Dr. Douglas Foster, chair of Restoration Forum XII, who lamented the sin of division in the ranks of Restoration churches.

### THE UNITY MEETINGS IN 1909

The first unity meeting after the *U.S. Religious Census of 1906* separating the Restoration churches was called in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1909. This was the year of the centennial celebration of the publication of Campbell's *Declaration and Address*. Fifty thousand "Disciples" met in Pittsburgh for the momentous occasion.

This first unity meeting in Nashville in 1909 was a part of a larger strategy to seize control of the churches in the South. E. A. Elam wrote in the *Gospel Advocate* that John B. Cowden, elder of the oldest digressive Christian Church in Nashville, had kindly and fraternally invited a representative group from both fellowships to meet in his home in order to find out if there were not some common ground for the two fellowships to work together. They agreed to work out some sort of proposition for discussions about the organ and missionary society. Plans were made for J. C. McQuiddy and James T. McKissick to engage in a written debate on the subject. The written exchanges were carried with nothing of substance accomplished.

### THE COMMISSION ON UNITY IN 1917

The *Commission of Unity in 1917* was just another calculated maneuver of the Digressives in Tennessee to restore unity to the troubled Tennessee churches by means of their tried and proved "northern strategy" to draw the churches of Christ to debate the instrumental music issue in churches across Tennessee. The maneuvering continued until the Boswell-Hardeman music debate came off it 1923 in Nashville.

That was the debate which ended all the desire of the Digressives for such future debates in Tennessee. Douglas Foster has the means to access these facts for documentation, but that he

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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## Associate Editorial...

In recent months several persons have declared that the worship assemblies of the saints convened today are to be conducted under the guidelines of the assembly discussed by the apostle Paul in First Corinthians, chapter fourteen. They have especially emphasized that the mandates governing the conduct of women assembled therein are binding on women in worship assemblies today. Twenty years ago the late Guy N. Woods thoroughly dealt with these matters in his book, *Questions and Answers*, OPEN FORUM, Freed-Hardeman College lectures. Also, Roy C. Deaver has an excellent study of this passage in his book, *The Role of Women*.

In this issue of *Contending for the Faith* brother Woods' treatment of the aforementioned passage as well as his explanation of the nature of said "assembly" discussed therein is presented. In the next issue of the paper brother Roy Deaver's study of the passage will be printed.

—Associate Editor

**"Please answer the following questions regarding I Corinthians 14:34, 35, touching women keeping silent in the assembly."**

Guy N. Woods

*Is the meeting contemplated in I Cor. 14 comparable to any convened in the church today?* No. In the meeting under consideration in this chapter, brethren spoke in tongues, prophesied, and exercised the gift of interpretation. These were spiritual gifts, limited in their nature to the apostolic age; hence, no longer possible in the church today. A meeting of that type is, therefore, no longer held.

*For what purpose was the meeting of I Cor. 14 called?* To edify the church through the exercise of the spiritual gifts above enumerated. The will of the Lord, at the period we are considering, had not been fully promulgated. Not having been committed fully to writing, the apostolic church was dependent on special revelation of the type mentioned in this chapter for their knowledge of the Lord's will. The church was thus under the necessity of meeting at stated intervals for the purpose of receiving these revelations. (See I Cor. 14:1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 19, 22-33, 37-40.)

*Are the rules set forth in this chapter for the purpose of governing the meeting thus contemplated applicable to the church when it assembles today?* No, it would be impossible to apply them to the church in their original form today. For example, note this "Let the prophets speak by two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace" (I Cor. 14:29, 30). We have no prophets; none capable of judging in the sense here intended; there are no revelations given to those that "sitteth by"; hence, it is impossible properly to apply the rules governing the meeting of I Cor. 14 to the assemblies characteristic of us today. The effort is ludicrous; it betrays an utter lack of understanding of the proper division of

the word touching matters limited to the age of miraculous gifts; yet this is precisely what our brethren of the anti-Sunday-school faction do! The passage they rely on so heartily follows the one just studied: "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." (I Cor. 14:31.) It matters not to them that there are no prophets today; hence, none able to prophesy. It is the only thing in the Bible requiring one to speak at the time, and thus they cheerfully ignore the fact that this was because the revelation was being delivered for the first time through an inspired man, and seize on to this as the final word on how properly to teach the word of God today!

**Who were the women required to keep silent in the passage under study?** They were the wives of the prophets considered in the fore going paragraph. Forbidden to interrupt, or to make inquiry, during the progress of revelation, the apostle laid down the very sensible rule that they should await a more opportune occasion to propound their questions—i.e., until they were able to ask their husbands at home. These women were married; they had husbands; their husbands were capable of answering their inquiries at home. One must indeed be bewildered who is able pompously to quote this passage with the regularity that characterizes our anti-brethren and make it applicable to all women everywhere. Yet this is exactly what nine out of ten of them do!

**Why were the women required to keep silent in this meeting?** Simply because they had no revelation; hence, were unable to contribute to the purpose of the meeting, which was to edify the church. The prophets were the medium of the revelation; these women were not prophets, they thus had no "word of exhortation" for the people. Having no message to convey, they were instructed to remain silent, just as the man who could speak in an unknown tongue, but without an interpreter present: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, *let him keep silence in the church*; and let him speak to himself, and to God." (I Cor. 14:27, 28.) Why was he required to keep silence in the church? Because, not having an interpreter to make known his message and unable to contribute to the edification of the meeting, he was like the women, silenced!

**Are women today solely dependent on the husbands for their knowledge of God's will?** The women of I Cor. 14, not being the recipients of God's revelation, were wholly dependent on others for their information. In no other fashion could they obtain it. And did the Lord still make known his will solely through prophets specially inspired in the reception of the message, they would be similarly dependent today. By the close of the apostolic age, however, the promulgation of the gospel was completed and fully committed to writing, the sum of which is our New Testament. To this the woman has full and free access, the same as the man. Having access to the source of divine revelation, *why should a woman ask a man anything today, unless of course she recognizes that through study he has learned more of it than she?*

**Those who attempt to apply I Cor. 14:34, 35 to the church today admit that women may sing (and to this extent not remain silent) but insist that they are here stopped from speaking in any other fashion. Is the silence of this passage relative (so as to allow singing), or is it absolute, forbidding the utterance of any sound?** There are two words regularly used in the Greek Testament to convey the idea of utterance. The first of these two, *lego*, is by Thayer defined: "To put word to word in speaking, to join words saying," (*lego*, put words

together). (Matt. 28:18.) I Cor. 14:34, 35 forbids women to *lalien* in the church, utter a sound, emit a voice. *It does not allow singing; she cannot adhere to the instruction here given, and audibly confess the Savior's name.* What further evidence than this do we need to indicate to us that the instructions here given were never designed to be applicable to the church today. Our anti-brethren are not even consistent in their error! They insist that the passage is relevant to present-day meetings, yet allow women to violate it constantly through permitting them to sing and confess the Savior's name.

**What is the significance of the word "silence" in the passage?** It is translated from the word *sigao*, which occurs nine times in the Greek Testament. Thayer defines it: "To keep silence; to hold one's peace." The translators rendered it: "hold one's peace," four times; "keep close," one time; "keep secret," one time; and "keep silence," three times. These instances are:  
Acts 15:12: "Then all the multitude kept silence."  
I Cor. 14:28: "Let him keep silence in the church."  
I Cor. 14:34: "Let your women keep silence in the churches."

An examination of these instances will reveal that the silence enjoined is absolute. Our anti-brethren, then, in the interests of consistency, should either stop the women from singing and audibly confessing the Savior's name, or else they should concede the truth regarding the non-applicability of this passage to our day and time.

**May a woman preach the gospel today?** No. Women are forbidden to exercise authority over men. (I Tim. 2:11, 12.) One of the qualifications of an evangelist is to rebuke with authority. (Tit. 2:15.) Women are, hence, stopped from serving in the capacity of evangelist. There is, however, an essential difference between *teaching* and *preaching*. One can not preach (acceptably, at least) without teaching; one may, however, teach without preaching. Women are commanded to teach. (Tit. 2:3, 4.) In doing so, they do not preach; hence, do not violate the prohibition above set forth.

**But did not Paul forbid a woman to teach in I Tim. 2:11, 12?** If so, it is wrong for a woman to teach English grammar in the public schools! "Oh, but Paul meant that she is forbidden to teach the Bible!" Well, in that event, she cannot teach Bible stories to her own children at home. "Oh, no; that is not what he meant. He meant that she cannot teach the Bible *publicly*." She may, then teach the Bible *privately*? "Yes." Well, the passage not only forbids her to teach, it also prohibits her from usurping authority over the man. She is, then, forbidden to teach and usurp authority *publicly over the man; she may teach and usurp authority over men all she pleases, providing she does it privately?* Is that it? Our anti-brethren are hardly prepared to make this concession; and yet their position on this passage leads irresistibly to this conclusion. What type of teaching does it forbid, seeing the woman may both teach and exercise authority over her children? The word "teach" in this passage is from the Greek *didasko*, defined by Thayer to mean: "*Deliver didactic discourses.*" The teaching here prohibited is such that involves the improper exercise of authority "over the man." She may, however, instruct, and not violate the provisions of this passage: Priscilla, assisted by her husband, Aquila, took Apollos, a young gospel preacher, aside and expounded (*ekitheemi*, set forth, declare, expound) "unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26), yet did not deliver "a didactic discourse." Neither do our sisters in our Bible schools today. They do, however, "set forth, declare, expound" the word of God, as did Priscilla; and what the Lord required of her, he does not forbid in them today. On the contrary, he

commands it. (Tit. 2:3, 4.)

*Is there authority in the Scriptures for class teaching?* It is taught both by precept and by example. The word "teach" is a generic term; there is no exclusive method of procedure inherent in the word. All concede that it is scriptural to teach the word of God by means of the radio, through the medium of the printed page, in religious periodicals and tracts, by means of charts and blackboards. We are commanded to teach; the Lord did not specify the manner or method of procedure. We are, therefore, required to use the ability that God gives us in such cases. (I Pet. 4:11.) Class teaching, an arrangement of pupils into classes properly adapted to them, has long been recognized as the most effective method of teaching. Our Lord, hence, wants us to utilize this method.

*May one use lesson helps such as are to be had in the quarterlies, commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, etc., in an effort to understand the word?* Such are nothing more than aids designated to contribute to a better understanding of

the word; to make available to those lacking access to Bible teachers the fruits and results of their study and experience. This writer has, for some years, engaged in the preparation of lesson helps. Brethren who would not hesitate to listen to him *preach* will, nevertheless, refuse to read exactly the same material committed to paper. One is no more obligatory than the other; both should be tested by the word of God. Through writing one's opportunities to teach are immeasurably extended beyond the possibilities of oral teaching. By what rule of reason or revelation is the one conceded to be right and the other wrong? Brethren who oppose lesson helps themselves use blackboards to display uninspired literature and carry with them notes into the pulpit. Are they candid in their opposition? Does there not lurk a strong suspicion that it depends entirely on whose *uninspired* literature it is that determines its acceptability? (Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers OPEN FORUM Freed-Hardeman College* (Henderson, TN: 1976), pp. 106-109.)

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## DIVISION OVER USE OF THE INSTRUMENT

Dan Goddard

At first I regarded the present move towards unity with interest, but now with dismay and wonder. A question comes to my mind: If the move is successful, what will be the result—will the church of Christ be *weaker* and the Christian Church *stronger*?

The division over the use of instruments of music in the worship occurred many years before I was born; but I have read about and observed the results of that division.

It seems to me that the two bodies are farther apart now than they were immediately following the division of 1906. Every Christian Church that I have ever heard of (or preached for—years ago) was separated from the church of Christ by *more* than just the instrument of music. One of the members of the Christian Church said to me: "We used to go by the rule, 'Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where it is silent, we are silent'; but we do not do that any more; instead we go by the rule, 'Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we make up our own rules.'" When the Christian Church brethren threw down the bars to let in the innovation that divided the two bodies, they also let in everything else that the imagination of man could devise. They enter into every community service with every other denomination. The Christian Church minister here told me that there were over 20 separate organizations in his church.

I have been asked to enter into a combined service on Good Friday and to give the invocation at the Easter sunrise service. (I did not accept either invitation.) How can

the church of Christ "walk the wire" with an organization of that type? How can it come to the middle of the road?

Some in our fellowship use the example of the Corinthian church, where trouble arose because of eating and drinking. They say: "Paul told the church to correct the abuse, but he did not tell them to divide over it." But Paul did tell the Roman brethren: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

Perhaps I have overlooked it, but in all of the Christian Church literature on the subject of unity that I have ever seen, where do they advocate the New Testament *only* as the basis of unity? I have read where they want the two bodies to come to the middle of the road, and wanted them to "walk the wire" together. But never have I read of the Christian Church insisting that they return to the New Testament.

Yes, division is condemned by the word of the Savior. Yes, unity is taught in the New Testament. Yes, we all want unity. But if the price of that unity is to be the leaving of the New Testament and walking towards the middle of the road compromising with the Christian Church, then the price is too great, and the division that now exists must be preferred.

The church of Christ advocates unity based upon the New Testament, and invites all men, including the Christian Church, to enjoy that unity with it.

I believe the words of the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 1:10 are still possible: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the

name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye 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."

The question is: "Do we still *want* unity?" If we do, we must preach the essentiality of obedience to the above passage, regardless of how impossible and unthinkable it may sound to some. This requires that all spoken "convictions" in religion must be consigned to "what the Lord has said to men."

Presently, the Christian Church has taken the position espoused by the denominations—and that is: "that the Lord never intended for all people to see the Bible alike." But what does that do to I Corinthians 1:10? Has the inspired Paul commanded the impossible? What the Christian Church and others fail to see about this passage is that "the same mind" and "the same judgment" take "convictions."

I believe it is possible for an intelligent, self-respecting, aggressive, and independently-thinking people to agree in their understanding of "what the Lord has said to men." Therefore, Paul has not commanded the unthinkable and the impossible, and the commandments of the Lord are "not" grievous.

The Christian Church and other denominations alike need to get busy and start restoring what they have torn down. If they do not cease their false teaching, then II John 9-11 must be obeyed.

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# A Word To The House of Israel

Kevin Cauley

And God said unto Ezekiel, "Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel" (Ezekiel 3:4, 5). And God said unto Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak" (Jeremiah 1:7). And God said moreover to Jeremiah, "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD..." (Jeremiah 2:2).

And God said through Isaiah, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me" (Isaiah 1:2). And God said through Jeremiah, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD" (Jeremiah 22:29). And God said to Ezekiel, "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD" (Ezekiel 13:2).

And God said concerning his word to the Israelites through Isaiah, "This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Isaiah 28:12). So, God said through Jeremiah that he would send destruction upon the Israelites "Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 29:19). And God, through Ezekiel, tells us why he would do such

a thing. "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house" (Ezekiel 12:2).

And God explains more about this rebellious people, "That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD" (Isaiah 30:9). God said, "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts" (Isaiah 65:2). God further says, "But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone" (Jeremiah 5:23). And God says to Ezekiel, "Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day" (Ezekiel 2:3).

Brethren, we are spiritual Israel (Romans 9:6-13; Galatians 6:16). Is it a wonder that the Holy Spirit through Paul would charge Timothy and all other gospel preachers until the end to "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will hearken to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables" (II Timothy 4:2-4). Brethren, that time has come. "Preach the word."

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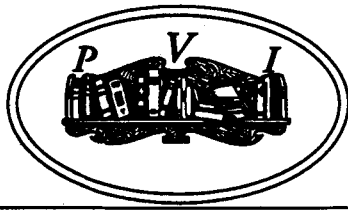
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# Baptism and False Teachers

Brock Hartwigsen

Can a person be taught a false purpose for baptism and still achieve the proper purpose? If a person is taught that he simply should be baptized to obey God, would his baptism be acceptable to God? If he is taught that it has nothing to do with salvation, that it is just an outward sign that he already has been saved, would his baptism be acceptable to God?

We have brethren in the church who are answering these questions with a defiant YES. They claim that all a person must understand is that God wants him to be baptized. They believe that if a person, in obedience to these teachings, is immersed then he has been baptized scripturally and is born again.

Is this correct? To answer this question we must first examine baptism and the gospel. In Mark 16:15, Jesus commanded the apostles to "preach the gospel." In the next verse Jesus included baptism as part of the gospel when he said "he that believeth and is baptized." If preaching the gospel did not include teaching about baptism then no one would have been baptized because no one would have been taught to be baptized.

In Acts 8:35-36 we are told that Philip "preached unto him Jesus." The eunuch after having Jesus "preached unto him" wanted to be baptized (Acts 8:36). If preaching Jesus did not include preaching about baptism, then where did the eunuch get such an idea? Preaching the gospel or preaching Jesus (however you want to word it) includes teaching about baptism.

In Romans 1:16 we find that the "gospel

of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation." God tells us in Ephesians 2:8 "for by grace are ye saved through faith." In Romans 10:17 we are told that "faith cometh by hearing...the word of God." Our access to the saving power of God's grace is through the gospel. It is not by the works of the law of Moses, works contrived by man, nor the teachings of man.

Galatians 1:6 reads, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." The saving grace of God is found in the gospel of Christ. Any other gospel is a graceless gospel. The next verse says, "Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." A perverted gospel is a graceless gospel. There is no "power of God unto salvation" in a perverted and graceless gospel. Any preacher who preaches a gospel that does not teach the necessity of baptism for salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21) is preaching "another gospel." He is preaching a perverted and graceless gospel.

Galatians 1:8-9 goes on and teaches that anyone who preaches,

...any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Any preacher who preaches baptism for any reason other than the reason preached by the apostles is preaching another gospel

and will be accursed. How can an accursed preacher, preaching a perverted and graceless gospel, produce a redeemed and saved soul?

Jesus tells us that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit (Matthew 7:18-19). Likewise a corrupt preacher preaching a corrupt doctrine cannot bring forth good fruit. A dirty pitcher filled with dirty water can only produce a dirty drink of water. An accursed preacher filled with a perverted gospel can only produce a soiled soul.

This teaching is hard. It offends people. I realize this, and so did Paul and God. In Galatians, after Paul by inspiration wrote about accursed preachers of perverted gospels, he went on and wrote in verses 10-12:

...For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Let us follow Paul's example and strive to please God and not man. Let us not try to win a popularity contest by teaching a pleasing, perverted, graceless gospel and damn ourselves. Let us not give false hope to people who have heard and obeyed a perverted and graceless gospel. Until they obey the true gospel of Christ which includes the teaching of baptism for the right reason, they are lost in their sins.

—12521 Holly Springs New Hill Road  
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## "HE THAT IS WITHOUT SIN?"

