

Contending **FOR**
THE **Faith**[™]

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Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

Learning from the Tulsa Workshop

Ronald W. Osborn

On March 27-28, 1992, my wife and I attended the *International Soul-Winning Workshop* in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I had attended in the late 1970's and was impressed by the workshop. I was so impressed by the 1978 workshop and the things I learned that I obeyed the gospel soon after returning home from there.

I also learned a great deal from the 1992 Tulsa Workshop. I learned what false teachers look like and many of the current apostasies in the church today. I returned home with renewed enthusiasm to combat error and false teaching to the best of my ability.

ALL TRUE—AND WORSE

I had been hearing for several years of the problems of the workshop, but simply could not believe a gathering of the Lord's people had regressed so much. But let me say, everything that I heard is true—and worse.

I have a workshop program in front of me as I write this article. It states that this was the *17th Annual Tulsa International Workshop*. The theme was "To Seek and Save the Lost," hosted by the Garnett Church of Christ. I enclose a copy of the welcome letter from the Garnett elders who were responsible for this workshop.

As I glance through the daily sched-

ule, I notice several false teachers such as Keith Lancaster, of "Acappella," Jeff Walling, Dr. Terry Johnson, and Marvin Phillips, just to name a few. I also notice that during each evening service there is a Bible Hour for ages 4-K.

DIVIDED WORSHIP, NO WORSHIP —AND MAGIC

Where are we given authority for dividing the worship service? Give me chapter and verse. Why not have an elderly people's worship, a young adults' worship, and a teenage worship service, also? Better yet, why not divide the worship by race or sex? If Bible Hour is scriptural, why not these others?

I also notice each night that grades 1-6 do not go to worship. Rather, they are to go to the cafeteria and be entertained by "Brother Wonder, A Magician With Bible Stories."

MAGIC, SORCERY CONDEMNED

Brethren, I need to say very little about the Bible condemning magic and sorcery. Read Exodus 7 through 9 about the plagues of Egypt. The magicians did not receive their power from God, so where did they get it? In fact, we read in Exodus 8:19, "Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, 'This is

the finger of God.' But Pharaoh's heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had said" (NKJ).

We read in Revelation 21:8, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (NKJ).

I ask why men such as Tex Williams and Richard Rogers would agree to speak at such a workshop?

"TAKE THESE THINGS HENCE!"

My wife and I arrived at the Workshop Friday morning about 10 a.m. The expo center reminded me of the state fair. It contained booths that were selling everything from Billy Graham and Nolan Ryan books to home-made pot-holders and towels. It also reminded me somewhat of a flea market. I wondered what Jesus would have thought of this? (John 2:12-17)

I also began to notice some rough-looking characters in the expo center. Some of them had long hair, beards, ear rings, and black t-shirts. I soon found out they were members of the "gospel" singing groups. I also noticed many

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Are We Drifting Toward 'Hobbyism' Again?

What is it with "us" that every few years an alignment of brethren seems determined to press and press some particular point which never can be settled and results only in further dividing an already fractured brotherhood?

In the 20th century alone, this has resulted in otherwise good brethren dividing over such things as anti-Bible-classes, anti-women-teachers, anti-multiple-containers, anti-cooperation, anti-this and anti-that. As brother J. D. Tant used to say, we seem to be anti every thing but ante-up!

Even in my own day, through some making a "hobby" out of such things as premillennialism, anti-cooperation and Crossroads/ Bostonism, many of us have watched appalled as great numbers of churches have been torn asunder, in my judgment at least, unnecessarily. Within the past three or four years, other such divisive issues have been raised among us, which, if pressed, will just as surely divide us as any of the issues above mentioned.

In our *Contending for the Faith* edition for February/1988, I wrote an editorial, urging, "Let's Try To Avoid Making A 'Hobby' Out of Anything." It appeared to have a good effect at that time; possibly it will hurt nothing to reproduce it herewith. Please read it once again, as follows:

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

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

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

GOOD ADVICE FROM FRANK L. COX

One of the sanest, sagest brethren in the church I ever knew was Frank L. Cox, who, for more than 20 years, was office editor of the *Firm Foundation*. I recall, as but yesterday, a visit he made to me in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, in 1941, when I was a 24-year-old preacher at Mercedes, Texas. He and I

had stopped to rest a moment at a stone wall, when our conversation got on the subject of "hobby riding."