Jimmie B. Hill

"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7). This is a verse of scripture that is often used entirely out of context by many brethren to excuse sin. Their contention is that since none are without sin, no one may point out the sins of another. This, of course, is absurd. The Lord does not refer to one who was absolutely sinless in every respect. That requirement would have made it impossible for anyone to be punished under the old law for Ecclesiastes 7:20 clearly states, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." What, then, did the Lord mean here in John 8:7?

The scribes and the Pharisees had brought a woman to the Lord who "was taken in adultery, in the very act" (verse 4). Where was the man? They invoked Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22 and stated "that such should be stoned, but what sayest thou" (verse 5)? They overlooked the fact that the law required that both the man and the woman should be stoned.

Were they truly concerned about the law of Moses? No! They were concerned about putting the Lord on the horns of a dilemma (verse 6). If he, thinking that the stoning would have been too harsh, said to turn her loose, he would have been in violation of the law of Moses. If he, on the other hand, had said to stone her, he would have been in violation of Roman law. Either statement would have furnished the Pharisees a pretext for accusations. However, the Lord maintained and vindicated the law but imposed upon them a condition which they had overlooked. That is, the one who executed the law must be free from the same sin, lest by stoning the woman he condemn himself as worthy of like death. They knew that he knew their lives and that they were as guilty as the woman they had brought. He had previously called them "a wicked and adulterous generation" (Matthew 16:4). These scribes and Pharisees forgot, too, the demand of Moses (Deuteronomy 17:5-7) that the witnesses (accusers) should cast

the first stone. The Lord's answer to them apparently hit like a lightning bolt. There can be no doubt that his words impressed upon them the truth that freedom from the outward act did not imply inward purity of sinlessness. Covered with shame, they left one by one.

Given this, the only conclusion possible is that the Lord meant that the ones who cast the stones must be innocent of the sin for which they wished the woman to be slain.

Brethren, don't misapply this verse. The question is not: "*Who is without sin?*"—*the Bible makes that clear*—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The question is: "Who has humbled himself in the sight of God and repented of his sins?"

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## God's Appointed Time and Place

Danny Butler

Our God is a God of order and consistency. The divine Creator has never been inconsistent in speech or action. The Genesis account of creation proves this position beyond any doubt. Creation was carried out in logical order. Light and water were created before the plants and animals that depended upon them. Earth was a perfect creation ready for man's inhabitation. It provided everything man needed for physical happiness. He was created sinless and in paradise. Man chose to violate God's divine commandment by committing sin. Therefore, it is up to man to make restitution according to God's instructions at his time and place.

From Genesis to Revelation, inspiration reveals the time and place specified by God, in which he will forgive the sins of man and restore him. It is unscriptural to try to apply the precepts of one dispensation to another. In the world today, many religious leaders give no consideration to God's laws in these matters.

The prophet Isaiah states: "**And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein**" (Isaiah 35:8). Isaiah prophesied concerning the coming of Christ's kingdom, the church. He assured the Jews that there was to be a way of salvation wherein all men would be welcome. Meeting God as he would direct has been available in every age of Biblical history.

### THE PATRIARCHAL PERIOD

While the first family lived in the garden, they had a place and time to meet God (Genesis 4:3,4). Cain and Abel, in making their offerings to God, brought them to a specified place. The account reads: "**In the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had**

**not respect. And Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell**" (Genesis 4:3-5).

Four points are clear in this reading. (1) The brothers had received instructions as to their offerings. (2) God was not pleased when his instructions were not met. (3) His appointed time and place are important. (4) He will not tolerate open violation of any part of his laws concerning worship activities.

In Genesis chapters 6 and 8, the account of the flood is recorded. By this time, the world was so wicked that God decided to destroy it. Noah was instructed to build an ark (Genesis 6:13-16). He was given the specifics concerning this venture in no uncertain terms. The material, dimensions, and contents of the ark were not left to human reasoning. After the task was completed, Noah with his family and the animals entered the ark and God shut the door (Genesis 7:16). Did all men have the same opportunity as Noah and his family? YES! Peter's record tells us that God was long-suffering while the ark was "a preparing" (I Peter 3:20). God's longsuffering and the preaching of Noah lasted for 120 years according to Genesis 6:3. God was just when he shut the door, and his day of mercy and grace was past.

### THE MOSAIC PERIOD

Three months after fleeing from Rameses, the Israelites had reached the wilderness of Sinai (Exodus 19:1). Being encamped before the mount, they were instructed how to prepare themselves to meet God (Exodus 19:10-17). After the precepts were obeyed, God met with the people. On Mount Sinai, the law was given with all its stipulations. The pattern was given for the tabernacle where God would abide. God had chosen his time and place. In speaking of this, Paul states:

**"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, see, saith he that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the**

**Mount"** (Hebrews 8:5).

Moses was to follow a strict pattern for the tabernacle. The church is an antitype of the tabernacle, and therefore the church has a pattern! It is absurd to contend that for thousands of years God had a *pattern* for worship, then *no pattern* during the last era of time.

### THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD

The Christian period began following Christ's death on the cross (Colossians 2:14). Christ's last will and testament was appropriated on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after his death. Men were added to the church or kingdom (Acts 2:47). The person desiring to commune with God must be in the kingdom for this to be possible.

One cannot offer spiritual sacrifices or acquire salvation outside the church, the spiritual body of Christ (I Peter 2:5-9), any more than the Jew could be acceptable outside the temple. God's precepts for approaching him consist of: faith (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6), repentance (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30, 31), confession (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10), and baptism for remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3,4). Only when these precepts have been met can one truly approach God (John 4:24).

The disciples met upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1,2). The early church understood that all aspects of the worship were set by divine instructions.

All honor and glory to God are confined to his church and nowhere else (Ephesians 3:21)!

### JUDGMENT AND ETERNITY

Inspiration states that there is a final time and place where God will meet man; that place is the judgment (Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:30, 31). Man will give an account of his life on earth (Romans 14:12; II Corinthians 5:10). Are you ready? Will you not comply with the precepts given in the new testament and prepare to meet God when this life is over?

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# The Cross Of Christ Made Of None Effect

Jesse Whitlock

Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:17-18, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." It is the preaching of the gospel; hence, the preaching of the cross of Christ that convicts and converts the sinner. We need a return to preaching in the perspective of I Corinthians 2:2 today, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

How does one go about this business of making the cross of Christ of none effect? I realize there are numerous ways. I would ask you to consider one for now. There are those who simply deny the Bible's teaching about the time of Christ's return for the purpose of judging this world. We know that the false prophets are legion. By misapplication and failure to study passages from Daniel, Revelation, and Matthew, many attempts have been made to predict the time of Christ's final coming:

1. **WILLIAM MILLER** set the date for 1843 and was wrong. He then set the date for 1844, but was wrong again.

2. **CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL** (founder of Jehovah's Witness), said the date had been 1874 (a secret and invisible coming of Christ). However, he later set the time for 1914. Both of these dates were wrong.

3. Various false prophets set dates in 1910, 1918, 1925 and 1931, et. al. As a matter of fact, false prophets are found in abundance in every century from the first to the present indicating Christ would come in that time.

4. **HAL LINDSEY** made a fortune on his book and movie: "*The Late, Great Planet Earth*," in which he set the date for Christ's return as being by or before 1988.

5. **BILLY GRAHAM** had previously set the date shortly after 1950. Seeing he was obviously wrong, he jumped on the Hal Lind-

sey bandwagon. Guess what? Wrong again!

6. **JOSEPH SMITH** (Mormonism) said the time was 1891.

Already the false prophets are working on still another date for the final return of Christ. There are those who now insist 1995 is the time of the end. Surely the year 2000 is going to be the target date for many. Notice all the prophets previously listed have a perfect record: Every date dead wrong! To realize this all we need to do is look to see the earth still stands where it has always stood. With Christ's return this earth will cease to exist. Psalm 102:25-26, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." Again, Isaiah 51:6. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment...." Now, please notice II Peter 3:10. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Finally, in Revelation 21:1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

## TIME-SETTING IS HOPELESS

Therefore, the false prophets are exposed and marked by the powerful word of God. We see the hopelessness of trying to set the time for Christ's final coming in Christ's own words of warning. He stated in Matthew 24:36. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." He declared in Matthew 24:42, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Hear him again in Matthew 24:44. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Some have dared to ask the question of whether or not God can tell time. I believe that God can tell time. I also believe that God knows his time frame better than anyone on earth. God's only begotten Son stated clearly that no man on earth knows the precise time when Christ

will return! Christ does not know that time. The angels in heaven do not know that time. Jesus said his "Father only" knows the time!

There is a new breed of false prophets in the past few centuries predicting a new "time frame" for the end. It is a novel and daring approach. Rather than going forward they have gone backward in time to the date of A.D. 70. This is the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies under General Titus. In this new horde of books we are told that Christ's final coming, the final judgment, the final abode for all men was settled once and for all in A.D. 70. A casual acquaintance with scripture proves this theory to be heresy. Was the earth burned up? (II Peter 3:10) NO! Were all the dead raised from their graves? (John 5:28-29) NO! Was all mankind judged and consigned to either heaven or hell in that day? (Matthew 25:31-46; II Corinthians 5:10) NO! Now, really think about this one: Was the last enemy destroyed? I Corinthians 15:25-26. "For he [Christ—JLW] must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." If Christ returned for the final advent in A.D. 70, then it follows, the last enemy (death) has been destroyed (no longer exists). I have put this question to the A.D. 70 errorists on several occasions. It puts the heretic between the proverbial rock and the hard place. It must be either physical death or spiritual death, i.e., sin. Which of these is non-existent today? If we say there is no physical death, we are wrong. If we say there is no spiritual death, we have lied. Lying is a sin (Revelation 21:8); since sin is spiritual death, we are still wrong!

## FALSE TEACHERS CANNOT AGREE

No wonder the world is confused about this subject. Even the false prophets cannot find agreement in their heresies. Some look to future dates. Now, this new breed of false prophets is going back to the future! If Christ's final coming and consummation of all things took place in A.D. 70 as these false prophets assert, then all their debates, writing, preaching, lectureships et. al., are all a waste of time. If the final judgment took place in A.D. 70, then my sentence, your sentence, their sentences were all sealed and set for all time and eternity in A.D. 70. Even if you or I could be persuaded to believe this heresy, what would it profit? There is not one thing that you or I could do to change the judgment given by God in A.D. 70. Not one!

The A.D. 70 errorists have placed themselves in the same category with our friends caught up in Calvinistic and Jehovah's Witnesses error. We are dealing with the concepts of election and non-election, the teaching that certain ones were elected to be saved and others were not elected. The Jehovah's Witnesses found themselves in a dilemma when it was figured that the 144,000 were already in heaven! The late brother Marshall Keeble had a good answer to the concept of predestination as taught by Calvinists and now, Kingites. He said, "The elect are the whosoever *wills* and the non-elect are the whosoever *won'ts*." Isn't it a shame that we must now use the same rebuttal, not only with Calvinistic false preachers, but with those of our own

number who have gone out from us? If the final judgment took place in A.D. 70, then why try to win me over to your heresy? The only plausible answer I can find is that this is a hobby horse. I know the A.D. 70 errorists insist that this is no hobby. I was recently given a business card (second hand) belonging to a preacher in this movement. It gave the usual information, name, location, times and phone. Now, in order to reach this preacher in his study, you must dial the usual prefix and then: 7070. Out of the ten thousand possible number combinations, what are the odds that one advocating this doctrine would be randomly assigned the number 7070? One in ten thousand? I wonder!

We started with Paul's writing in I

Corinthians 2:2. "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." When I hear the preaching, read the articles, and listen to the tapes of this A.D. 70 foolishness, I wonder if they would not like to re-write the apostle Paul? Perhaps they would have him to say that he determined not to know any thing, *save the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70*. This present heresy has made the cross of Christ my Lord to become of no effect. How tragic to take Christ and his cross out of the picture. How sinful to replace the cross of Christ with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70!

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## "ALL THINGS" MEANS ALL THINGS

J. Shannon (Shan) Jackson

In Philippians 4:13, Paul assures us that we can do **all things through Christ**. As Christians we need to simply accept his inspired statement as fact. Therefore, we must be always ready to share our values with others. Since "values" is an obscure term at times, let me define it as worth and usefulness, importance to the possessor. (*Webster's New Dictionary*, 1987) To plug this knowledge into a working statement, let me say, To seek and save the lost and to seek first God's kingdom is the basis of Christian value.

This is the essence of our text and the purpose of our Christianity. However, to fully grasp the meaning of this passage we must refer to its prerequisite verses. Beginning with verse 4 we find information that is essential to a full understanding of this passage. Here Paul speaks of the utter joy that is ours in Christ. **Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice.** It seems almost unspokeable not to participate in this sphere of joy that is reserved for God's elect. Notice also that in the Lord is the occasion for this rejoicing and in the Lord is also defined as the place of such. (Ephesians 1:3)

### JOY BEYOND MEASURE

Not only is joy the first mentioned prerequisite of this passage, it also serves as the core of the entire book of Philippians. We find the blessing of joy is mentioned from start to finish that is ours to appreciate and to share. Paul will also speak of this joy as one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22ff). This naturally adds further credence to our thoughts.

Joy beyond measure and abundant happiness as mentioned by Christ in the beatitudes demonstrate his plain and simple plea. **Blessed (joyous, happy) are the poor in spirit...** (Matthew 5:3ff) This is the joy that cannot be dampened by the slight of man, this is the joy that will show the way of salvation also to others.

Also in verse 5 we find another prerequisite. Here Paul refers to an attitude called moderation. Moderation calls for a Christ-like spirit of meekness. Moderation also challenges a Christian to display the control that is needed for a tame existence.

Only a stable Christian, a Christian under control, can be used by God in this out-of-control world. When a Christian or any one else is out of control, he is ineffectual, profitless, and without value (remember our introductory definition). Moderation is

shown in our serviceability and submission to the will of God. (James 4:7) Such value is founded on our love for the Father and is supported by the realization that he is with us and within us.

### HOW TO ESCAPE WORRY

Verses 6 and 7 show plainly that worry and anguish serve only to diminish our Christian zeal and value. Still, the question is asked, How, in a world of worry, does the Christian escape? Paul says that there is but one way and that is the way of prayer and supplication and when we make our requests known to God we will find the peace that surpasses all human understanding. We may not fully understand, but we can fully believe.

The final prerequisite for an understanding of our text is where Paul deals with Christian perspective that will allow a Christian to grow and prosper in the kingdom. The world boasts, We are what we eat, but Paul shows that a Christian is what he wants to be. To be consumed by things mean and ugly will simply make us mean and ugly, but thoughts of truth, honesty, compassion, and love will bring truth, honesty, compassion, and love to our lives.

This thought shows us the picture of a Christian life. A Christian life is a life of truthful perspective. A life seen as it really is. A life filled with Christ. (Philippians 4:10-12) One of the greatest heartfelt messages for us that our Lord ever promised is that he will be there when we need him and be forever by our side. (Hebrews 13:5) Such realization will bring us this needed perspective and allow for further growth and maturity in Christ and his church.

Then and only then can we do all things through Christ as Paul declares. Then and only then is our true value as Christ's stewards fully appreciated. Seeking the lost and seeking God will bring the joy without measure that Paul refers to in Christ. Joy, moderation, absence of worry, and the right perspective will lead us to a further knowledge of God and the desire he has for his children. But it can only be lived through the power of faith. Faith will allow us to live a life of Christian richness in God and prepare us for that eternal home on high. And, as Paul says, **We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.**

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## Historical Backgrounds

(Continued from Page 1)

will is not anticipated.

### THE MURCH-WITTY UNITY MEETINGS

The third round of unity meetings which began in the late 1930s created considerable interest. James Deforest Murch of the Christian Church and Claude E. Witty were the principals in the movement.

Murch addressed a rally in the Old Central Church in Toronto, Canada. A brother in the church of Christ was present and was so impressed by the message and its spirit that he thought such could be the means of promoting understanding and eventual unity in the two churches. This elder arranged a meeting between Claude E. Witty who was then the minister of the West Side-Central Church in Detroit. They agreed to consider that something should be done about the scandal of divisions in the ranks of the Christian Church/churches of Christ. [Sound familiar?]

A series of national meetings were held thereafter. The first "National Unity Meeting" was held where Witty preached in Detroit. The second unity meeting was held in Indianapolis. This is the meeting when H. Leo Boles delivered his famed address which lasted an hour and thirty minutes. Boles got right down to business.

On the second day, May 3, 1939, the meeting reached its climax. Boles said to the group that he was not clothed with any "official authority." Boles reminded the Digressives of their divisive tactics in other days. They were the parties who introduced organized societies and instrumental music over protest into the churches.

Boles bluntly told the Digressives in the assembly: "You know where you left the churches of Christ; hence you know where to find them; come back and unity is the inevitable result." Boles informed the Digressives that if they were seeking a compromise that they would not find it. [Our liberal brethren wearing the "Joplin Summit" brand say they seek no compromise. Why should they, since they have already abjectly sold out to the Digressives "lock, stock, and barrel."]

### THE JOPLIN SUMMIT

Sixty years have passed since the Murch-Witty Unity Movement. The Digressives now have strong new allies in a fourth round of unity meetings presently called the "Restoration Forum." Their allies this time around are our own liberal brethren who regard instrumental music as a "non-issue." The Vultee

church of Christ in Nashville under the misdirection of one of its elders, Carl McKelvey, chose the hapless and inept Alan Cloyd, fugitive from the ranks of the Christian Church, to represent churches of Christ in the new venture. The most notable act of Cloyd was his dramatic removal of the printed speech of Boles from the display table. [And this was obviously done with the knowledge and consent of the Vultee elders.]

On the other hand, the "Independent" Christian Church was represented by Don DeWelt, their highly recognized and respected champion. What ill-conceived and misbegotten judgment marked our church of Christ brethren in this misadventure which is still playing.

The "Joplin Summit" has continued under a different name, the "Restoration Forum," which has met annually since 1984. The Restoration Forum was hosted in 1994 by Abilene Christian University. And here opens up an entirely new front in the strategies of church of Christ "change agents" to sell out the churches of Christ to their old nemesis, the Digressives. And their successes in this calculated strategy are growing as will be documented in later articles.

### POSTSCRIPT

The time has come for our liberal brethren, the schools they lead, the papers they edit, the forums and lectures conducted by them, and their strategies they have devised to be put under the historical microscope for analysis. The next article will explore the past decade of events in the ongoing Joplin Summit/Restoration Forums. And the third article will put on display the words and actions of the "change agents" to develop what they have in mind when they speak of "unity in diversity."

As Job told his hypercritical friends that he was not inferior to them in knowledge, we say to our Postmodern liberal brethren that conservative brethren, too, have knowledge which is first grounded in Scripture. Our devious brethren are providing only "half loaf" of the facts of Restoration history.

It is indeed a perversion of historical facts which does not award to David Lipscomb the same importance to churches of Christ as it is to show the importance of Alexander Campbell to the Christian Church. Dr. Bill Humble is especially singled out for failing to provide this dimension of information in view of his highly touted reputation as a balanced Restoration historian. We use this means to say to our brethren that we are coming directly to you with our complaints. If we are wrong, take it to the church (Matthew 18:5).

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## A PADDLE FOR LIBERALS

Wayne Coats

That the bride of Christ is being ravished, raped, and ransacked by an increasing horde of liberal attackers, no one can successfully deny. Moreover, elders who should know better are permitting packs of wolves to enter in, no longer under the guise of sheep, but as well-known wolves, and flocks are being turned aside from the pasture of the good Shepherd. Men used to try to keep wolves out, but now they are invited in with great fanfare.

Liberal preachers are invited to spread their stinking refuse and declaim about

their *scholarship* while brethren sit goggle-eyed and mumble about somebody being smart. Even *infidels* sound smart to some people.

Way back when the church was being afflicted and the truth assailed by the liberal digressives, brother Moses E. Lard wrote, "In the third place, there is a peculiar dialect which characterizes these men. 'The reformation is a failure' is one of their favorite sayings. Not quite true, gentlemen. You are the failure; it is not the cause we plead. Again, and especially, 'I do not believe that

baptism is for the remission of sins.' This said with weighty emphasis. Why, then, do you still continue to fraternize with a people who do believe it? Your departure will give us pleasure, not pain. 'We must quit opposing the sects; they are as good as we are.' This is another of the pet expressions which ripen in the lips of these men. But we shall not abandon our position as long as the Bible remains the law of our action. On this you may count with confidence. Further, 'We must quit preaching our distinctive doctrines,' and again, 'our religion



lacks style.' But on these items I shall detain the reader no longer."

Brother Lard made a strong appeal to abide in the truth at a time when the liberal husks were being fed to anyone who would gather at the devil's trough. I would certainly join in the suggestion made by Moses E. Lard and ask why the liberals in the schools and congregations do not move on out and show some degree of integrity? Of course, it is impossible to show that which does not exist.

Back in Deuteronomy 24, there are some very interesting and unique directives set forth by Jehovah. I firmly believe the liberal preachers and professors among us should observe these instructions. God decreed, "For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy; that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee" (Deuteronomy 24:14). God would not walk among a people when it was unclean. A defiled, corrupt, and unholy camp was a stench to Jehovah. How is it that we can tolerate—even approve—a stinking and infested camp and be so deluded as to think that God will walk among us?

We strongly insist that brethren rise up and react against liberal perpetrators who would defile the camp of God. We must say, "Thou shalt have a place outside the

camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad" (Deuteronomy 24:12). We dare not allow liberals to deposit their refuse inside the camp if we want God to walk in our midst. We will either keep them out, or like the old liberals of yesteryear, when they get invited in and get their foul stench spread sufficiently, clean and holy saints will be forced out. Liberals have no compunction of conscience in trying to change the Bible, the church, and all that is holy unto the Lord. It is a time for solid saints to hold the weapon of truth in hand and defend the beautiful bride of Christ from the defilement of liberals.

Almighty God gave orders to keep the camp clean and thus he said that when each person came to, "ease thyself abroad...", said person was to dig a hole and "...turn back and cover that which cometh from thee" (Deuteronomy 24:13). Why does God want us to know about this matter? Why is it in the Bible? What is the point, if any?

It is a good time for faithful brethren in congregations of the Lord's people to give every liberal preacher and teacher among us a paddle and demand that they get out of the camp and cover up their liberalism at once. It is pure nonsense for elders to allow liberal preachers and professors to come inside the camp and "ease themselves" in pulpits where others have labored so faith-

fully in days gone by. We need to send the liberals out into the briar patches immediately instead of furnishing them with padded podiums from which to prattle.

We would assume that brethren and sisters would howl and gnash their teeth if they should enter the "holy sanctuary" some Sunday morn and find where vandals had defiled the pulpit on Saturday night. Imagine that same wailing crew of characters drooling and cooing like silly doves when the reverend liberal eases himself of a belly full of bilious and liberal corruption week after week as he stands in the pulpit.

I think our Lord would like to walk among the congregations, but we also know that he is careful where he walks (Revelation 2:1). I do not believe the Lord will walk in the midst of that which is filthy, defiled, and corrupt. If we gave the liberals a paddle and sent them on their way, we would hardly expect them to cover their foolishness. On second thought, it might be better to give them the pointed end of a Texas boot, aimed at the proper place and applied with sufficient force as to make sure that their landing would occur "without the camp." Of course, this is a strong metaphor and not to be taken literally. What I am trying to say in a very nice way is, "Brethren, let's clean up the camp."

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## THE DEBATE BETWEEN CATHOLIC RESPONSE AND DARRELL CONLEY

Hal Smith

The debate between Michael Luther and Dr. Robert Narvaez, of Catholic Response, and Darrell Conley, preacher for the Northern Oaks Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas, August 14-17, 1995 was well attended all four nights, and was an overwhelming success for the truth and the Lord's church.

Both Luther and Dr. Narvaez were weak in the presentation of their position that "The Catholic Church is the true church of Christ in which alone is to be found salvation (and which is infallible in teaching the truths revealed by Christ)." Brother Conley was extremely well-prepared, and presented the truth in a kind but powerful and logical manner. He proved beyond any shadow of doubt that "The church of Christ is the only true church in which is salvation, and that the Bible alone is our only authority in faith and practice." Neither man representing Catholic Response could defend his position, nor could they answer the arguments brother Conley set forth.

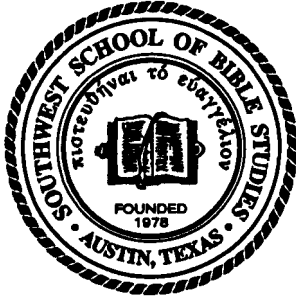
Brother Conley used their own history and doctrine to prove that the Catholic church is a man-made church, and that it is nothing like the church of the New Testament. He logically showed the fallacies and inconsistencies of the arguments set forth by Luther and Narvaez. Using God's word and some logical charts, he set forth truth in an irrefutable manner. He forced the Catholics to admit things which dealt devastating blows to Catholicism. One of these devastating blows was their admission that the pope is "just a man," and that some of the popes have been so wicked and immoral they will surely be lost forever. This

is not what Catholics want their people to believe.

After the debate, quite a number of Catholics expressed dissatisfaction with Catholicism and a desire to learn the truth. On the Sunday after the debate two Catholic couples attended Bible class and worship with the Northern Oaks church. In class, they expressed their disappointment with Catholicism and felt they had been deceived. They requested further study with brother Conley, and these studies are now underway. Not only were the Catholics impressed, but also there have been Baptists who have called brother Conley to express appreciation for his excellent defense of the truth.

This debate was a success in every sense of the word. Brother Roy Deaver was the able moderator and gave invaluable assistance with charts, logical arguments and questions. Brothers Conley and Deaver are an outstanding team "set for the defense of the gospel." This debate proves that truth, when presented logically, in love, will prevail. At a later date, sometime year after next, brother Conley will again meet representatives of Catholic Response in a public forum.

You may order either audio or video tapes of the debate from Paul Tuller; 504 Cosgrove; San Antonio, Texas 78210. The cost is \$27.95 for audio and \$44.95 for video. This includes tax and postage. Perhaps it should be noted that the video tapes were actually made by World Video Bible School, but are being handled by Paul and Shirley Tuller (Tullstar) as noted above.



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# Wresting The Scriptures?

Terry W. Frizzell

In II Peter 3, Peter writes of those who wrest [pervert] the scriptures to their own destruction "which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest,...unto their own destruction." Peter penned an important principle in this verse which has continued to be true time and time again. The two ways in which man has perverted the scriptures are in the same problem—teaching out of context

It seems the pendulum in our brotherhood swings from one side to the other with so many people never actually studying to see what the passages teach. So-called "liberal" brethren, by definition, give liberties which God has not given. So-called "anti" brethren, by definition, bind things which God has not bound. Both of these are done, more often than not, by taking a passage out of context to prove a preconceived belief.

The purpose of this article is not to label anyone, call any names, or prove the writer has knowledge superior to anyone else. (It does not take someone with superior knowledge to understand scriptures but it takes a student of the word of God who is willing to study.) The purpose of this article is to take two of the most commonly misused texts and show the context and application given by the inspired penman.

## I CORINTHIANS 10:12

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Many today take I Corinthians 10:12 to teach that one should never boast of salvation. These say that as soon as one claims to be sure of salvation, that person is ready to fall. However, the context of this passage does not uphold this position.

When one studies chapter 10 of I Corinthians, he can easily see that Paul is showing the Corinthians an example they were not to follow. He uses the children of Israel as an example and shows why some of them fell away. Paul give a history of Israel after God has miraculously delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, and shows that they had not yet learned to depend on God. They lusted after the food in Egypt at Kibrothhattaavah because they thought they were dependent only upon themselves (I Corinthians 10:6 *cf.*, Numbers 11:4, 33, 34). The convinced Aaron to build a golden calf so they could participate in idolatrous worship because they thought Moses had left them alone (I Corinthians 10:7 *cf.*, Exodus 32:1-6). They even committed fornication as a part of their idolatrous practices at a later time (I Corinthians 10:8 *cf.*, Numbers 25:1-9). Once again de-

ceding that they were wholly dependent upon themselves for provisions they "made trial of the Lord" (*ASV*), and murmured against Moses' authority (I Corinthians 10:9 *cf.*, Exodus 17:1-7; I Corinthians 10:10 *cf.*, Exodus 16:2). Finally, Paul insists that all these events were being written for an example (I Corinthians 10:11). What example? That those who feel they are standing *alone* will fall (I Corinthians 10:12). Paul is telling the Corinthians no man can stand alone without God. He is not telling them they cannot know of salvation.

## I CORINTHIANS 14:26-35

This passage is abused by more than just a few. Some brethren take the first few verses of this passage out of context to attempt to prove that worship should be an impromptu, "holy wow" type of gathering. They teach that the "traditional" worship will just not do today because many, like the Corinthians, just need a "little more." And others take the last few verses of this passage to say that no woman should be able to speak at all in an assembly of the saints. Where does the truth lie? Somewhere in the context. Somewhere in the context surely the apostle Paul was setting forth a lesson to the Corinthians, and not simply several unconnected verses. The lesson of the context is not difficult to understand.

The context of this passage begins at chapter 12. There Paul gives a description of miraculous gifts. In chapter 13, Paul instructs as to how long these gifts will last, and in chapter 14 he shows the Corinthians how they have abused these gifts. These brethren were dividing over differing miraculous gifts.

Beginning with the abuses of the miraculous gifts in chapter 14, Paul rebukes them for trying to edify *themselves* by their gifts rather than using them for the purposes for which God intended (I Corinthians 14:1-12). In verse 22 he shows the purpose of speaking in tongues and for prophesying: "...tongues are for a sign,...to them that believe not." In verse 26, he continues the thought of their abuse of miraculous gifts by *rebuking* them for turning worship to the almighty God into a party.

This is exactly the opposite of what those who take this verse out of context use it to teach. Paul is not telling these brethren how they *should* worship but rather he is rebuking them for how they *are* worshipping. He adds that God is not the author of

confusion (verse 33), which is what their worship had become.

In context, this passage confirms that worship should be directed toward God, not designed to entertain man. But Paul is not done yet, he continues this same thought with an additional problem. Paul mentions that the women were to be under obedience (subjection, *ASV*) to the men in the assembly (verse 34), even to the point of silence. The whole context of chapter 14 is a public assembly in which they were using miraculous gifts. The prophets (men) were prophesying in these assemblies and Paul commanded their uninspired wives to be silent (verse 34). The word *silent* here literally means "not to make a noise." Taking this verse out of context to apply it today would force one to the conclusion that women could not even sing in the assembly, which would obviously not be considered "keeping silent." If one goes all the way back to I Corinthians 11, he will find that Paul gave commands as to how the *prophetesses* in that assembly were to prophesy. Is he contradicting himself in chapter 14? No, the difference is that the women of chapter 14 did not have the gift of prophecy. Without an inspired prophecy, the prophets' wives (14:34) were to keep silent.

Does the context of I Corinthians 14 allow women to preach in the assemblies today? No. A sincere preacher of the gospel should never be forced to use a passage out of context to prove something even if the belief is true. I Timothy 2:11-12 deals with women who would preach and usurp authority today, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." The context of I Corinthians 14 does not deal with the public assembly today because of the miraculous events being considered. The context allows no room to condemn women translators without requiring one also to teach that they cannot even sing when the command is for all to do so. The late brother Guy N. Woods, dealing with this passage in the Freed-Hardeman Open Forum, writes this:

"We have earlier noted that I Cor. 14:34, 35, is obviously class legislation, designed for a specific situation (meetings in which miraculous revelations were received), and particular women (wives of the prophets). If some are disposed to think otherwise, and to urge the application of the meeting to all women

they should explain how the following women can learn anything from their husbands at home!" (1) Single girls. (2) Widows. (3) Women whose husbands are not Christians. (4) Women whose husbands have lately obeyed the gospel and are novices. (5) Women who know more than their husbands do!" (Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers, Open Forum, Freed-Hardeman College Lectures, [Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College, 1976], 108-109.*)

#### CONCLUSION

The scriptures are not thrown together without any purpose or pattern. There is a harmony in the Bible. We would avoid so many problems in the brotherhood if all would take the time to study the context, and explain passages the way God intended for them to be.

The spirit of wresting the scriptures to one's own destruction is definitely not dead today. However, it is just as wrong today as it was when Peter was penning the very verse referring to such a problem. Remember always to take time to study openly and honestly, and never use the "sword of the Spirit" in a deceitful or destructive way.

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## My Aim As A Preacher

Wesley Simons

The major points in this article were written by Dub McClish and appeared in *The Minister's Monthly* in June 1967, page 483. The points are so great that we feel they need to be repeated. I am convinced that many preachers have forgotten what their true aim ought to be. Many preachers are so busy doing minuscule things and trying to please all the people all the time that they do not have time to study, visit the lost, visit the sick, edify the saved and defend the truth. Now let us notice what our aim ought to be.

1. "Be true to God's word regardless of the consequences." Some preachers are so afraid of being dismissed that they will not preach what needs to be preached. They will not preach on subjects like: marriage-divorce-and-remarriage, social drinking, dancing, various denominational errors, and the like. I want to be able to say on judgment day, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). God will take care of us if we proclaim the truth. Even if we are

killed as were some in the first century, then heaven will be our final abode. Brethren, it takes courage to be a preacher. Who are you trying to please?

2. "Seek the approval of God above all others in spite of who might disapprove." Every preacher must have the attitude that he is God's man first. We are to proclaim the truth in love. Those to whom we preach may or may not approve of our message. This we regret. However, consider this: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye" (Acts 4:19). Also ponder this: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). We cannot allow the pew to control the pulpit. We must allow God's word to control the pulpit. Many preachers have become "so tactful" that they never say anything worth hearing. Some are trying to preach without making enemies. This is impossible! Jesus said, "Blessed

are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake" (Luke 6:22). The Bible also states, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). Somehow, some feel that they know more than God in that one can live the Christian life and never suffer in any way for it.

Some have declared that if Stephen would have been more tactful, then he would not have been stoned. What nonsense! Those who state such are so-called preachers.

Brethren, we are living in a very liberal and compromising age. Can God depend on us to be his mouthpiece here on this earth? Will we have the conviction to speak the truth in love regardless of the cost? May God help us to do this.

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For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

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—North Carolina

Rocky Mount: **Church of Christ**, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, Wayne Coats, preacher, Tel. (615) 758-406.

—Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., Al Brown and David Brown, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

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## BIBLE RESOURCE PUBLICATIONS?



Bible Resource Publications was formed in early 1994 by David P. Brown, a faithful and long-time gospel preacher who is a frequent speaker at many lectureships and associate editor of this paper, and Kenneth D. Cohn, one of the elders of the Spring Church of Christ which eldership has the oversight of the Houston College of the Bible. The intended purpose of the enterprise was to make available in one place all the resources helpful to the diligent student in the furtherance of his or her knowledge of God's holy writ. Bible Resource Publications carries in inventory about 350 titles by outstanding authors committed to walking the "Old Paths" plus audio and video tapes, Bibles, Bible software, class material, and communion supplies.

Contending for the Faith is published by Bible Resource Publications in much the same manner as was done by brother Rice, except computers are now used much more extensively, and is edited in exactly the same manner since brother Rice is still the editor and will continue in such capacity while breathing God's free air. Bible Resource Publications wishes to perpetuate the paper for the very reason that brother Rice first established and has to the present operated it, that is, to keep brethren informed about church and doctrinal matters and particularly about those speaking perverse things seeking to corrupt the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.

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## A Review of an ACU Press Publication

By C. Leonard Allen and Richard T. Hughes

# DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

In the preface to their book, *DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ*, C. Leonard Allen and Richard T. Hughes at least pay lip service to "the great debt we both owe to the churches of Christ," saying that "the Bible is the touchstone, the final authority for all Christian faith and practice." But by the time they lead us through the historical detritus of what they were taught at the University of Iowa, they have the churches of Christ, *not* as the *one true church* established by Jesus Christ, but merely one more *denominational outgrowth* of history with roots in the Renaissance and the Reformation, among Puritans and Baptists, in the Age of Reason (Enlightenment) and the American Experience, and have us in debt to Martin Luther, the Anabaptists and even the Holiness and Pentecostal Churches!

In their final chapter on "What Can We Learn?" they ask, "Why bother with tracing our 'profane' or human roots?" By the time I got that far in the book, I asked the same question: Yes, *WHY?* If ever a book had no justification for being written, it just has to be this book.

### WHAT ABOUT THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT?

As for the "restoration movement," their position is anomalous. In the first place, neither one really believes that there *ever was* an apostasy, but that the church existed among the Catholics, the Orthodoxies, the Puritans, and even among the Protestant denominations through all those centuries. If so, what was there to "restore"!

Contradictorily, even if there *was* an apostasy, *which* "restoration movement" was the *true* one, since, in their

view, "our antecedents" are in "Christian history" and "others outside our particular movement have appropriated the restoration ideal?"

### ARE OUR ROOTS SIMPLY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

In Chapter 1, entitled, "Roots, Why Bother?," these men practically hoot at the idea that "our roots are simply in the New Testament and that we really have not been shaped in any significant way by the intervening history" (p.2). As for our rejection of human tradition, they contend that such rejection is *itself* such a tradition and that we are just self-deceived (p.3).

[Studying their bibliography at the end of each chapter, it is abundantly clear that they rely far more on *sectarian* and *secular* "scholarship" than anything that *genuine* Christian scholars have to say.]