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

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

YOUNG PREACHERS, ESPECIALLY, PAY ATTENTION

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

As we study the scriptures, we find much said, for

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

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

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Tulsa Workshop

(Continued from Page 1)

young people, both boys and girls, wearing shorts to all the services.

LIKE A ROCK CONCERT

On Friday evening, we attended the singing at the pavilion. I have never been so shocked in my entire life. The singing was nothing more than a rock concert. There were people standing in the aisles clapping and swaying back and forth with the music. Most of the "performers" could have fit right in with any rock band.

One particular group was called "Arios." This word simply means music or melody. They performed one tune called "Yo Noah." They performed this rap song complete with neon sunglasses and caps. What ever happened to giving glory to God?

SHOCK AND CONFUSION

Then the congregational singing started. It was led jointly by Jerome Williams and Keith Lancaster. For the most part, their selections were not in the song books. They led songs where one group would echo the other. Again, much like a performance instead of a worship service.

During these songs, there was clapping and some stood with their hands held up straight over their heads, swaying to the music. I was still in a state of shock and confusion.

The collection trays were then passed. Again, this was on a Friday evening. I wondered if the Garnett elders are familiar with I Corinthians 16:2, which commands us to take the collection on the first day of the week?

SHOULD WE "PARTY FOR GOD"?

The so-called sermon was then delivered by Jeff Walling. His theme was "To Seek and Save the Lost." He began his lesson by poking fun at some of our best-loved hymns, including, "Mansion Over The Hilltop" and "Farther Along."

Mr. Walling stated that we should not be satisfied with a little silver or gold, but rather should (and I quote) "party for God." He also stated that if a person was not a Christian, he should go out and partake of anything and everything he wanted to.

Marvin Phillips sat behind Walling on stage and agreed with everything that was said.

Mr. Walling's lesson would have been excellent on a Billy Graham Crusade. I wonder if Mr. Graham will invite him to speak?

CHARGING FOR WORSHIP?

As if this were not enough, on Saturday we were encouraged to attend the "Ten Year Anniversary Concern With Acappella, AVB, and Keith Lancaster." This was advertised on page 21 of the workshop program.

The cost of the tickets to this concert was only \$2.00—if purchased from the Acappella Concert Booth #182. Tickets at the door were sold for \$7.00. There was also this note: "A portion of the proceeds will go to the Wright Christian Academy."

Charging admission for singing praises to God—who ever heard of such a thing! Also, what portion went to Wright Christian Academy? A penny? A dollar? Who knows? I did not

care to line Mr. Lancaster's pockets, so I did not attend this concert.

DO PHARISEES STILL EXIST?

In Matthew 6:1-4, Jesus said, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen of them. Otherwise, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will himself reward you openly" (NKJ).

Some people tell us that the Pharisees do not exist any more. I suggest to you that they are alive and well today.

WHAT I LEARNED AT TULSA

I can honestly say that I learned more from this workshop than I did that one back in 1978.

First, I learned how far the church has digressed and where it is headed, unless faithful brethren put a stop to it.

Second, I learned that religion is being commercialized today, just as in the days of Jesus. People will do or say anything for money. Perhaps we need another temple cleansing today.

Third, I left the Tulsa Workshop with a renewed enthusiasm and determination to do all I can to combat error and false teaching within the Lord's church today.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

There are two things that all of us have the ability to do to combat this error:

- 1) Refuse to attend the *Tulsa Soul-Winning Workshop* and other such meetings, unless changes are made.

- 2) Write to the leaders of the two sponsoring congregations and voice disapproval. Their addresses are:

Elders,
Garnett Church of Christ
12000 East 31st Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74146

Elders,
Memorial Drive Church of Christ
747 South Memorial Drive
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74112

(Signed)

Ronald W. Osborn
Route 1, Box 135
Holdenville, Oklahoma 74648



A Response to Brother Guy N. Woods' Article Reprinted in Our October/1995 Edition

M. C. Brooks

In the October issue of "Contending for the Faith" an article by the late Guy N. Woods was presented on the assembly mentioned in I Corinthians 14. Although I have deep respect for brother Woods, I do not believe either he or any other man is the final judge as to the meaning of scripture. It is my belief that brother Woods made several errors in his analysis of this chapter. Certainly it behooves the paper to print opposing views to those expressed in the above mentioned article. I know that there are a multitude of brethren who are more qualified than I am to answer what I believe to be error. However, I cannot sit idly by and not take any action when such is taught by a paper that I have supported for a number of years. Therefore, please find the following:

First, Woods states that there is no meeting convened by the church today that is comparable to the meeting mentioned in I Corinthians 14. He states that the purpose of this meeting was to "edify the church" with which I agree (vs. 26). However, because spiritual gifts were exercised (which was true in all the first century churches), this would eliminate us using this as a pattern for worship. He further states that we have no prophets today to judge what is being said, so, we cannot apply the rules governing that type of meeting today. Brethren, what kind of reasoning is this? Are we to throw out as examples all meetings of the church mentioned in the New Testament simply because they had spiritual gifts during this time? Shall we disregard all examples of conversions in the book of Acts because miracles were involved in each of them?

The only difference between an inspired instructor of the first century and an uninspired instructor of today is the method of obtaining knowledge of God's Word. The use of the inspired word today should be the same as the use of the inspired word in Bible times as to how the church was to be edified. The apostle is not just giving instruction as to the use of gifts. He is giving instruction as to how the church as well as the unbeliever were to be instructed when the church came together in one place, how they were to behave themselves in this assembly, and what their women were permitted to do when they all came together in one place! It is amazing to me that brethren will use Woods'

argument on women in this chapter but will turn around, and quote this same chapter to limit the speakers to one at a time, or to forbid a speaker in another tongue from speaking unless he has an interpreter. Where is the consistency?

Woods states that we have no prophets today. Is this true? Vines defines a prophet as "a proclaimer of a divine message—one who speaks forth or openly." Certainly we do not have divinely inspired prophets—but no prophets? He states that "there are no revelations given to those that sitteth by." Certainly there are no divine inspirations given to those that "sitteth by"—but, are we not to judge what is being said? Are we not judging the speakers by the same word that the prophets in I Corinthians 14 were judging? Would not this chapter serve as our pattern to allow those chosen by the church as shepherds of the flock to arise and correct (or expound further) on the message delivered? Paul states in verse 31, "For you may ALL prophesy," and in verse 1, "Follow after spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Were all these brethren divinely inspired? Were all prophets? We know from Acts 18 that there was at least one prophet who was not divinely inspired, but who did publicly declare the word. He was not divinely inspired because he taught error and had to be corrected. Thus, one did not have to be inspired in order to be a prophet. We still have prophets (preachers) today who publicly proclaim that same word of God that was delivered to the Corinthians.

Second, Woods states that the women who were required to be silent in this passage were the wives of the prophets. Of this he seems absolutely certain that it was these who were forbidden. How does he know that? How does he know that it wasn't the wives of the tongue speakers, or of the interpreters, or the song leaders? He states that all of these women were married—their husbands were qualified to answer their questions (hence, they were inspired prophets)—that they were wholly dependent on others (their husbands?) for their information. I wonder if the Berean women knew this. Of course, all the members of every congregation were dependent upon revelation in the first century. This does not mean that they did not know