### DID PURITANS, BAPTISTS PROVIDE OUR SEEDBED?

On page 7, they assert that "we among Churches of Christ are principally heir to the Puritans for our restoration appeal...The Baptist movement emerged out of Puritanism...continued the stress on restoration...they [the Baptists] provide the seedbed of our own movement." Elders, brethren, is this what you believe and teach? It is what *they* teach at ACU!

Time and again, as I studied through their book, it was like they were quoting from Rubel Shelly—or *vice versa*. For example, on page 19, citing so-called "Christian Humanists," their comments favored their concern "*not* to recover the *primitive church* but simply to restore the *teachings* of the ancient Christians..." (Continued on Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 11

November/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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*Contending for the Faith* was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

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## Editorial...

### Why Won't Elders Read!

If there is any *one* phenomenon among churches of Christ these days harder to understand than any other it has to be why most of our supposed-to-be *elders* won't even *read!*

These are those among us who are *supposed* to be guarding the flock against "grievous wolves" and speakers of "perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," warned against in Acts 20:29-30.

Instead of taking heed unto themselves and unto all the flock over the which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers (verse 28) and watching (verse 31), many of our elderships continue throwing their respective flocks to the wolves as well as inviting perverse speakers to lead away the disciples under their oversight. It makes no sense at all!

#### IF ELDERS WOULD ONLY READ!

When I left the U. S., September 18th, for further missionary work in Murmansk, Russia, I purposely put four books among my things to read while overseas. (Jet-lagging, as always, this would give me something useful to do when waking up at 12:00, 1:00 or 2:00 o'clock in the morning most of the mornings that I should be away.)

The books I took with me this time were some written principally by C. Leonard Allen, who teaches in the College of Bible Studies at Abilene Christian University, with assists by Richard T. Hughes, of Pepperdine University, as well as by Michael R. Weed, Professor of Christian Ethics, Institute for Christian Studies, of Austin, Texas.

The first book I read was *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ*, authored by Allen and Hughes. I did not have to read long before asking myself, "Are these *really* our brethren?" If not wolves among the sheep, they are at least coyotes among the chickens!

#### ALL QUESTIONS; NO ANSWERS!

Instead of edifying readers with dependable answers, their primary purpose in writing this book evidently was to raise faith-destroying questions. Going to some length to establish their "theological credentials," they then vaunt their alleged "scholarship" to intimidate and mislead.

Although both of these men took graduate degrees from Harding and Abilene, respectively, they also both took the Ph.D. in the history of Christianity from the University of Iowa—and herein may be the source of their problem. Instead of relying on the *Bible* as God's inerrant word for their doctrine, both of them look to secular and sectarian *history* for answers—the result being no reliable answers at all!

#### FOUR BOOKS READ; THE FIRST ONE REVIEWED

Although I read all four of the books I took with me (including *The Worldly Church*, *The Cruciform Church* and *Distant Voices*)—and all four need to be reviewed as time permits—nevertheless, in *this* issue of *Contending for the Faith*, I am limiting my review just to the first one earlier mentioned.

Please now turn back to Page 1 and read my review of *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ*. Then study brother J. E. Choate's insightful article on "The Evolution of Modern/Postmodern Theology" in which he also mentions this very same book, starting on Page 5.

If only we can persuade *elders* to do their "homework," as at least *some* of us are trying to do, there might be hope for faithful churches of Christ on into the 21st century even yet!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## ROOTS—A Review...

(Continued from Page 1)

Of Erasmus, they said, "He believed...that even if one could reconstruct a precise New Testament model of the church—which he doubted—it would not be suitable for imitation in the present because conditions had changed." [Sound familiar?]

#### DID BIBLE PROVIDE OUR BLUEPRINT?

By Chapter 3, Allen and Hughes had waxed so confident of their position that they were *insisting* that our roots go back to the Reformation. "While Churches of Christ have insisted over the years that they are not Protestants but only Christians, their roots nonetheless reach back into the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century" (p.21)

On pages 23-24, they sound like Rubel again: "Does the Bible provide a complete blueprint for all time laying out the details of church government, forms of worship, and rules of behavior? Or does it rather provide a central core of saving truth, leaving many of the details to human discretion and the changing circumstances of time and place?"

#### WHAT OF OUR NON-USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC?

Rather than attribute our non-use of instrumental music in worship to the silence of the scriptures, they seek its roots in the views of Huldreich Zwingli and the Anabaptist Conrad Grabel (p.27).

Instead of citing I Peter 4:11 ("If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...") they try tying us to William Tyndale, saying, "Tyndale believed that scripture alone should determine all Christian beliefs, practices and institutions" (p. 37).

[And what if he did? Would this mean that *we* got it from *him*? Or that both he and we got it from the *same source*—God's word!]

#### WAS CARTWRIGHT OUR PATTERN?—OR BIBLE?

As for the Puritans, Allen and Hughes go to Thomas Cartwright, a Puritan spokesman, saying he "maintained that the biblical pattern of the church—set out especially in Acts of the Apostles—should be the pattern..." (p. 43)

[Once again, does this mean that *we* got the idea from *him*? Or that he and we both got it from the *New Testament*?]

#### WHAT OF BAPTISM AS IMMERSION?

And what of immersion for baptism? Do these ACU teachers look to the *scriptures* for its roots?

Do they show how Philip and the eunuch "**went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him**" (Acts 8:38)?

Do they go to Romans 6:4 or Colossians 2:12 to show that baptism is a *burial*?

No, they follow their agenda to Roger Williams, who, by 1638, "had become convinced that scriptural baptism involved the immersion of adult believers, not the sprinkling of infants" (p. 57). And because Williams and some others rebaptized each other and together formed the first *Baptist Church* in Providence, Rhode Island, somehow Allen and Hughes conclude we must have gotten immersion for baptism from the *Baptists*. Yea, verily!

#### DID THE BAPTISTS WATER OUR SEEDBED?

But our two "historians" are determined to tie us even tighter to the Baptists.

By page 65, they are saying, "...our primary concern in this chapter is the Separate Baptist movement that emerged in the mid-eighteenth century. For it was this stream that watered the seedbed in which our own movement took root in the early nineteenth century."

Then again, on page 68, they aver, "It is hardly surprising that the efforts of Barton Stone and then Alexander Campbell took root in those southern areas where the Separate Baptists had, for a generation or more, rejected creeds and held up the Bible alone as their guide. Stone and Campbell called for a simplified Christianity achieved by a 'restoration of the ancient order,' and that call struck rich chords among a people long nurtured on simplicity and a passion for primitive Christianity."

Concluding their chapter on "Our Roots Among Baptists," Allen and Hughes say, "It is striking that Landmark Baptists and Churches of Christ flourished in the same region at about the same time and that they both took similar approaches to the task of restoration...Perhaps the similarities should not surprise us. For the Landmark Baptist movement ultimately drew its strength from the earlier Separate Baptists—the ~~same~~ restorationist strand of the Baptist heritage that nourished the Stone and Campbell movements in the early years of the nineteenth century" (p.71-72).

[By this same line of reasoning, our roots must be in the Baptist churches of *our own day*, too, for we are flourishing in the same region and the same time and teach at least *some* of the same things as they! As hard as they oppose us, it would be difficult to tell the *Baptists* that. At least they have no such illusions even if Allen and Hughes so teach.]

#### WAS CAMPBELL DEPENDENT ON JOHN LOCKE?

In their chapter on "Our Roots in the Age of Reason," these two ACU professors would have us believe that the influence of the Enlightenment philosophy of John Locke—especially on the mind of Alexander Campbell—contributed heavily to the mind-set of the early restorationers.

Referring back to positions taken by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, they state that Locke, in his book, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, concluded that "Christianity is a reasonable faith, especially in its essentials: the Messiahship of Jesus and obedience to his clear commands. All other biblical teachings Locke viewed as non-essential issues..." (p. 78-79).

#### WHAT ABOUT "THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE"?

Without defining exactly what "others" might include in what is styled *their* "restoration sentiment," in the chapter on "Our Roots in the American Experience," Allen and Hughes assert that

there was a "wide variety of restorationists" in this new nation at the time of Barton W. Stone, the Campbells, et. al.

"...alongside Churches of Christ," they state, "were Baptists, Mormons, Shakers, and other radical sects who intended to restore primitive Christianity and viewed that task as central to their work" (p. 89)

#### **WAS THERE BUT ONE CHURCH THROUGH THE CENTURIES?**

Pursuing their agenda that there was but one church through the centuries, on page 93, they state that "it would never have occurred to most Europeans to ask, 'Which of all the churches is the true church?' There was but one."

Therefore, when they come to "The Birth of Our Movement," instead of honoring, extolling and defending the restoration principle, they argue contrary to it with all their might. Rather than agreeing that by going only by the Bible we restored the same Christianity contained therein, they say we just "presumed" we did so.

On page 110, they charge that our "presumed lack of tradition became itself a tradition," our "rejection of theology became a fundamental theological maxim," and our "zeal to escape the constraints of history became the substance and core of the particular history of this particular people."

They taunt the Churches of Christ with but *assuming* that we are "a people whose only roots lie in the Bible itself"!

#### **ACU NO LONGER CONTENTS FOR THE ONE FAITH**

With teachers like this having infiltrated the ACU faculty, is it any wonder that those being graduated by ACU no longer know how—or even care to—"contend earnestly for the faith as it was once delivered" (Jude 3)?

In their closing chapters, Allen and Hughes pay homage to three movements that they clearly accept as "Christian" as much or more so than the Churches of Christ in what they call "Christian history"—those of Martin Luther, the Anabaptists and the Holiness and Pentecostal groups.

#### **DID LUTHER RESTORE THE GOSPEL OF GRACE?**

Whereas they say "we" focused on "restoring the forms and structures of the apostolic church," they credit Luther with restoring "the gospel of grace," opining that "Luther can help us see more clearly the strengths and weaknesses of our traditional view of restoration" (p. 113)

These ACU professors swallow hook, line and sinker what Luther taught on grace through faith without works. Evidently with approval, they state, "For Luther, the divine Word was spoken supremely in the person of Jesus Christ, not in a mere book...The Bible was the Word of God only in a secondary sense...By itself the Bible is only a dead word. But when the Spirit works in conjunction with the preaching of the gospel, the Bible becomes a powerful, living word..." (p. 116)

[Harmonize this, if you can, with what Jesus Christ himself said in John 6:63, John 12:48, and the writing of Hebrews 4:12!]

#### **DID ANABAPTISTS RESTORE APOSTOLIC LIFESTYLE?**

For "restoring an apostolic lifestyle," Allen and Hughes next credit the Anabaptists, referring to them as "believers," and saying they were "determined...to embrace a lifestyle consistent with scripture and to signify this commitment by submission to believer's baptism..." (p. 128)

Though for the most part Anabaptists did not practice immersion, yet these ACU writers clearly consider them to have been Christians, saying, that the hail of fury wreaked upon "the Anabaptists...would mark their story as one of the great stories of faith and martyrdom in the history of the Christian faith."

#### **WERE HOLINESS, PENTECOSTALS RESTORATIONIST, TOO?**

Having known advocates of Holiness and Pentecostal

churches intimately from childhood, I never dreamed that anyone claiming to be of the Churches of Christ would deem them to have been "restoration" movements, too.

However, in Chapter 12, that is exactly what Allen and Hughes claim, describing them as "two restorationist movements in America" devoted to holy living and spiritual empowerment as their central themes (p. 137).

Whether they, the Anabaptists, the Lutherans, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians or any other denomination believe, teach and practice "the whole counsel of God" seemingly has no importance for C. Leonard Allen or Richard T. Hughes. They are determined to look upon and call them "Christians," "brethren" and all the rest.

#### **SO WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS MESS?**

In their closing chapter, rhetorically, they ask, "What Can We Learn?"—going on to quote from David Steinmetz (1976), "Those who believe that they have no creed but the Bible will...be victimized by the past..."

They esteem "conversations" with Erasmus, Zwingli, Bullinger, Bucer, Calvin, Tyndale, Cartwright, Cotton, Williams, Backus, Stearns, Graves, Smith, Stone and Campbell not only as "enriching" but as absolutely essential to understanding just who we are and how we got to be this way.

According to Allen and Hughes the sweeping rejection of human traditions characteristic of Churches of Christ "results not in a traditionless and culture-free faith but in a faith even more vulnerable to blind traditionalism"! (p. 154)

"We repeat:" they repeat, "human traditions are simply inevitable, even among those—or perhaps *especially* among those—who reject them. We would do well, therefore, to admit it, for only then can we begin the self-conscious engagement with tradition so vital to a healthy church."

#### **WHAT HUMAN TRADITIONS MUST WE ADMIT?**

And what are some of "our" human traditions they require that we must 'fess up to? On page 155, they list several:

- 1) The way we conceive the task of restoration itself.
- 2) Our particular way of interpreting the Bible.
- 3) Our "word only" view of the Spirit.
- 4) Our five steps of salvation.
- 5) Our use of invitation hymns.
- 6) Our "low church" worship style (whatever *that* is!).
- 7) Our exclusive use of one particular version or translation.
- 8) Our disproportionate focus on Acts of the Apostles and certain Pauline epistles.
- 9) Our opposition to (take your pick) racial integration, racial segregation, church cooperation, church non-cooperation, long hair on men, short hair on women...

[To which we might all join Ruble in one big "Holy WOW!"]

Oh, they are not suggesting a rejection of ALL our traditions. "That," they tell us, "would be disorienting and difficult." And of course they are not suggesting a bland acquiescence to them. "That would be disastrous."

But perhaps the most disorienting, difficult and disastrous of all would be to try following the self-contradictory course espoused by these two misguided "brethren" (?) in their misbegotten book. Of course, it would be nice to know all about our doctrinal "roots;" but we'll never find them in ACU's *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ!*

—2956 Allshore  
Memphis, Tennessee 38118





# THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN/POSTMODERN THEOLOGY

J. E. Choate

The downgrading of the conservative churches of Christ by our brethren was begun in the 1950s. It was not necessarily offensive at first, but gradually became so by the 1960s. There were first the slogans, *e.g.*, "the man not the plan." This slogan conveyed the idea that it is not the plan (hearing, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism) which saves, but the man.

Here is the embedded idea that doctrine is secondary, not crucial. A contemporary slogan goes like this: that the churches of Christ are not patterned after the *apostolic church*, but began as a small sect on the *American frontier*, and developed into its present denominational status.

Our liberal brethren have completely abandoned the concept that the churches of Christ are patterned after the apostolic church. The recent books published by ACU, *Will The Cycle be Unbroken?* and *Discovering our Roots* are two prime examples of this disclosure.

This did not happen overnight. It all began in the 1950s when a small number of our brethren entered the schools of religion in major universities in America and Europe. A few of them picked up on liberal theologies. Some left the church. Unfortunately, not all did, and some are positioned in high places of influence such as our colleges and journals.

The distance from the past forms of modern theology to the most recent postmodern theology is a narrow line which our liberal brethren succeed in disguising with a disclaimer here and there which is mostly camouflaged in ambiguous theological rhetoric. They do not address postmodern theology either to condemn or to praise it. And they never have. We would that they would do one or the other. Their consistent silence conveys more than anything else where they do stand.

The burden or the thesis of this article is to take giant steps over time to trace the evolution of postmodern theology from the Age of Reason (18th century) to the most extreme forms of postmodern theology today, which some of our brethren have bought into in part or in whole. Such brethren surround us whose high profile names are listed on college rosters and affixed to such journals as *Image* and *Wineskins*.

## SEVEN STEPS IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE POSTMODERN APOSTASY

The *first step* in the modern age must start with the Age of Reason (Enlightenment) and modern science in the 18th and 19th centuries. The liberals in the field of religion began their long journey to make Christianity acceptable to the people. We could dwell on the influence of Voltaire and Thomas Paine who were leading spokesmen for the Age of Reason and the religion of Deism. However, these are the theological dinosaurs of another time.

The *second step* is the "German connections." There is, first, the theory called the Documentary Hypothesis which suggests that the Pentateuch was a compilation of five documents written over a period of five centuries by a spate of writers labeled J, E, P, and D. This view was formulated with the evolutionary hypothesis of Julius Wellhausen in mind that Scripture is the end of an *evolutionary creative process*, and not a *supernatural revelation* from God. This "higher critical" approach did much

to destroy the historical belief in the authorship of the biblical books.

The second theory was termed "form criticism" and "source criticism" which concludes that the gospel records are simply the collection of floating "myths" in the folk mind of the apostolic period. The idea is that Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote the gospels independent of each other, and that each pulled together materials from a common source, and that each writer created his own account. These theories reached their height in the 1950s at the apex of the influence of neo-orthodoxy.

The *third step* is the Darwinian hypothesis of evolution which presents two theories: *Atheistic* evolution is the anti-supernatural approach to biological life origins teaching that all life emerged from a single cell through the natural process over billions of years evolving into the present highly complex forms of life. Evolution is one of the main pillars today in postmodern theology as it has been for more than a century.

The second interpretation of evolution is known as *theistic* evolution that God guides the process as the lower forms of life evolve into higher forms of life and man.

The *fourth step* is the "Social Gospel." The concept is that the social gospel is not about the sinfulness of man, but the betterment of man which is tied to the evolutionary theory that man is upon an upward spiral and grows better daily. The primary emphasis is on moral value. The advent of World War I destroyed this myth, and thus dealt a death blow to this now defunct form of liberalism.

The social gospel was replaced by neo-liberalism which continued the search for God, not outside, but inside of man. Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969) was the founding father of the new liberalism which precipitated the liberal-fundamentalist controversy. Today the fundamentalists are referred to as the "religious right." This article proposes to update the concepts of postmodern theology in a comprehensive manner.

The *fifth step* is neo-orthodoxy which means the "new orthodoxy." Most historians attribute the beginning of neo-orthodoxy to Karl Barth's 1919 commentary on Romans, but is more clearly identified with Rudolph Bultmann. Neo-orthodoxy stressed an experiential encounter with God while retaining many of its beliefs, *e.g.*, the Documentary Hypothesis, and Form and Source Criticism. Some of our liberal brethren are still citing Barth as though he remains a contemporary authority in theology. Much of neo-orthodox theology remains still a vital part of postmodern theology.

The *sixth step* is labeled postmodern theology. This extreme atheistic form of theology emerged from the cocoon of neo-orthodoxy, the charismatic rage of the 1960s, and the "death of God" theology which dominated the late 60s and 70s. What all of this meant then, means the same and far more today.

The end of the modern age is clearly marked by numerous events. The Model T Ford is replaced by inter-planetary space ships. The wireless telegraph merges into the super information highways of cyberspace. Freud and Marx created social systems which have given way to new forms of social engineering. Wars are no longer fought with men flying by the "seat of their pants," but by electronic push buttons. However, models (paradigms)

change at rates which sometimes outrun us. We could go on and on in this vein.