any scripture each time they met together. There are no scriptures to indicate that either Priscilla or Aquila were inspired, yet they took Apollos aside and taught him from the scripture that they had learned beforehand from either Paul or one of the inspired prophets. Certainly the first Christians in Jerusalem would have learned some scripture from the apostles as they met daily to study and pray. God, by his divine will, kept the teaching pure by inspired prophets who continued to teach after the apostles had imparted these gifts to them. Were only men given inspiration? Were there any women "which did prophesy"? Was not God's promise that Peter quoted in Acts 2 given to both men and women ("your sons and daughters shall prophesy")? In light of this is it not amazing that Woods would state that the reason the women were required to keep silent in the church was because "they had no revelation; hence, were unable to contribute to the purpose of the meeting which was to edify the church." This is not the reason God gives us for this prohibition. It is so plainly stated how could we not understand it? Listen: "for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." This is why these women (even if they were actually the prophets wives) could not speak in this assembly. Is it, or is it not, "a shame for a woman to speak in the church" even today? Has anything changed this commandment of God? Some try to demean this statement by stating that God could not have meant this because then it would have prohibited the women from singing. What kind of "speaking" did Paul address in this chapter? Was it not reading of a psalm, giving of a tongue, an interpretation, a revelation, a prophecy, or asking of a question? Why then would anyone try to include singing in this prohibition unless it is to diminish the prohibition of these verses which Paul states are "the commandments of God"? If one really believes that the silence mentioned here includes singing with the congregation then that person should practice that prohibition rather than stating that these verses have nothing to do with today. The message has to do with how we should behave ourselves in the house of God!

Woods mentions I Timothy 2:11-12. However, he does not address the 11th verse at all! Why? Does this not fit exactly with what Paul teaches in I Corinthians 14 which Woods states does not apply today? Listen: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." Where must a woman learn in silence? Is it not the public assembly of the church where she is not to speak, per I Corinthians 14:34? Do not these two passages tie together? I believe that they do. The apostle Paul in Acts 20:20 stated to the Ephesian elders that he had taught them publicly and from house to house. Therefore, they had LEARNED either from public or private teaching. We know from I Corinthians 14:35 that the women could learn by asking questions in private (at home) so, then, there is only one place left where they must "learn in silence" (in public teaching). Why is this difficult to accept? Did not God know that man would struggle with this teaching? Why else would Paul stress that this was a "commandment of God"?

Some brethren believe that it is scriptural for a woman to interpret a sermon today because she is not giving her

own words but that of another speaker. However, if you would ask them if they would permit that same woman to interpret from an English Bible the words of the Apostle Paul (or any other writer for that matter) they would probably answer no. Why? Is it because no man is standing on the rostrum with them when they give their interpretation? If this is the case, could a man stand with her while she interpreted Peter's entire sermon in Acts 2, along with other selected verses as the sermon for any given congregation? But, someone may say, this would be usurping authority over the men in the congregation. If she violates I Timothy 2:12 by interpreting Peter's sermon, why does she not violate this same scripture when she interprets a sermon today given by one of our preachers? Brethren, be consistent! Remember the commandment of God—"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted for them to speak...for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church." Let us not digress away from the truth, nor be ashamed of the the gospel of Christ. In the love of Christ,

(Signed) Mac Brooks
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LEARNING FROM ONE'S MISTAKES

Shan Jackson

Confusion reigns supreme in the religious world today. Denominations, factions, cults have a free hand. But the alarming scenario shows that there is also much confusion in the brotherhood. In this similar vein the inspired penman, Jude, encourages his readers to **"earnestly contend for the faith."**

The old adage, "Learn from one's mistakes" was coined because problems of one generation generally have the habit of appearing in each ensuing generation. "Experience is the best teacher" is not limited to one's own lifetime alone. The problems that Jude addressed are, more than likely, the same problems that the church is facing today. Men, and probably preachers, were so distorting the truth that religion was being transformed from something holy and pure to something ungodly and defiled. Their immoral actions were distorting biblical teachings. Jude says they were **"defiling the flesh"** which sounds like fornication and **"despising dominions"** which smacks of disrespect for authority. But these were also speaking evil of others. They were **"murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts"** (verse 16). However, not only does this sound like the tele-evangelists of today but also resembles many who perform under the banner of "Churches of Christ."

ARE CONTENDING, JUDGING THE SAME?

Many ask, "Who gave you the right to attack others?" Or, "Who set you up as judge?" First, I am not trying to attack anyone. Rather, my desire is to attack false teaching regardless of whether it is "in" or "out" of the church. According to scripture there are certain things that are deemed right and others that are wrong. You don't have to be a judge to see the truth.

On the Judgment Day each will have to give an account for every word even to the intent of the heart, but Christians also will have to account for every *needed* word that was left *unsaid* in the defense of his truth. A Christian's obligation extends to the **"whole counsel of God."** God's truth must be spoken, **"in season and out of season."** Besides, who are we afraid of offending? If I must speak out and offend an evil doer or remain silent and offend Jesus Christ, there is but one alternative.

The word "contend" is defined as "standing in opposition to" or "to be rivals with." The thrust is not for friendship but for truth. Therefore, to contend for truth we must be anti-false. If we stand with Christ and are for purity and love we must stand

opposed to impurity and hate. One cannot be both for and against both since each represents opposite ends of life's spectrum.

Jesus said, **"If you are not with me you are against me"** and **"you cannot serve God and mammon."** Therefore, we contend that there is no middle ground in religion. When Jesus condemned adultery he left no "gray" areas nor did he concerning divorce, remarriage, or any other area of discussion. Never once did he allow our opinion to set precedent or allow sanctuary under the heading "middle ground." If we are *for God* then we are *against sin* and if we are *against sin* then we must speak where God speaks.

Paul said emphatically that there is "one body" (Ephesians 4:4); and if I do not contend for and defend it I am not preaching the truth of the New Testament. Christians are God's only line of defense against opponents of the truth. If we do not stand and withstand, God's truth has no champions to face the enemy. Armed with the **"whole armor of God"** (Ephesians 6:13) and walking **"in love"** (Ephesians 5:2) we must

contend. If Christians will not no one will.

IS GOD'S WORD OUT-MODED?

Through the years many skeptics have attacked the Bible as being out-moded, out-of-date, and needless. They have challenged its credibility and its inspiration. Others have attacked God's precious plan for man's salvation as too rigid and cold. But in their attack they fail to show a viable alternative.

The works of a "great master" of art have never been accused of being out-of-date and his works deal with simple aesthetic appreciation. God is the "Great Master" of salvation. His works of art began before the world began and are seen in every tree, flower, and child's smile. His plan was not chipped from ice but rather cost the blood of the Savior. There is no alternative for there is **"one Lord, one faith, and one baptism"** (Ephesians 4:5).

The confusion we see in religion today is man-designed and man-sustained. To **"earnestly contend for the faith"** means we must contend for the things Christ contended for and the things the apostles and

For those who already have a copy of my book "A Time of Transition" I have added the following insert which you may want to incorporate into your copy. Thanks much.

Corrections and Clarifications to "A Time of Transition"

It is very important to me to handle the word of truth properly and present it to the best of my ability. To that end I would like to offer the following corrections and clarifications to this book.

On page 37, I say "Moreover Jesus did not come on Pentecost." As has been correctly pointed out to me by Roy Deaver, Jesus did come on Pentecost in a substitutionary way in the sending of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16-18, 26, 28)

Bible scholars are divided on the fulfillment of Mark 9:1. Many of the finest Bible scholars teach that it was fulfilled on the first Pentecost following our Lord's resurrection.

The chart on page 54 has "Altar" misspelled as "Alter." Moreover, I depict the Mosaic covenant as extending until the destruction of Jerusalem. This is because I see the destruction of Jerusalem as the probate of the new covenant. In general a will is legal at the point of probate, but I have no argument with those who would terminate the Mosaic covenant with the death of the testator at the cross, although I believe doing so neglects the time of transition and presents them with a certain problem.

W. N. Fangio

September 26, 1995

early church also contended for. If any brother insists on speaking where the Bible does not, we must stand in opposition to him. If any brother insists on remaining silent where the Bible is not silent, then we must be rivals with him. Not out of meanness but out of love for God, his Bible, and his church.

Brethren, I know this sounds hard and it

was designed as such. We have fluffed the feather pillows of denominational men and we have turned to them for spiritual guidance too long. We also have played "patty-cake" with brethren who spew their false teaching in articles, meetings, and lectures too long, as well.

We must earnestly contend for the faith to receive the benefits of the faith. His truth

will outlast their evil surmisings. They will be rooted up and their false teaching will fall; but, until then, we must continue defending his truth and contending for his faith "once and for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

—Post Office Box 904
Palacios, Texas 77465

Who Are My Brethren?