The *seventh step* is the projection of the forms and substance of postmodern theology. The task is no easy one. The "Death of God" theology strips the Bible of any claims to divine origin, and remains coiled up in the very bosom of postmodern theology. The theory is that God no longer speaks to man through Scripture, and, as a matter of fact, never did. The Bible is thus seen as the result of 4000 years of evolutionary changes from Moses to Barth. Christianity is regarded as just another historical religion.

Postmodern theology was not created by a handful of theologians. It emerged from the theological cocoons of the immediate past still carrying all of the theological baggage accumulated throughout the modern period. The dynamics of postmodern theology took on new dimensions with the emergence of liberation theologies in the 1960s which were first dominated with concerns for the poor. Liberation theology today is mostly identified with the women's liberation theology, and gay and black liberation movements.

And strangest of all is the control exercised by an idea which is presently called "deconstruction." Jaques Derrida, a French philosopher, is the godfather of deconstruction which is running rampant in philosophy, literature, literary criticism, and post-modern theology.

In theology, deconstruction calls for dismantling of Scripture, and the reconstruction of the Bible to accommodate some theological hypothesis. This is best expressed by Schussler-Fiorenza who calls for a complete reconstruction of the Bible to give woman her rightful place in God's scheme of things. This, on a popular level, would lead to the removing of every gender reference to God.

The most outrageous expressions of the deconstruction of Scripture are best explained in the work of the "Jesus seminar" which strips away most of the sayings attributed to Jesus. They have gone so far as to reconstruct the "fifth gospel" based upon the theory of liberal higher criticism that the "Q" gospel first circulated in oral traditions in the apostolic church before being put into written form by the four gospel writers.

This influence from the concepts of deconstruction and re-structure has filtered into the thinking of our liberal brethren who find it correct to put women into the pulpit and the roles of elders, and who would bring in the organ and all sorts of gimmicks and silly theatrics into the worship.

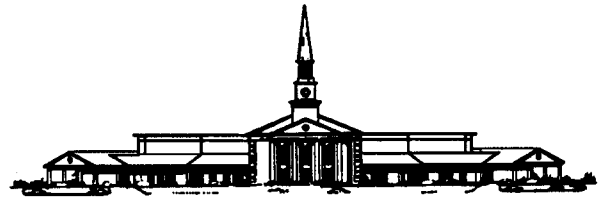
## CONCLUSION

Volumes have been and are being written about these matters and fill entire book shelves of major universities. I know because I have walked through the stacks, and pulled books from their shelves without a week hardly going by. These things are not being done in a corner. Our liberal brethren need to know that we are onto the theological games they play.

The fight to combat the invasion of liberal theology is just now beginning to shape up, and will be relentlessly pursued. Indeed churches are troubled and dividing all over this country. And the troublemakers are the "foes from within."

Why should brethren known for their great piety be annoyed when we track them down and call them by name? We are not children playing games in the market place. The last thing that I expect my brethren to do is to challenge a single position in this article; but I wish they would to see how well I would fare at their hands.

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard  
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# THE NEW HERMENEUTICS: *You Can't Know For Sure*

Robert Lawrence

In the February 15, 1987 issue of *Image Magazine*, then-editor **Reuel Lemmons** wrote that "heresy hunters shoot first and investigate later." Let's see. In the same issue, **Steve Ink** wrote, "Women preaching in the Sunday morning assembly will be either good or bad depending on your hermeneutics. A kitchen in your church building (or even the building of church facilities themselves) will appear either in or out of line with God's will depending on your set of hermeneutical rules. Instrumental music can be either good or bad depending on your hermeneutics."

Do you detect any heresy? Within the narrow confines of God's law unto man, we are surprised to find such an elastic doctrine available to us. In Ink's view, we have a method of interpretation that grants a license to do whatever we want to do: it isn't yes or no, it's *either/or*.

The presumption of an authority to change things by nothing more than the use of a new method of interpretation is a common credo among agents of change. Here, Steve Ink reduces textual understanding to a process of human choice based on an abstruse way of reading a text. Let's see how this squares with the Bible. Here's a listing of the choices you have under Ink's view of interpretation:

1. Women can/cannot preach in the Sunday morning assembly.
2. You can/cannot have a kitchen in a church building.
3. You can/cannot have a church building.
4. You can/cannot worship God in song with [mechanical] instruments of music.

To Ink, these are true choices based on an arbitrary hermeneutical method. Yet for a hermeneutical process to have any merit it must be based on a work—obviously, the Bible. Interpretation is derived from a standard, and cannot itself be a standard. Therefore, we must be able to locate within biblical texts a thought upon which to base an interpretation. Are there New Testament texts to support Ink's hermeneutics?

## CHANGE AGENTS DIVERT SUBJECT

Though an important inquiry apart from the present subject, our concern here is not to settle the matter pertaining to women's role in worship, nor why God elected to set men in authority in the church. For this discussion, we accept it as his desire, noting that all things pertaining to the oversight of the church are masculine—as all things are masculine in matters issuing from heaven. Thus, women who are silent in the churches, are silent only in the sense that they do not usurp authority over a man.

You will note that part of the agenda of agents of change is to divert the subject from their own failed methods to a plethora of biblical questions, scattering the discussion in different directions, diluting it for their own gain. They deliberately keep defenders of truth off balance by constantly throwing up arguments that do not follow from the premise. We should be wise not to play them at their own game. When we examine the Ink article, we see this technique.

Ink's point about a kitchen in a church building, and even a church building itself, is a stumbling block to dodge the issue. He could just as easily have asked if a church building should sport a steeple, or if a congregation is free to rent or lease a building.

To cite these things based on a hermeneutical standard is to overlook the fact that the New Testament is silent on such

matters. Even so, we notice that the early church met in the temple, more than likely the public porch (Acts 5:42), and in the same text, *every house*. (Cf., Acts 20:20; Acts 2:46)

## WHAT INK'S INQUIRY IS REALLY ABOUT

Ink's inquiry about mechanical instruments of music smacks of the classic desire among liberals to introduce their use into the assembly of the Lord's church. This hackneyed argument derives from a lust to change worship in an effort to lure those who seek religious entertainment. The result of this segment of change is a religion that does not change the person, but the person changing religion to fit a need.

As for our native ability to reason, suppose someone told you to go to a place and bring back a certain item. He wouldn't name—in the negative—all the things you were *not to bring back*. He would, rather, name *only* the thing or things you were to *get*. The same is true, in the main, of the New Testament method of instruction: it teaches us *what to do*.

Mechanical instruments of music in worship were never pleasing to God. Even under the Old Law, the use of these devices was condemned (Amos 6:4, 5). God found no pleasure in them; in the same sense he found no pleasure in the oft-present blood sacrifices under that same law (Hebrews 10:5,6,8). Thus, when we view all the positive things we are to do regarding music in the New Testament church, we do not find mechanical instruments of music. How can we apply a hermeneutic to something that is not there? Simple enough. Remain silent.

Let's test the idea of using mechanical instruments of music. Question: will God punish those who *do not* sing in worship accompanied by mechanical instruments of music? The answer to this question is a test of the foolishness of the interpretive methods of the New Hermeneutics. If agents of change cannot give an answer proved by New Testament texts, then their whole argument is vacant.

We are *to do*. James understood the doing of the law: "**But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves**" (James 1:22). Anything *in addition to that* we understand to be things we *do not do*—notice *Romans 10:3; II Thessalonians 2:15, 3:14; II Corinthians 9:8*.

## DEVICE TO GRANT SELF-PERMISSION

To liberal brethren, it's quite clear that the New Hermeneutics is simply a handy device *to grant permission*. In effect, Ink states that owing to our own hermeneutical code we are free to *accept or reject* any of his previously cited things. Under such a standard, the Bible becomes nothing more than a meager reference to *our own* hermeneutics, and in such a case hermeneutics becomes canon—which it cannot be. (Cf., Matthew 15:9; Mark 7:7; II Peter 1:20) One can only wonder how liberal brethren so willingly overlook that a personal and elastic hermeneutic denies the very author of the New Testament, the errorless Holy Spirit.

Ink's devotion to the New Hermeneutics shows up again in the March 1, 1987 issue of *Image Magazine*. Quote: "But he (God) hasn't told us everything. We may look at the Bible with all of its pages, divisions, and directions and mistakenly think God has an answer for every specific situation hidden away in the pages somewhere. But that is not so." What emerges from Ink's view is clearly the (existential) *subjectivism* of **Rudolph Bultmann's** New Hermeneutics which states that you cannot

know anything for sure. Is this failed idea really Steve Ink's view of the Bible? It seems so to be.

Ink writes, "There are some things the Lord has not revealed to us which will remain hidden until the end of time. I don't even know what those secret things are because the Lord hasn't told us. But I do know there are some questions I have which are not directly answered in the Bible. These areas often cause us trouble." Such a view constrains us to ask: *what has God neglected to tell us that we need to know?* Does Ink's hermeneutics discover no sound information about truth, belief, sin, grace, baptism, law, life, church, shepherds, singing, women's role in worship, or eternal damnation? (Cf., II Peter 1:3; Deuteronomy 29:29.)

In one of the better works on interpretation, Clinton Lockhart dissected the problem when he noted: we can express the truths of the Bible in the everyday language of men. There is nothing *everyday* about the language of the New Hermeneutics.

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## "FIFTH & GRISS"

Jesse Whitlock

About 20 years ago a good friend of mine from Ireland came to the states to learn how better to proclaim the gospel in his native Ireland. The first time I heard him speak his text was Ephesians 2:8-9 and his topic was "faith and grace." However, his accent put it as "fifth and griss." I thrilled to hear him preach what I had always heard, *i.e.*, we are saved by grace, it is a gift from God and it doesn't work alone and independent of man's obedient faith. Listen: "for by grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." I have been preaching that gospel truth for almost 25 years myself.

There are two sides in salvation: by grace and through faith. The divine side is grace (God's unmerited favor); the human side is faith (a faith that obeys). This is gospel. No gospel equals no grace! God's grace *teaches* us (Titus 2:11) and we stand lost without obeying the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:7ff). We need to stop this sectarian preaching about God's grace saving alone and realize that Christ does have a law (Galatians 6:2) and that law *must be obeyed* (I Peter 4:17). If grace only (alone) saves, then if I am lost I can only blame God or if God saves you and does not save me then I know that Peter was wrong in Acts 10:34, "...of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

### WHAT ABOUT NAAMAN?

Remember Naaman? Naaman had to go to the river Jordan and dip seven times in the water of Jordan (II Kings 5). He did not *earn* his cleansing. There were *no magical powers* in the muddy waters of Jordan, and without his obedience, there would have been no blessing. Finally he obeyed. II Kings 5:14, "then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." Only by *obedience* was the leper made clean. Remember Noah? The scriptures tell us, "but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Noah was given instructions (a pattern) as to how man could be saved from the flood. Noah believed God and was obedient (Genesis 6:22). God's grace saved Noah and his family (Hebrews 11:7).

Remember the raising of Lazarus as recorded in John chapter 11? The Lord gave instruction to the men: "take ye away the stone." Christ could have done this, but so could the men. Then,

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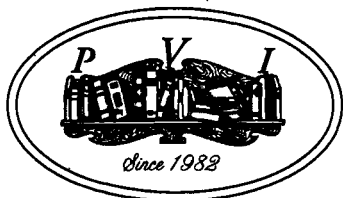
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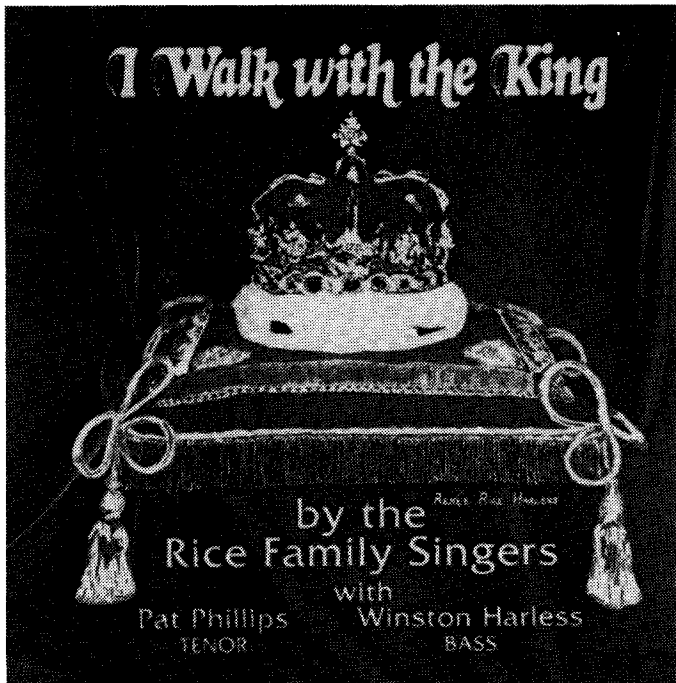
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His Grace Reaches Me  
Redeemed  
O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee  
How Great Thou Art



Christ cried out: "Lazarus, come forth." The men could not have done this. Notice that Christ allowed the men to do what they were able to do. He then instructed them: "Loose him and let him go."

### TRUST AND OBEY

In the cases of Naaman, Noah and the resurrection of Lazarus, we see a common pattern. In each instance, God did that which man could not do and that is called grace. God then allowed man to do what he was able through obedience to the will of God and that is called faith. There is a song that we sing from time to time entitled, "Trust and Obey." That is what we are discussing when we speak of God's grace and man's obedient faith. Only the liberal false teachers of the day are ashamed to use the term "obedience."

Paul speaks frequently of the great grace of God, but he never did away with the need for man's obedience (Romans 16:26).

There is no stigma attached to obeying the Lord in simple, trusting and obedient faith. Let us always be content to "do whatever he tells us to do" (John 2:5).

Ephesians 2:8 = saved by grace

Romans 1:16 = saved by the gospel

Acts 20:24 = Paul preached the gospel of grace of God

Brethren, let us dust off those old sermon outlines and preach fervently the gospel of the great grace of God and then encourage men to have the obedient mind of Christ our Lord (Philippians 2:5ff). Let us then admonish them, as did Paul, to "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling..." Let us do away with the sectarian speech-ify-ing that man does not and cannot contribute one whit to his own salvation! Let's preach it boldly—to be saved requires both faith and grace (or fifth & griss)!

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## First Corinthians 14:26-40

Roy C. Deaver

*EDITORIAL NOTE: In the October, 1995 issue brother Guy N. Woods' material regarding the assembly discussed by the apostle Paul in First Corinthians chapter fourteen was published. It was noted in that issue that brother Roy C. Deaver's remarks regarding the assembly discussed in the aforementioned passage would be printed in this issue of the paper. It is herewith offered to our readers.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor*

Space limitations do not allow an adequate discussion of I Corinthians 14. One obvious and basic point is: this chapter is a vital part of the discussion of the subject of spiritual gifts. This discussion begins in chapter 12, verse 1, and continues through all of chapter 14. Thus, chapters 12, 13, and 14 are all on the matter of spiritual gifts in the early church.

It is our studied conviction that there were special meetings in the early church for the purpose of exercising and receiving the benefits of the spiritual gifts. The meeting considered in I Corinthians 14:26-40 was just such a meeting. It was not a regular meeting of brethren for worship. The Lord's Supper assembly had been dealt with in chapter 11, and the verses presently under consideration make no reference to the Lord's Supper.

With regard to this meeting note carefully:

1. It was a meeting of brethren *only*—no outsiders were present in this meeting;

2. Spiritual gifts were to be exercised, verse 26;
3. There could be in this meeting the exercise of the gift

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of tongues, verse 27. If this gift should be exercised there had to be at least *two* speakers; there could be *three* speakers; there could not be *four* speakers; these speakers had to speak *in turn*; there had to be an *interpreter* present.

4. There could be the exercise of the gift of interpretation of tongues;
5. There was a condition in which a *man* was instructed to "keep silence in the church," verse 28;
6. There could be the exercise of the gift of prophecy, verses 29ff. If this gift should be exercised there had to be *two* speakers; there could be *three* speakers; there could not be *four* speakers; others are instructed to "discern;" there was a *second* condition in which a *man* in *that* meeting in *Corinth* was instructed to "keep silence," verse 30; the prophets were to speak "one by one" for the *learning* of all and the *exhortation* of all the prophets were to exercise control of themselves and thus avoid confusion.
7. The *prophets' wives* were instructed to "keep silence in the churches." They were not permitted to speak (they were not permitted to break the silence). They were to be in subjection. If they would learn anything (with regard to the message coming through the husband/prophet) they were not to interrupt the prophecy, but were to wait and ask their husbands at home. It was "shameful" for a woman to speak (to break the silence) in that meeting.

#### SOME PERTINENT QUESTIONS

(1) In our regular worship meetings are our women permitted to speak? Do our women sing? Are they commanded to sing? Do they speak when they sing? Do they *teach* when they *speak* when they *sing*? Obviously, our worship assemblies are not identical with the I Corinthians 14 meeting.

(2) In our regular worship meetings is *all speaking* done by women *shameful*? Do our women sing? Is a woman allowed to come forward, stand before the entire assembly, and confess her faith in Christ in order that she might be baptized? Could she confess her sins that she might be restored? Is such speaking shameful? Our meetings are not identical with the I Corinthians 14 meeting!

### DEBATE WITH ROMAN CATHOLICS

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On the nights of August 14 -17, 1995, *Darrell Conley* of the Northern Oaks Church of Christ met *Mike Luther* and *Robert Narvaex, M.D.* of the Catholic "lay" organization, "*Catholic Response*" in public debate at McAlister Auditorium, San Antonio College, San Antonio, Texas.

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The instruction "...let them ask their own husbands at home" never did apply: (1) to a widow; (2) to a single girl; (3) to a woman whose husband was not a member of the church; (4) to a woman who knew more about the Bible than her husband did; (5) to any women excepting the wives of the prophets in a day when there were prophets and the exercise of spiritual gifts. I can think of nothing more ridiculous than to hear an anti-Sunday school preacher tell a single girl or a widow: "If you would learn anything, you must ask your husband at home!"

In a public debate, many years ago, I rebuked my opponent (*Lester Hathaway*) for his inconsistency on this point. The night before, after the session, when he did not know that I was near, I heard him giving instructions to a woman who had asked him some questions. So, in the next session I dealt with this. I said: "Brother Hathaway! If you are right you are wrong. If you are right in your doctrine, you are wrong in your practice! I heard you teaching this woman. Two things are wrong: She is not your wife, and you were not at home!"

It should be emphasized that the sacred principles which Paul was here stressing are just as binding today as they ever were. The *means* by which he stressed these principles do not exist in the world today, but the *principles* do exist. If I were to tell a man that he should "...*desire earnestly spiritual gifts*," citing I Corinthians 14:1 as documentation, I would be teaching false doctrine and would be misapplying the passage. The sacred principles stressed in this section are: (1) Let all things be done unto edifying, verse 26; (2) God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, verse 33; (3) Let women be in subjection, verse 34; (4) Let all things be done decently and in order, verse 40 (Roy C. Deaver, *The Role of Women* (Wellington, Texas: Copyright, No Date), pp. 13-15.)