Danny Bennett

Jesus answers this question (Who are my brethren?) completely by saying, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother..." (Matthew 12:50), thus covering those "in" or "out" of the church! Many incorrectly think that the question only applies or has relevance to those "out" of the church—neglecting those in error "in" the church. The liberals among us, including Rubel Shelly and Max Lucado, would have us believe that those in the denominational, religious world are our brethren—thus effectively voiding the question and its correct answer. Their idea is far from the truth.

In this article, my main purpose is to direct our attention to the spiritual status of those "in" the church, who, like the liberals above-mentioned, not only are in error themselves but are aggressively promoting false doctrines.

LIBERALS WOULD DESTROY ONE TRUE CHURCH

Can we scripturally continue to address the erring as brother or brethren? This is something which every member of the church—the church of Christ—must consider. Unquestionably, most of the destruction within the church has been the result of the liberals among us.

Fortunately, through the efforts of brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., and *Contending For The Faith*, the church has not sustained as much damage as could have been inflicted. As a result of his efforts, a large portion of the brotherhood has been informed of such preachers/teachers, churches, and educational institutions and their heretical doctrines.

WHY CONTINUE IN FELLOWSHIP?

Sadly, we continue to fellowship and refer to those in error as brother or brethren, thereby encouraging and bidding them God speed in direct violation of II John 9-11. There are many reasons for this; but three of these are primary:

1) **Personal Status**—type of de-

gree/college and where one preaches/teaches;

2) **Church Status**—not disfellowshipping;

3) **Spiritual Status**—brother/brethren.

Many say we do not have the right or authority not to call those in error brother/brethren because God added them to the church (Acts 2:41, 47) with the inherent right to be thusly called. However, by taking this position, we may be subtly introducing the Calvinistic doctrine of "Impossibility of Apostasy" into the church.

TWO RECORDED INSTANCES

There are only two recorded instances in the New Testament of the use of "brethren" in conjunction with "false" (II Corinthians and Galatians 2:4). However, the usage in these two passages reflect a special circumstance prompting Paul to use the descriptive adjective "false" with "brethren" to designate a special type of brethren as distinguished from true brethren. Those he was describing as "false brethren" were of the same category as "false witnesses" (Matthew 26:59-60) and "false Jews" (Revelation 2:9; 3:9; and Romans 2:28).

Those who use these two passages to justify referring to the erring as "brother" or "brethren" have missed Paul's point. The scriptures teach that we are to exercise our responsibility toward those in error (John 7:24). The apostle Paul says,

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to revenge all disobedience..." (II Corinthians 10:4-6)

ERROR DESCRIBED AS LEAVEN

Error is described by Paul as leaven, a symbol of impurity, which must be purged (I Corinthians 5:6-7).

The apostle Peter also describes those promoting error as "false prophets" and "false teachers" (II Peter 2:1-2).

Those in error are neither abiding in Christ nor walking in the light but in darkness (I John 1:6-7). Their condition is "worse with them than the beginning" (II Peter 2:20-22).

Brethren, if these liberals continue in error, we are to have no fellowship with them (Ephesians 5:11; Romans 16:17-18). Of course, if they repent, we are to receive them back into fellowship, forgiving them (Galatians 6:1-2; II Thessalonians 3:15).

It should be noted that the "receiving back" implies that while they are "in error" they also are outside the church and the saving blood of Christ—no longer our brother/brethren! We must not continue to address those in error within the church as brother/brethren. It is imperative that we give much prayer and study to this subject with our response firmly based upon the inspired word of God!

—6205 Wall Triana
Madison, Alabama 35758

[EDITORIAL NOTE: To say the least, this question, "Who is my brother?," is not easily answered. If one ever was "born again," hence a member of God's family, was he not my brother then? If so, if, through error, he is not my brother now, how did he get unborn? Only God could add him to his family; only God can take him out (John 10:29). As Paul told Timothy, "The Lord knoweth them that are his..." (II Timothy 2:19)

When Paul instructed the Thessalonians to "withdraw yourselves from every BROTHER that walketh DISORDERLY" (II Thessalonians 3:6), did the fact that a BROTHER walked "disorderly" mean that he NO LONGER WAS A BROTHER? He had to be withdrawn from, hence not fellowshiped. Paul's calling him "brother" evidently did not imply fellowship. As for verse 15, had this one been "received back," or was he STILL WITHDRAWN FROM when Paul said, "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother"?