\*\*\*\*\*

When brother *Virgil H. Turpin*, of Pagosa Springs, Colorado, sent \$100.00 in support of our Far East/World Evangelism work, he had two suggestions to make: 1) He thought much members could raise much more if they could be told in *Contending for the Faith* that those false teachers causing so much division and offense in the church would be sent to the moon by NASA—provided it was a one-way ticket, and 2) since I had added an "e" to Turpin, he said I needed to fix my typewriter.

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# Why So Much Religious Confusion?

Dan Goddard

Have you ever wondered why there is so much confusion and division in the religious world today? Why are there so many "churches" and different groups of people all claiming to be followers of Jesus Christ? Is religious division what God desires? Or is it displeasing to God?

These questions demand an answer. They demand a true, scriptural answer. In this article, we shall look into the Bible for the correct answer to the above serious question.

## JESUS PRAYED FOR UNITY

Yes, there is MUCH religious division in our present world. Just pick up any newspaper, listen to the radio, or walk down any street and you will observe hundreds of different religions and religious bodies claiming to follow God and to be "Christians." But is Christ divided? Is Christ so confused as to what he wants us to believe and practice? All of the various groups each teach a different slant of religion and they are NOT united in doctrine and practice—this is obvious. Is this the way God wants it? (To help answer that question, study I Corinthians 1:10-14).

Does Jesus desire that we be divided? Surely not. Do we not remember the earnest prayer that Jesus prayed in John, chapter 17? This is what our Lord prayed just before his betrayal and crucifixion: "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: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one," (John 17:20-23). Therefore, as we can

plainly see from the Lord's own prayer to his Father, Christ wants all believers to be ONE. Jesus desires that his followers be UNITED just as he and his Father are united. Christ wants all men to be ONE as he and the Father are ONE.

Here is the important question: Is the religious world today one? Certainly not! In fact, we even have people today who thank God that we are NOT ONE and that "everybody can go to the church of his choice!" This is thanking God that Christ's prayer has NOT been answered.

## FAULT IS MEN'S—NOT GOD'S

The fault and the sin of religious division and confusion lies squarely with men and not with God. Men today have divided themselves and enforced their own man-made rules and humanly devised doctrines and denominations and have left the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Consider Galatians 1:6-9.

The reason there is so much religious confusion is because men have not been content to stay within the bounds of God's own commands. Too many individuals have refused to abide in the sound doctrine of Christ and have turned away their ears from the truth just as Paul predicted they would in II Timothy 4:3,4.

God is not a God of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). God desires that all men obey him and be added to the ONE church. There is only ONE God, ONE Lord, ONE Spirit, ONE Faith, ONE Baptism, ONE Hope, and ONE Body (which is the ONE church, Ephesians 1:22, 23). For proof of this, read Ephesians 4:3-6.

Yes, all persons can be UNITED in the ONE church or else Christ failed in his

mission and died in vain. Jesus built just ONE church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2; Ephesians 1:22, 23 and Colossians 1:18). This is the only church you can read about in the Bible. This church belongs to Christ and therefore wears the name of Christ.

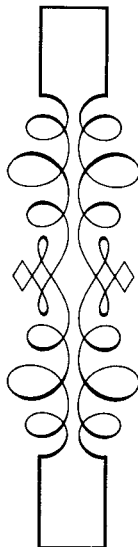
Religious division is very displeasing to God (Psalm 133:1; Proverbs 6:19 and I Corinthians 1:10). It cost the blood of God's only begotten Son to purchase the church (Acts 20:28) and we must not treat it lightly. Anything that is this precious and valuable is certainly necessary to our salvation. The Lord adds the obedient to the church (Acts 2:47).

## HOW TO GO TO HEAVEN

Would you like to live forever? You can. Yes, you can become and remain a Christian in the very same way people did in the New Testament record. You must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17) and believe in Jesus (Hebrews 11:6). Then you must repent of all sins (Acts 17:30), confess Christ as God's Son (Matthew 10:32-33) and be buried in baptism (I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:4). Then continue steadfastly in living a faithful Christian life (Acts 2:42) and a crown of righteousness will be yours. This is the way to become and remain a cleansed child of God, a member of the Lord's own church, on the road to heaven and eternal glory.

There is no salvation in man-made and man-ruled denominations. No mere man was crucified for you. No mere man can forgive your sins. ONLY in Christ is salvation found (Acts 4:12). Will you not leave the religious confusion of men and become nothing more or less than a Christian? The Lord desires that you be a Christian, a

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member of his body, his church (Colossians 1:18) and reject all doctrines, creeds, dogmas, and denominations of mere men. This is the only way to go to heaven (Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16).

Why would anyone refuse to go to heaven? Will you?

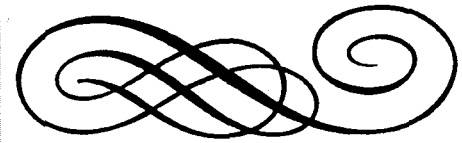
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[P.S. You might encourage the readers of this article to send it to their denominational friends or a denominational preacher. I did and have experienced some interesting results. Your friend and brother, Dan Goddard.]

Joseph D. Meador, Director, Southwest School of Bible Studies, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748-5399 let us know of brother John Moore being added to the Southwest's full time faculty, beginning with the fourth academic quarter (May, 1995).

Brother Moore had served the past four years as Director of the Bible Chair at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

"Brother Moore comes from a very stable spiritual background," brother Meador wrote, "as his father serves as an elder for the church in Dripping Springs, Texas, and his brother is a gospel preacher in Comanche, Texas, and also is a graduate of SWSBS."



## TEACHETH THOU NOT THYSELF?

Robin W. Haley

This is the question of Romans 2:21 that Paul asked of the Jews who felt they had it made over Gentiles. His point was simply: do not be hypocritical. Such is the question we would ask of many of our brethren today who seem not to be able to recognize their own shortcomings in this very regard. Some, it seems, are able to correct those of us who "object" to the liberalism perpetrated by many, yet are unable to see that they themselves are guilty of some of the very same things.

Consistency has always been a rare jewel. I offer no guarantees of my own consistency, but I try. I offer the benefit of doubt to many of my brethren, that they are trying sincerely to be consistent. There comes a time, however, when we must go beyond "doubts" and realize that a brother simply is wrong and is continuing in an erroneous direction. Such is the case with brother Howard Norton and his work at the *Christian Chronicle*, the organ of OCUSA.

### TWO STATEMENTS COMPARED

I want to compare two statements brother Norton has made in his editorials, with some things he said to me during a luncheon we had together. These statements were made exactly one year apart in his editorials in the *Christian Chronicle*. In September of 1993, addressing the subject of "Lessons we can learn from denominations," his closing remark was: "One last word, please. Let us not be timid about presenting the Restoration Plea to 'churched' people whose churches have left them desolate." Amen! But, will brother Norton be consistent in this plea? Judge ye: Within the body of that editorial he made a few fine points. He

spoke of such things as "the importance of teaching, preaching and honoring God's infallible word; holding to Biblical doctrine that makes us distinctive is a key to the church's spiritual health, not a sign of legalism; leaders who don't share the spiritual values of people in the pew, the church is in serious trouble." To all these, we say amen! Yet, was it not our own brother Norton who appeared on the *Tulsa Workshop* where appear such teachers of apostasy as Rubel Shelly, Marvin Phillips, Terry Rush, and Jeff Walling? Verily! Have not these false teachers been exposed long enough to the brotherhood for all who are even the slightest bit informed to know that they do not teach the kinds of things brother Norton just outlined? Absolutely. How can one who is the head of the Bible department at a Christian University not know these brethren's folly? He *does* know! He admitted as much to me in our lunch together at Pryor, Oklahoma on August 8, 1994. Why then does he not join others of us to expose these brethren for what they are? Why will he join with them and fellowship their error? Does he think he is immune to the folly they endorse and represent? Truly, he is guilty of it himself. Ephesians 5:11 still reads "**and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them.**" So, though he says we ought not to be timid about the restoration plea to the churched, why will he not plead with his apostate brethren and try to bring them back?

### HE COULD HELP IF HE WOULD

The second statement is from his editorial of September, 1994. He was writing on "the Unity of the Spirit." Again, his closing remark was: "We desperately need people today who, regardless of their other functions, will

make peacemaking within the church a top priority." These are good words. Or perhaps they would be better called "great swelling words" (II Peter 2:18; Jude 16). They *sound* good, but they are *empty*. In making several points within the body of his article, he tells us that it is a waste of time to deal with division. He tells us that "the real work of the church comes to a screeching halt while Christians fight."

That may be true if the "fight" is over options and methods which are not contrary to doctrine. But it is simply not true when the "fight" is pitched because of brethren who will not walk the old paths! It then becomes the work of the church to deal with it swiftly. He could help in such things by allowing his *Christian Chronicle* to be an organ for good, and not compromise as it now stands. Much of the apostasy the church feels today could be averted if brethren like Norton and others would lend their influence to the battle, rather than to the foe. Yes, peace is very important, and indeed it is a virtue to be a peacemaker. But he has overlooked what the prophet said, "**They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, SAYING PEACE, PEACE; WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE**" (Jeremiah 6:14).

So, as we see from these two statements, "peacemaking within the church must be a top priority... (and)... let us not be timid" is just so much hot air, or rather, cold ink. Brother Norton would do well to teach himself what it really means to be a peacemaker, and not be timid about confronting the false teachers with whom he runs! Brother Norton charged me and the brethren I was with at this lunch (brethren Cliff Lyons and Ron Cosby) with being "right extremists" because we dared question him regarding his part in the Tulsa Workshop. He was being a peacemaker when he said this, I guess. But I gathered from our exchange that he was being timid, not able to answer.

—912 East Teresa  
Sapulpa, Oklahoma 74066

# Notes & Quotes...

Shiloh Christian School, of Bacolod City, Philippines, is the only fully accredited Christian School in the Philippines associated with Churches of Christ.

Alvin and Fe Luther began their mission work together on the Island of Negros and Panay in 1964, shortly after their marriage. They have raised three faithful Christian children in the mission field. Alvin serves as missionary to the Bacolod City church as well as to 13 churches and tribal congregations on Negros and Panay Island. He also directs the Bacolod Bible School, training church leaders for local work. Fe has served as the principal of Shiloh Christian School since 1987.

Sareth Voun, our preacher at Battambang, Cambodia, telephoned under date of August 6, 1995, that they had baptized five more precious souls into Christ since he returned on his third journey there in May.

Readers will rejoice to know that the credit card amount with which he purchased property earlier now has been cleared—some \$2,620 having been contributed from various sources in June. He, his wife Thoun and their infant daughter continue to need monthly support. Those wishing to help, please make checks payable to Bellview Church of Christ, earmarked Sareth Voun/Cambodia Fund, addressed to 4860 Sauflay Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526. Thanks, IYR Jr.

Al Thompson, Goodlettsville, Tennessee: "In reading the July (95) edition of 'Contending For The Faith,' I spotted the words, 'Single Subscriptions—3 years \$27.' How presumptuous of me! All this time you have faithfully kept me on your mailing list without ever billing me for a single penny for the publication. I never once thought about it costing me anything...until now. Please forgive me! Enclosed is my \$27 check. Why don't you determine how long you have been sending the publication to me and apply any (or ALL) of this \$27 to it? Please notify me when the next amount is due and I will pay it immediately. Once again, please forgive my oversight..."

[NOTE: There was no oversight. Brother Thompson's receiving **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH** was paid by the contributions of hundreds of concerned brothers and sisters in Christ to our "special mailings" fund, which were being sent free-of-charge to all the families in some 13 churches of Christ sponsoring such divisive things as the "Nashville Jubilee," the "Tulsa Workshop," the "Greater Northwest Evangelism Workshop" and such like.

Now that he has been made aware of such divisiveness and wants to pay for his own subscription, of course, we are delighted. He does not owe **ANYTHING** for **PREVIOUS** mailings. However, now, we are taking him out of our "special mailings" list and adding him for three years to our regular subscription list.

Possibly there may be others like brother Thompson who would like to do the same as he. If so, by all means, "go thou and do likewise!" Some might even want to subscribe for their friends. We'll be more than happy to have you (and them) as regular subscribers. IYR Jr.]

Harl Mansur, Wichita Falls, Texas: "Do you have available in the Spanish language your Basic Bible Course? Please send me a set. How much are they? To be used in Nicaragua."

[NOTE: "Thanks for your interest in my **BASIC BIBLE COURSE**," I replied, in part. "It would seem that **SPANISH** should have been one of the [15] languages it has been translated into; but it is not. I am sending a set in

**ENGLISH** to you...At least you will know what it is like. If someone wanted to translate it into Spanish, I should feel honored for him to do so." IYR Jr.]

\*\*\*\*\*

"The power of obedience to the gospel is manifested by righteous living."—Joseph D. Meador, Lord's Day morning, July 31, 1995, at the South Texas Summer Lectureship, Beeville, Texas.

\*\*\*\*\*

M. L. Sexton, of Fort Worth, Texas, sent \$20.00 toward our ACU/Special Mailing. Anita Berry, also of Fort Worth, sent \$25.00. Jesse E. Cochran, of Mt. Vernon, Washington, sent \$100.00 to help us mail out the book *Behold The Pattern*, saying, "I regret to say it, but I have found our wayward brethren have very little interest in any verbal or written admonishing that would guide them back to the truth. However, I know that we must not give up. If only we could get those books in the hands of faithful brethren that would check them out to those who need them most, perhaps some good would result and the books wouldn't be burned. I suspect the book would make a very good **BIBLE STUDY GUIDE** if one could get it started...Please send me four of the books if possible. I have some people that will read them and I will get them back and pass them to others and with God's help something good can happen...God go with you in your fight for the faith."

[NOTE: In your letter you wondered what good it might do; I replied, in part, we have reason to believe that this, together with other special mailings, have accomplished a great deal. I relayed information from a former member at one of the big offending churches in the Nashville, Tennessee area that more than 800 members now have left and gone elsewhere—also that, as a result, one of the churches nearby had so many coming over that they were having to put out extra chairs up and down the aisles to seat the crowds!]

When I learned that many in the greater Tulsa area no longer support the Tulsa Workshop, I asked one of my old-time preacher friends now living in Tulsa if he could estimate the reduction in attendance at the Workshop. He replied that it **USED** to take **FOUR PARKING LOTS** to accommodate the crowds, but, since our big special mailings, this last time it took only **THREE!** We haven't stopped them yet; but, to say the least, our mailings are slowing them down!

Sometimes it seems to take forever to hinder false teachers and bring those they influence back to the truth. However, the scriptures still teach that we shall reap in due season if we faint not (Galatians 6:9). IYR Jr.]

Manuel K. Pelayo, Manila, Philippines: The Makati Central Church is planning to hold a gospel meeting especially for the deaf in December. This was actually proposed during one of the meetings I had with brother Sam G. Roach in my apartment. He had pursued this matter and brother Richard Massey is being considered by us to be one of the main speakers. The details of the gospel meeting are being discussed and should be finalized very soon...

Brother Rice, the dwindling number of members of the Lords church who are willing to enter the ministry, as we both have mentioned in our letters, here and in other countries, is something that should merit the serious attention of the faithful. I agree with

your observation that materialism is a major cause. There is a serious lack of Bible teachers and preachers in the Philippines now; and it would seem that this is the case in most Asian countries. But I also know that so many have been driven to seek secular work to enable them and their families to survive the kind of poverty being experienced by so many in this part of the world.

Gary & Barbara Summers arrived in Denton, Texas, June 30, 1995 to begin their new work with the Pearl Street Church of Christ.

Doris E. Hoggard, Ceres, California: "Thank you for the news about sending these 'special mailings.' I'm happy to hear they are waking people up to the error that is raging everywhere...The 'Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter' was so interesting to read. Such a shame that a good man like brother Udom Kananaporn had to die so young. His wife and daughters' letters of their father were sad. Such devotion to a father and husband."

Richard H. Wineinger, Guin, Alabama: "Due to ill health I am unable to preach any more but I spend much of my time in research and writing..."

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The trouble with false doctrine is that you can teach, learn or practice it to perfection—and it is still false.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bill Haberman, San Antonio, Texas: "The final disposition of the [Royce] Money exchange was the usual. When they get through with their cliché of jargon, they are empty. Once he saw that I could meet him on his terms and had the force of argument on my side and could prove it, he abruptly stopped responding..."

"As long as they think they have a pigeon, they will talk (II Timothy 3:5-7)."

Don & Loraine Van Blarcom, Brentwood, Tennessee: "Loraine and I have had our share of exposure to the 'liberal-leaning' segments of the brotherhood which never seem to lack for a ready supply of eager followers. Throughout these tribulations of distortions of the gospel there has always been **Contending For The Faith**. You have been consistently generous in sending it to us regularly and reminding us of the **TRUTH** as presented in the Scriptures..."

Helen Wells, of Celina, Tennessee, enclosed \$20.00, saying, "My prayers go with you on your missions above the Arctic Circle in Murmansk, Russia..."

Gary Colley, minister, Southwest Church of Christ, Austin, Texas: "I am looking forward to receiving five more years of **Contending for the Faith**. Thank you for your love for the truth and your untiring fight for the faith!"

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"Prejudice is the great enemy of truth."—Steve Ellis, evening service, May 7, 1995, Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

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## The Christian Scholar

When some of us complained that the Gospel Advocate had let "The Christian Scholar," the remarkable biography of Hall Laurie Calhoun go out of print, they brought out a very limited second edition in paper-back. Authored by Adron Doran and J. E. Choate, scholars in their own right, the book sells for \$14.95 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. We were able to secure 30 copies for our readers. First come, first served. Once these are gone, we do not know if we can get any more. Please enclose payment with your order to **Contending for the Faith, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.**



# DIRECTORY

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Florida

Pensacola: **Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Tel. (904) 455-7595. Minister, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

—North Carolina

Rocky Mount: **Church of Christ**, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, Wayne Coats, preacher, Tel. (615) 758-406.

—Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., Al Brown and David Brown, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

—Wyoming

Cheyenne: **High Plains Church of Christ**, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, Tel. (307) 634-3040.

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# A ZEALOUS PEOPLE?

Clay J. Browne

After being a Christian for 15 years, I must not have the correct definition of our supposing to be a "zealous people for good works" (Titus 2:14), or there are many of our brethren who do not know what it means to be a zealous people.

The word zealous according to *The Random House College Dictionary* means: full of; characterized by, or resulting from zeal; ardently active, devoted, or diligent.

We are commanded by the Spirit, through John in Revelation 3:19 to be zealous—but if we are truly convicted by what the word of God says we should not have to be commanded to be zealous. Are we zealous football fans? Do our wives have to command us to go play a round of golf? (I know mine doesn't). And, ladies, do our husbands have to tell us to go shopping? Well, of course not. We all understand these examples. Why is it then, when we talk about spiritual things, that common sense and logic forsake us, but when we talk about mundane things we seem to use our common sense as God intended it to be used!

Being zealous for the cause of the truth naturally applies to spreading the gospel, attending worship, and such like. No one has any problem seeing that. So why doesn't being a zealous person also apply to "earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered!" (Jude 3)

I was privileged to attend a religious debate between brother **Bill Lockwood** and heretic **Don Preston** on the A.D.

70 theory. The debate was held at the Spring church of Christ, in Spring, Texas on July 18-19 and 21-22, 1994. [If you don't know where Spring, Texas is, it is a suburb just north of Houston.]

For as many members of the Lord's church as there are in the Houston area, one would expect to have masses attend such as what I should call "a once-in-a-lifetime event." But there were about as few members of the Lord's body in attendance each session as imaginable. The lack of attendance was really shameful.

Why weren't the numbers soaring like many of the debates in the yesterday? During the *Wallace-Norris Debate* in Ft. Worth in 1934 there were some 6000-7000 people in attendance for that event, and in one session of the debate or another some 800 preachers from the churches of Christ were noted. Can you imagine such a gathering of Christians today? This was nothing really out of the ordinary.

During the *Stevens-Beaver Debate* of 1952 the attendance for each session of the debate ranged from 4000-6000 people. I could cite many more such gatherings, but two are enough.

What's the problem brethren? Where is the support for these men during such polemic events?

I know that there are legitimate reasons why *some* could not attend these discussions; but don't tell me everyone in the Houston area had something else going on every night that the debate was in session.

No, brethren, I believe the problem

is that Christians as a whole *could not care less* for the truth. I believe that is the bottom line.

Paul has something to say about those who don't receive a love for the truth. Read II Thessalonians 2:10. A lack of love for THE truth can be verified when we look around and see our so-called brethren engaging in all kinds of denominationalism such as special music during worship and errors being taught on the work of the Holy Spirit during conversion.

And for those of us who don't think debating is scriptural or Christian-like, I'd like to know how *you* deal with Satan in everyday living. We are in a constant debate with Satan every day of our lives.

There are many definitions of the word debate, one of which means, a discussion. Are you telling me that I can't discuss Christ with one of my lost friends. If we are not authorized to debate then we had better stop teaching Christ to our friends.

The church has never experienced growth like it did in the 30's, 40's and 50's. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why this is. My estimation is that we had men who were willing to debate any issue any time. The truth triumphed every time it was proclaimed; and until we figure this out and become a more zealous people the church will never experience the growth that it did 40 and 50 years ago.

—201 Krenk Tap #3  
College Station, Texas 77840

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## FROM THE JOPLIN SUMMIT TO RESTORATION FORUM XIII

J. E. Choate

Three distinct unity movements have been organized in this century. The 1909 and 1917 unity meetings were called by leaders of the Christian Church in Nashville. In both cases, the digressives called for confrontational debates on instrumental music. **David Lipscomb**, **E. A. Elam**, and others identified with the *Gospel Advocate* had no compromise in mind. They successfully withstood the digressives who waged an aggressive 30-year campaign (1890-1920) to attain their objectives.

The Murch-Witty unity meetings of the late 30s and early 40s created high levels of interest in the possibility of uniting churches of Christ and the Christian Church. **Claude F. Witty** would not endorse instrumental music in worship. The position of **James Deforest Murch** on the matter was unclear. Later after pressure from his brethren, he wrote in the *Christian Standard* his defense of instrumental music in worship.

It took the famed 1939 address of **H. Leo Boles** to put the whole matter to rest that the churches of Christ would make no compromises. He told the assembly that the digressives had forced division. If they would give up their organs, then unity would naturally follow. He was right then, and that principle still holds today among brethren who stand on the Word of God.

### THE JOPLIN SUMMIT 1984

More than 40 years would pass before the "Joplin Summit" which was calculated to restore unity to the divided fellowships. The roots of the Joplin Summit/Restoration Forum are traced to the *Restoration Leadership Ministry* which had been started by **Marvin Bryant** and **Robert Shank**. The purpose of said ministry was to convert denominational preachers. The Vultee church of Christ in Nashville sponsored one aspect of the ministry which was to start talks with leaders in the Independent Christian Churches. **Alan Cloyd** and **Dennis Randall** were chosen by the Vultee church to represent churches of Christ.

That Alan Cloyd took the lead in this venture was most unfortunate. That he would undo the work of the lifetimes of such brethren as David Lipscomb, H. Leo Boles, and N. B. Hardeman proved to be little more than a comic act of a "court jester." He

was less a convert in the church of Christ than a "quisling" discovered hiding in the baggage of the digressives.

The "Joplin Summit" was the direct outcome of the planning of the Vultee elders and **Don DeWelt**, editor of the College Press, in Joplin, Missouri. Fifty men were selected from each church to make up the group which met in 1984 on the Ozark Bible College campus. Don DeWelt took the lead for the Independent Christian Church. By whose authority this was done was not clear then or now.

And what a mismatch it proved to be. Our gullible, liberal brethren were way in over their heads and out-classed the moment they joined hands with Don DeWelt. He was a master strategist among his digressive contemporaries who trusted his wisdom and judgment.

I would favorably compare the talents of Don DeWelt with that of the incomparable **Isaac Errett** who more than any other person crafted the paradigm (model) of the present Independent Christian Church and the Disciples of Christ who are still immersed in bitter alienation from one another.

Errett succeeded in winning approval for the organ in an almost clean sweep of the Christian Church. By 1890, the sound of the organ was heard throughout Kentucky to the North and East and West. David Lipscomb and a few good men with the *Gospel Advocate* blocked the digressives in their campaign to drag the churches of Christ into their fold.

Don DeWelt partially succeeded where his early predecessors **James De Forest Murch** and **John B. Cowden** failed. This is said in view of the fact that DeWelt pulled into his orbit the support of some of the most influential brethren in the churches of Christ ranging from university presidents, editors of such journals as *Image* and *Wineskins*, and brotherhood lectureships such as the Tulsa Workshop and the Nashville Jubilee.

And with the passing of Don DeWelt, his shoes are capably filled by the polished and talented **Victor Knowles**. He is the editor of the *One Body*, the main engine which drives the Restoration Forums. And make no mistake about it, he calls the shots.

(Continued on Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVI, No. 12

December/1995

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*  
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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*Contending for the Faith* was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

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

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## Editorial...

### Hicks Laments Damage Being Done to Nashville 'Jubilee'

We were somewhat amused by a headline in the September/1995 edition of the *Christian Chronicle*, which read, "Christian Jubilee alive and well, plans underway for next year, sponsors say."

Of course, the editors of the *Chronicle* habitually encourage those in error; so what else could we expect from them? However, the *Chronicle* is not our *only* source of information as to how "alive and well" the Nashville "Jubilee" *really* is!

#### NEWS & NOTES FROM OLAN HICKS

Olan Hicks, of Searcy, Arkansas, goes around all over the brotherhood teaching error on Marriage-Divorce-and-Remarriage contrary to Matthew 19:9. Ordinarily, *Contending for the Faith* would not quote him about *anything*!

However, in his paper called *News & Notes from Olan Hicks* for August, 1995, Hicks front-paged somewhat about "Jubilee," which we found far more revealing than the *Chronicle* piece. It is much too lengthy to include the entire article in this editorial; however, under the heading, "JUBILEE, A BATTLEGROUND FOR WHAT?," we found the following portion sufficiently germane to reproduce here:

### JUBILEE, A BATTLEGROUND FOR WHAT?

In our own work things are going wonderfully well, just getting better all the time. Brotherhood wide most of the news is good too. But I cannot say it is all good.

In July our trip was to Nashville, east Tennessee, and Georgia, where we had some interesting experiences which were fruitful and, I think, significant. Here is the story.

AT JUBILEE we were unusually busy at our booth. All day every day people were there talking with us. We were able to help a great many people. The Need for material on the divorce subject seemed especially acute. More people than usual needed to ask questions and discuss various aspects of that subject. We had a great week. We enjoyed seeing many of our friends from all over the country too. One couple we enjoyed meeting was a deaf minister and his wife. They communicated with us by writing, including the fact that they needed to study the divorce subject.

But, though activity was up for us, the total attendance at Jubilee was down quite a bit, about 4,000 less than last year. This is one of the things I see as significant. For that reason, although I don't like to deal in sad things, I believe everyone needs to know the truth about this.

Most of our readers know that Jubilee has been under fire from the "traditional" element among us almost since it began, as has the Tulsa workshop and several college lectureships. Regardless of the great teaching and the inspiring uplift provided, condemnation has been pronounced on these, especially Jubilee. All year long in publications, local bulletins, and sermons they hammer



away at it and at the individual speakers, and have done so for years. They even put ads in the Nashville papers each year to proclaim publicly that this program is heresy and its speakers are apostates. I know people who condemn it who have never attended a session nor talked to any of the speakers. This year a man from Robertson County church of Christ showed up on the sidewalk out front wearing a T-shirt with two names on it, (Rubel Shelly & Joe Beam I think), and it said they "are false teachers." He was telling anyone who would listen that if they went inside and participated in anything they would be on their way to hell.

The leaders of the Jubilee event have been ignoring this nonsense. But is that still the case fully? This year Rubel Shelly, a primary target of that element, was omitted from the program, attendance was down about 30%, the sessions on divorce recovery of last year were not on the program this year, and two of the three congregations who have been hosting Jubilee now say they are dropping out.

#### WHY MISLEAD THE BROTHERHOOD?

Deliberate efforts to mislead the brotherhood on the part of the editors of the *Christian Chronicle* long have been puzzling to those of us who keep up with such things.

Habitually—evidently deliberately—they report things which are *just not so*. Their September/1995 article, re: "Jubilee 1995," is but the latest case in point.

#### "ALIVE AND WELL," INDEED!

When you read the Chronicle, they tell you "Jubilee" is "alive and well." Almost in passing they say that two of the three sponsoring churches (Madison and Antioch) are pulling out and, that although there is "no anti-Jubilee sentiment either place," they no longer will exercise a "leadership role as in years past." Evidently, **Rubel Shelly** and the **Woodmont Hills inter-denominational church** will have it all to themselves "next summer and for the next several years."

What you can NOT learn from the Chronicle is that attendance this year was down some 4,000 less than last year—approximately a 30% drop, according to Hicks. "Alive and well," indeed!

#### COULD 'JUBILEE' BE SALVAGED?

Farther down in the Hicks report, he states, somewhat curiously, that "Jubilee would suddenly become a fine thing to that element if the current speakers were all canceled and replaced with the men they approve, those who do the speaking on their 'annual lecture-ship' programs..."

This makes "that element" wonder if either Hicks or the Chronicle really understands our objections to the so-called "Jubilee." What "that element" objects to not only are the *heretics* they habitually invite to speak, but also *calling it "Jubilee."*

Jubilee was an *Old Testament* celebration. The Old Testament—including the Jubilee—was nailed to the

cross. Jubilee was part of "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us..." The apostle Paul said it was **blotted out, taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross.** (Colossians 2:14)

With this understood, how could something called "Jubilee" suddenly become "a fine thing" in New Testament practice, *no matter who spoke!*

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## From Joplin Summit To...

(Continued from Page 1)

It is difficult for me to believe that two Restoration historians, **Bill Humble** and **Douglas Foster**, are groping in the gathering darkness in this latest unity movement organized and orchestrated by the most sophisticated leaders in the Christian Church. It must be kept in mind that Dr. Humble is a convert from the "anti" brethren a generation ago who troubled churches of Christ even to a greater extent than the premillennialists.

It is my personal opinion that these brethren share in a common cause with the digressives, which is to compromise and to destroy the present identity of the conservative churches of Christ. It is my opinion that when the smoke and din of battle has blown away they will find themselves on the short end of the stick and left in the company of the likes of **Ernest Beam**, **Carl Ketcherside**, and **Leroy Garrett**.

The "Joplin Summit" took on the name of the Restoration Forum in its second 1985 meeting and has met annually since. Not since the 1984 "Joplin Summit" has any local church of Christ sponsored the movement.

This whole story is now unfolding under the umbrella of the "One Body Ministry" and its official publication, the *One Body*, edited by Victor Knowles. Both are absolutely controlled by the Joplin group connected with the College Press and the Ozark Bible College. Victor Knowles has succeeded Don DeWelt as the chief spokesman for both the Forum and the *One Body*.

**Calvin Warpula** is a member of the *ad hoc* committee which meets annually in Tulsa to plan the agenda for the next forum. Decisions are made by consensus of agreement which means that no votes are taken. If a committee member finds a speaker or topic unsuitable, it is simply dropped. Brother Warpula operates without authority from a sponsoring church of Christ. He serves in this capacity only through the good graces of Victor Knowles and the One Body Ministry.

We await the time when he will invite the likes of H. Leo Boles to speak before the Restoration Forum assembly who will honestly and forthrightly address the issues. The editor of the *Firm Foundation* did during the 1988 Restoration Forum and was insulted by a remark from a digressive speaker that he was "culturally deprived."

## RESTORATION FORUMS

Some thought that after the close of the Joplin Summit in 1984 the movement would die. However, this did not happen. The Restoration Forums today serve as one of the most powerful and creative efforts of the Christian Church to invade successfully the ranks of the churches of Christ.

**Furman Kearley**, editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, was an early but ill-advised participant in the first Forum meetings, but has dropped out. The *Advocate* carries no notices of the current Restoration Forums. *Image* magazine and its editor, **Denny**



**Boultinghouse**, lend full support, which is not surprising.

Don DeWalt had the foresight to comprehend the enormous significance of the potentials of this latest unity movement to promote the cause of the Independent Christian Church at the expense of the conservative churches of Christ. He succeeded in turning the "Joplin Summit" into one of the most successful propaganda instruments in this century to advance the interests of the Christian Church.

The *One Body* started as a tabloid and has been elevated to the status of a class magazine. **Marvin Phillips** is a staff writer by invitation. Articles from members of churches of Christ have included **Reuel Lemmons**, Leroy Garrett, Carl Ketcherside, and other like writers who have expressed their contempt for the conservative churches of Christ.

## **THE ONE BODY MINISTRY EXPANDS IN ANOTHER DIRECTION**

Restoration XIII met in Louisville November 8-10, 1995. This story has been slowly taking shape through 13 annual meetings of the Joplin Summit/Restoration Forums since 1984. I have followed the proceedings every step of the way since the first Joplin meetings. Every issue of the *One Body* has been cleaned over and over. Tapes have been analyzed.

There are stories that demand telling in order that the conservative churches of Christ may set up their defenses and launch their own counterattacks against the foes who are of their own household. The time element is necessary to tell the substance of this story. We do not need to make a case; the facts are already there and only await their tellings. We fully intend to do so, and expect no rebuttal.

The Joplin Summit (1984) was initially conceived to bring only the churches of Christ and the Christian Church together to

talk about unity. However, a brand new group has been formed within the One Body Ministry called the *Disciples Renewal Movement*. The One Body Ministry has branched out to embrace disenchanted members of the liberal Disciples of Christ who are fed up with and disgusted with the liberal theology and practices of the Disciples of Christ, e.g., the lesbian and gay life styles.

The Disciples Renewal Movement met for the first time on May 24, 1995. It was composed of 24 members who met by invitation only. (This was the case with the 1984 Joplin Summit.) It must now be so clear that even the blind can see that the Joplin leaders now envision reaping defectors from disgruntled members of the churches of Christ and disgusted members from the Disciples of Christ. This is true in spite of all this pious talk about unity.

I would recommend that **Rubel Shelly** and Douglas Foster, who identify with the Disciples of Christ, and Calvin Warpula and his kind, who identify with the Independent Christian Church, that they join one or the other of these two denominations, and leave the churches of Christ alone which have nurtured them since birth.

## **POSTSCRIPT**

One swallow does not make a summer's day. And one article can not explore the labyrinthine passageways of the transactions of the Restoration Forums. That a growing number of churches of Christ are being troubled and divided throughout the country needs no documentation.

Restoration Forum XIII assembled in November, 1995, in Louisville. We plan to use what goes on in the Restoration Forums as looking glasses to clearly reflect the truth of the facts and issues which are set forth in this article.

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# **QUALIFICATIONS OF A PREACHER**

Jack E. Orbison

What is the most important work in the world? Is it not the preaching of the gospel? Jesus died so men could be saved from their sins, and the gospel is the good news that tells the whole story.

The charge or the marching orders of the church is to go preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15,16). It is sad that many preachers and churches have lost sight of this goal. They have turned the blood-bought church of our Lord into a social club. They have structured it for entertainment, baby-sitting, and how-to-do seminars on everything from health to wealth.

Gospel preachers are a vital part of the important work of proclaiming the gospel of Christ. Since the work is so important, it is reasonable to suppose that preachers must have minimum qualifications before they begin this important work. In this article I wish to set forth briefly the qualifications as they are revealed in the scriptures.

### **GENDER AND EDUCATION**

*Gender* is the first qualification of a

preacher. He must be a man! Not because of tradition or custom, but because the scriptures clearly set forth this requirement.

The preacher is charged to speak with all authority (Titus 2:15). But the woman is to learn in silence with all subjection (I Timothy 2:11). The woman is not to teach nor usurp authority over the man (I Timothy 2:12). Every example of a woman teaching, and every command for her to teach puts her in a role of subjection. God's order of authority is clearly set forth (I Corinthians 11:3-9).

*Education* is the second qualification of a preacher. He must be able to read the scriptures. Paul charged Timothy, "...give attendance to reading..." (I Timothy 4:13). If a man cannot read the scriptures with understanding, and if he cannot read the scriptures so others can understand them, he is not qualified to be a preacher.

When Israel was brought back from captivity, they all gathered at the water gate and had Ezra to read them the law of God. "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and

caused them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8).

The preacher must be able to study the scriptures. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

He must be mature enough and wise enough to avoid fables and genealogies (I Timothy 1:4). He must hold to the word and answer as did our Lord, "...it is written." He must understand what the scriptures teach. "From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (I Timothy 1:6, 7).

He must be able to wage war against evil and false teachers. "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare..." (I Timothy 1:18). "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to

the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

He must be able to teach others to become teachers. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). He must know the doctrine of Christ. "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience..." (II Timothy 3:10).

#### CHARACTER AND ATTITUDE

The third qualification of a preacher is *character*. It matters little how brilliant a preacher is if he has no character. He must be pure. "...keep thyself pure" (I Timothy 5:22). He must be faithful. "...and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men" (II Timothy 2:2). He must be honest. "...providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also

in the sight of men" (II Corinthians 8:21). He must not be lazy. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15 ASV). He must be an example for others to follow. "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12). He must not be covetous. "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, But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (I Timothy 6:10, 11).

The fourth qualification of a preacher is his *attitude*. He must not be arrogant. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance" (II Timothy 2:25). "...and the pride of life, is not of the

Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:16). We must notice that meekness does not suggest cowardice. The faithful preacher must have courage to stand against evil and courage to stand up for truth. "But the fearful...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

He must be humble and honest enough to know that he can err. He will then be very careful about how he lives and how he preaches. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine..." (I Timothy 4:16).

It is just as important for preachers to have all the qualifications revealed in the scriptures, as it is for elders to have all the qualifications. We can't leave out any step or qualification for one to become a Christian, neither can we leave out any qualification for one to become a preacher.

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## THE NEW HERMENEUTICS: A License to Change Doctrine

Robert Lawrence

An honest investigation into the New Hermeneutics uncovers an alarming fact: in all its convoluted exposition it takes small notice of the true meaning of religion. Indeed, as **C. B. Armstrong** summarized, it yields a "Christianity without religion." (*The Church Quarterly Review*, April-June 1964) This is a shocking statement.

Could this be the goal of the agents of change? Could professional pulpiteers desirous of grandiose religious theater need only "church" with no substance? Have the walls between the church and the world been broken down to such an extent that there is no calling out? What we find troubles us.

#### IS "COMMUNITY CHURCH" THE EKKLESIA?

The dedicatory on the masthead of *The Christian Chronicle* reads, "An International Newspaper For Members Of Churches Of Christ." But a news item appeared in that publication on its "National" page under the subhead ARKANSAS, to quote in part: "JACKSONVILLE—The Central Community Church conducted a formal opening service in its new building May 1...." (*The Christian Chronicle*, Volume 51/No. 6/June 1994, page 3.)

What is the "Central Community Church?" Is it the ekklesia? Why is there no evidence that it belongs to Christ? Why does news of a "Community Church" show up in the pages of the *Christian Chronicle*. Where is news of *Methodist* churches, or *Roman Catholic* churches? Is there something about a "Community Church" that makes it part of the brotherhood—and thus part of brotherhood news? In the absence of an explanation, perhaps the *Chronicle* masthead should be changed to read, "An International Newspaper For Members Of Churches Of Christ *And Community Churches*."

In his article in the August, 1992 issue of *Wineskins Magazine*

(co-edited by **Rubel Shelly**), **Mike Cope** acknowledges his association with the "new hermeneutic." To him, this school of thought literally means a new way of reading or interpreting scripture. He further states:

"I believe that the winds of change we feel are gusts of spiritual renewal; that the sound we hear is the sound of wineskins expanding from the new wine of the gospel."

His poetry needs an explanation that would provide an agree-

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able comparison with biblical texts. He concludes that these things will return us to a "commitment to unity within diversity."

This thought creates a problem. His phrase, "I believe that we are again returning to...a commitment to unity in diversity," illogically suggests that we at one time correctly practiced unity in diversity. When was that? (One cannot return to something he has not previously done.)

He continues: "This revival in Churches of Christ is also putting greater emphasis on the full Bible—realizing that the books of the Old Testament were not 'nailed to the cross.'"

Let's look at that from the Bible: "**Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross**" (Colossians 2:14). Decide for yourself.

#### IS OLD LAW STILL ALIVE AND BINDING?

We uncover a horrendous linguistic madness if Paul does not teach how death ends a relationship, thus an obligation (Romans chapter 7:1-6).

Is the Old Law still alive—still commandment? If it is, why does the New Testament portray the practices of the Old Law as *beggarly elements*? (Galatians 4:9) This is hardly the stuff of which viable commandment is made. To deny that the Old Law has come to an end is to deny the Christ that ended it: "**For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth**" (Romans 10:4). What do you say?

#### ARE CONFLICTING CLAIMS HARMONIOUS?

The desire for universal salvation so that all churches with their variant doctrines may be one is far older than the New Hermeneutics. Nevertheless, this new interpretive method exists because it plays to the needs of liberal brethren. The thrust of such a dogma is to make all churches one, even though their beliefs differ markedly. This explains why we've been hearing the term the *unchurched*: a term that means we leave alone those who are already in a church, they are our brothers—as **Rick Atchley** preached. (Sermon, October 14, 1990, "Don't Bother Your Brother.") From the specious thinking of this kind of Universalism came the slogan, "unity in diversity."

It's a simple illustration, but a good one: When two men say two different things, one can be wrong and one right, both can be wrong, but both cannot be right. That's the way it was when language had meaning. Now we see that disciples of the New Hermeneutics claim their agenda of change is to include all faiths as though conflicting claims are harmonious. They do this to the disregard of a vengeful God and his demand for narrow obedience.

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## —North Carolina

Rocky Mount: Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

## —Tennessee

Nashville area: **Villages Church of Christ**, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Fifteen minutes from downtown Nashville, Wayne Coats, preacher, Tel. (615) 758-406.

## —Texas

Houston area: **Spring Church of Christ**, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, Tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., Al Brown and David Brown, preachers. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

## —Wyoming

Cheyenne: **High Plains Church of Christ**, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, Tel. (307) 634-3040.

Mike Cope writes, "The 'new hermeneutic' includes an appreciation for what God is doing among other groups of believers." Thus, by the simple application of an interpretive method, Cope has entered the mind of God to determine that he is at work among members of denominational churches in the same way he administers to the church of Christ—which we think of as the ONE true church. But to Mike Cope, there is no one true church, but many churches with widely differing doctrines, all pleasing to God.

It is *doctrine* that separates churches. If you find the same doctrine, you find the same church. If you find a certain doctrine, say, infant baptism, then those who accept this doctrine form groups of the same belief. Thus, it is the *doctrine* of the Methodist church that makes it distinct from the Baptist church. And the *doctrine* of the Baptist church makes it distinct from the Lutheran church, and so for all man-made churches.

On the liberal side, we have Mike Cope teaching that the different churches in the world actually speak a single holy language because they are part of God's doctrine. But Paul by inspiration wrote, "**Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye 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). Do we need an enigmatic hermeneutical process to understand the simplicity of that statement? Is not speaking the same thing *oneness*? Is this not *singleness of thought*? How can churches be one in thought if they think different things? They cannot.

### CAN WE KNOW WITH CERTAINTY?

Are the essential New Testament lessons that teach us salvation, worship, government and life buried in obscure language? Was God so reluctant to *reveal* the Good News that he *encoded* it? Can we work out proper meanings? If we cannot, then the promise is empty: God would have failed to provide us with the trustworthy language necessary for understanding. Do you believe that we are so bogged down in a morass of linguistic mud that we cannot *know*—and know with certainty? Of course you don't. To accept that idea is to accept subjectivism.

New-doctrine preachers who teach from the New Hermeneutics have in the past experienced little resistance. They have won the minds of thousands of brethren (some out of indifference) by changing the meaning of language. Owing to this, they see no need to enter into public discussions to prove the merit of their teachings. The new linguistic madness continues.

There's nothing new about the New Hermeneutics. For quite some time, the forces of evil have twisted words to author new ideas. There is no other method to deceive than with words. The Devil is a prolific author. In his craft, he is the opposite of God (I Corinthians 14:33; John 8:44). But those who would change the church of Christ from sound doctrine to creeds of men should be warned that Satan is an untrustworthy ghost writer.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:4).

If there is a Godly promise of understanding—and there is—then there must also be a Godly method for men to attain that understanding—and there is. Yet, as we have seen, certain men teach otherwise, insisting that they are the sole source of enlightenment, sanctioned by the force of the New Hermeneutics. But we must not forget that agents of change are empowered by unthinking, middle-of-the-road, passive followers. Without the latter, there will be no former.

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# BORROWED BAPTISMS

Robin W. Haley

Apparently our *WINESKINS* brethren are not satisfied with what the Bible teaches regarding baptism, its design, and the various facets of its application for a penitent believer. This article will review a few comments made by Rick Atchley, Roy Osborne and C. Leonard Allen and published in the June '93 issue of *WINESKINS* (Vol. 2, No. 2).

On page 13 of this issue, brother Atchley implies that brethren have "reacted to the "faith only" crowd by teaching that we believe "faith wasn't enough...we needed baptism to save." We all know that no brother or sister (faithful or not) ever has taught that baptism was the invention of man due to our conviction that faith was faulty. Why does Atchley allege such things? Likely because he is about to set before his readers the correct views as discovered by himself and his peers.

In column three he states, "The bottom line is Jesus was baptized to obey God." If you are a reader of *WINESKINS*, or if you are aware of this publication to any degree, you will know before I tell you that he did not even attempt to justify such a statement. He offered no book, chapter or verse for this "bottom line." He did refer to Matthew 3:15 and tried to make this equal to his statement. He said it twice in his article on baptism.

On page 14, column one, again he says, "The Scriptures give many reasons why baptism is essential for the believer, all we really need to know is this: Jesus was baptized to obey God." Again, no Bible references. As to the "many reasons" for baptism, there are a number of things that happen or take place in that action, but the Bible teaches there is but *one* reason to be baptized: unto remission of sins...to wash sins away (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

## WHAT IS BEHIND BELIEVERS' BAPTISM?

Back to page 13, again he says, "Behind every believer's baptism is the baptism of Jesus." Does this sound familiar? We have heard this before. All the Baptists (and others) teach this. Again he offers no proof for so alleging. The Bible teaches something quite different.

Paul made clear from Romans, chapter six, that our baptism is into the *death* of Christ. His *death* is what is behind our baptism.

We are not surprised that he would go the next step of saying that baptism "declares" something. Says he, "Baptism does not contradict salvation by grace—it declares salvation can be received in no other way" (emphasis mine, rwh). In other words, he alleges that baptism makes a

declarative statement. This is Baptist doctrine. Where does the Bible teach this? Baptism does not "declare" anything. Even the death of Christ is declared not by baptism, but by the *Lord's Supper*.

But more: "Baptism is a sublime ("exalted; noble") faith statement that I am not relying upon my own efforts for salvation, but trusting instead in the death and resurrection of Jesus." Well, he is a mite closer, but still no cigar. Which is it? First he says baptism is linked to the baptism of our Lord, now he says it is associated with his death and resurrection. Why the contradiction or at the very least this confusion?

On page 15, column one, he utters these pithy words: "The Gospels (sic) allow no room for the view that faith is not enough." This statement is sown within a context alleging that his brethren have taught this notion of having to include baptism merely because we have thought it necessary.

But, he is not finished with teaching Baptist doctrine yet. In column two he tells us that "Baptism is an expression of faith," and again, "Baptism is a faith statement (column three). He seems not too sure just what to make of this action called baptism.

## IS BAPTISM A "NATURAL RESPONSE"?

Let us consider quickly a statement from C. Leonard Allen, page 31. "Baptism, because it embodies or expresses repentance and trust is a natural response to the blood of Christ." Really? Does he not know that "baptism has the baptism of Jesus behind it as per Atchley? Not only does Atchley contradict *himself*, but even his fellow writer Allen contradicts *him*. Why is this?

Allen surmises that any moron should be able to conclude that one should be baptized because Jesus shed his blood. If baptism is so "natural" a response, why did those on Pentecost, having learned that they had put to death the Son of God by the hands of Godless men, ask this question, "Now when they heard [this.] they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

It seems that *WINESKINS* is a publication whose writers are uncertain about what they contribute. One needs to wonder if the editors and publisher really know *what* is

being written—or, for that matter, what is going on *at all*? Can they not make up their minds about what to believe and teach? Or would to do so be too dogmatic for them? Let us leave the door open for discussion. So broad minded!

## WAS JOHN'S BAPTISM "INADEQUATE"?

We come now to page 17 and Roy Osborne's article entitled, "Dead Men Don't Climb Ladders." In column three, paragraph two, he says, "The baptism of John was inadequate because it was a baptism of repentance leaving the burden still on the shoulders of the sinner to correct his mistakes and live righteously." With no surprise, we find *no scripture* to substantiate this foolish statement. (Educated folk surely can be goofy sometimes!)

A couple of questions come to mind: 1) For whom was John's baptism inadequate? He needs to refresh his thinking on Luke 7:30, "But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him." 2) Was it not necessary for a penitent believer to correct what mistakes he could and live righteously? This is a part of the definition of repentance! Is he going to join the "faith only" or "grace only" crowd? (Yea, he is in their camp already, being a charter member of those from the Lord's people who so espouse this heresy.)

Does Osborne conclude that "all the sins a Christian may do will not damn his soul"? Or, "we do not contribute one whit to our own salvation"? Verily! By this he implies that those baptisms, or baptism with repentance in view, are inadequate. The truth is, the Bible doctrine of repentance and baptism is inadequate *for him* and his false view.

## WHY SO MUCH ON BAPTISM?

Obviously, we have thus a third contradiction regarding baptism. Why does this issue of the *WINESKINS* have so much to say about baptism? Their goal appears to be to change the *design* and *purpose* of baptism as well as its *scope*. If this can be accomplished and their readers can be convinced that "our old, out-dated, traditional view of baptism is wrong or at least inadequate," then the sure line of demarcation between sinner and saint is removed (or



made hazy) and the doors for fellowship are suddenly broadened! Hallelujah, now we can hold hands and play pat-a-cake with "all of God's children!" With this, who is able any longer to say for sure *who* or *when* one is born again or who therefore is my brother or sister in Christ? No judgments allowed—just accept everybody and their claims to sonship.

No wonder we find such conclusions as what **Gordon Rampy** came to on page 29. He wrote an article, entitled, "Transition:

Where is it taking us?" His last sentence reads, "Change does make many of us uncomfortable, but if it leads us to a clearer understanding of the qualifications of citizenship in God's kingdom, then perhaps we will come to realize that his family (and ours) is much larger than we thought." Do you suppose he wants us to consider the possibility (probability) that people other than members of the church of Christ are also God's children? —912 East Teresa Sapulpa, Oklahoma 74066

*doctrine which ye have learned: and avoid them*" (Romans 16:17)? False doctrine affects one's salvation because if one is not in the doctrine of Christ, he does not have the fellowship of God the Father and Christ the Son and is therefore lost.

Another elder at the same congregation also stated that "whatever the area congregations wanted to do was their business." That is a true statement to a point. Each congregation of the body of Christ is autonomous or self-governing. Each is independent of every other congregation. As New Testament Christians we are commanded to care for one another physically and spiritually (Galatians 6:10; James 5:16).

If we are not aware that our neighboring congregation is in error, then we are in danger of the error infiltrating us and leading precious souls away from the truth.

There is a purpose in withdrawing fellowship from congregations that are in error just as there is in the case of a sinning brother or sister (Revelation 2 and 3). **"...Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened..."** (I Corinthians 5:6-7). If the error is not rooted out, it will spot and damage the body.

Our elders who are to watch over the Lord's heritage need to read widely and study so they can be prepared to warn the flock of damnable doctrines.

Elders are spiritual leaders if they follow God's word, **"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"** (Titus 1:9).

The elder who is not aware of the false doctrine that is being promoted by Satan is a blind leader. Men who fill the office of the eldership who can not see the difference between truth and error (I John 4:6), and who do not see the importance of keeping their eyes and ears open to what is happening in the brotherhood, are failing in fulfilling the duties of an elder.

May God bless us with men who meet the qualifications to fill the office of elders. May they also see the grave need to know what is going on around the membership they watch over.

We need leaders who can help protect us from the dangers that Satan puts in our way. **"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).

—9874 Knowlton Road  
Garrettsville, Ohio 44231

## BLIND LEADERS!

Steve Miller

**"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matthew 15:9-14).

The scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus and asked. **"Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread"** (Matthew 15:2). In answering, Jesus asked them a question. **"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?"** (Matthew 15:3).

Jesus revealed to them that their tradition concerning defilement was not a law of God; neither was it a physical problem. He said they worshipped vainly because they taught for doctrines the commandments of men. He told the multitude that gathered, **"hear and understand"** (Verse 10). After Jesus' words in verse 11 the disciples said the Pharisees were offended (Verse 12).

In verses 13 and 14, Jesus laid down two principles to show the disciples the sad condition of the Pharisees. First of all, Jesus said that **"every plant"** that was not planted by God, would be uprooted. Every man-made doctrine will be destroyed and only that which is authored by God will remain. If the teaching or practice is not found in the new covenant purchased by the blood of Christ, then it will be destroyed.

### SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

The second point Jesus made concerning the Pharisees was that they were blind. He later referred to them as **"blind guides"** (Matthew 23:16). The Pharisees were spiritually blind leaders and they would fall into the ditch (or pit) along with their followers. McGarvey writes, "This is clear enough in reference to the literally blind, and Jesus asserts it in reference to the spiritually

blind. If a man, knowing himself to be blind, allows another blind man to lead him, he deserves to fall into the ditch. He should choose a leader who can see, and as there is no leader who can see all the way that we have to travel except Jesus..." (Commentary On Matthew And Mark, p. 136) We have blind religious leaders today. We have "fake healers" and T. V. evangelists who are blind and dead spiritually. Blind leaders are heading for hell because they do not shine with the true light, Jesus Christ.

In the church, we also have blind leaders. Over two years ago I had an elder make this statement to me. "They are not teaching anything that would affect anyone's salvation." This was said concerning the heretical doctrine of Max King, known as the A. D. 70 Doctrine. The conversation centered around whether faithful congregations of the Lord's Church should have fellowship with King's congregation.

Through further discussion, it was plain that this elder did not know enough about King's false doctrine to know that he teaches Jesus came for the second time in A. D. 70. How could anyone that is a Bible student believe that false doctrine will not affect one's salvation!

False teaching is preaching and teaching something contrary to what the Bible teaches. Why did the apostle Paul tell the Galatians that anyone who teaches a perverted gospel would be "accursed"? (Galatians 1:6-9). Why did Paul also reveal to the Roman Christians to **"mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the**

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## **Notes & Quotes...**

Alice Griffiths, Cygnet, Tasmania, Australia: "Many thanks for sending the Asian Newsletter regularly. It was a real shock to read of the passing away of Udom [Kananaporn]. I got to know him when he was in Four Seas College. He was such a very quiet gentleman. Life was short for him, but I reckon he now is in a better place with God.

"The missionary work that you and the rest of the brethren are doing in Russia seems to be a big job. Nevertheless, there is a saying, 'No job is too big or too small as long as we are doing the job in God's glory.'"

[NOTE: Sister Alice worked for many years grading the BASIC BIBLE

COURSE in Singapore and handling the office work of getting it out to the many thousands who were enrolled there. She enclosed her check for \$50.00 support for our missionary work. How wonderful to know she is still interested in seeking and saving the lost after all these years. [YR Jr.]

Concerning those who distinguish between preaching "the church" or God's "plan of salvation," Gary Colley said, "The church IS God's plan of salvation, and if you miss it you miss salvation." —South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.



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