We may not totally agree with brother Bennett on this one point. Basically, his article is a good one; and we appreciate his effort. Possibly we all need further study on this vexatious problem.—The Editor]

Is The *Christian Chronicle* In "Good Hands"?

Jesse Whitlock

In the pages of the *Christian Chronicle* [August 1995, pp. 14-15], there appeared a two-page spread called, "The Men's Movement." The authoress is Lora B. Postelwait. The thrust of the article is to promote and encourage Christian men to join hands with an interdenominational conglomeration commonly called "Promise Keepers."

The article begins by describing a typical "worship scenario" at one of the Promise Keepers conferences:

"Fifty thousand men packed into a sports stadium rise in unison. They shout, stomp their feet and cheer on their victor. Beach balls fly through the arena. The slap of high-fives resounds through the air. These 50,000 men are yelling...for Jesus Christ."

Sounds like true worship to me! I am sure this is what Paul had in mind when he wrote. **"Let all things be done decently and in order"** (I Corinthians 14:40). And, of course, we realize that all terms and designations are found in the word of God. I Peter 4:11 reminds us, **"if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..."** Listen to a few terms from the article with all scripture references listed after: "Men's Leadership Ministries" (...), "Promise Keepers Okla. State Task Force (...)", "Point Man" (...), "Wake-Up Call" (...), "Promise Keepers" (...), "Spiritual Shepherds" (...). Surely we can see that this is *interdenominational* language, i.e., *"The language of Ashdod."*

Before looking at the seven promises allow me to point out that the idea of having men to assume their rightful role in the family is commendable. However, it is such only because it was commanded in the Bible multiplied centuries before the idea of an all-denominational conference (at \$55 a head) was dreamed up by the denominational founders, Bill McCartney and Dave Wardell. The article speaks of the dream:

"In 1993, this colossal dream was realized when more than 50,000 men filled the Colorado University stadium to hear speakers and singing groups, to pray and to encourage each other."

The majority of the speakers and singing groups are from various man-made denominations. Guess what accompanies the singing groups? Just how does a New Testament Christian pray with and encourage denominational men? How does one address God as "Father" if he is not one of God's children? When I am asked why I refuse to join local ministerial alliances and/or Promise Keepers, my answer remains the same:

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the father and the son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house. Neither bid him god speed: for he that biddeth him god speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11). Yet, one so-called minister among us is quoted in the article as saying:

"The major thrust of excitement for me was to see that what Jesus prayed for in John 17 can be achieved—that we would all be one and lay aside our differences."

I could not help but wonder if this man comprehended the real meaning of the Lord's prayer. Christ prayed **"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 hath sent me"** (John 17:21). There are unique differences that help identify the Lord's church as being the body of Christ. If we lay aside our differences, then the Lord's church would be what many erring brethren are working toward; just another denomination among many.

The two-page spread in the *Christian Chronicle* even high-

lighted "the seven promises to which Promise Keepers pledge themselves: Promise Keepers believes that Christian growth begins by making promises. These are the seven promises that they encourage men to uphold. We are going to note all seven with a brief comment. A promise keeper is committed to:...

1. Honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to his word, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I have no trouble with the first part of the statement. However, note the last seven words. This teaches the Calvinistic idea of a leading of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the word; which is contrary to Ephesians 6:17. Notice the statement includes obedience to his words and then adds the last seven words. I reject this creed of Calvinism!

2. Pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

This is redundant to any New Testament Christian in view of Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 3:13 and similar passages. But, notice the word "brothers" in this setting of all denominations coming together. I am not persuaded the Bible allows me to call one a "brother" who has not been baptized into Christ for / unto / in order to obtain the remission of sins.

3. Practicing spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity.

Aren't these things already commanded? (James 1:26-ff; Titus 2:11-ff; I Timothy 5:22). If I should "join up" with Promise Keepers I would be in violation of this promise since I would be united with those who do not preach God's truth, do not practice



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God's truth and do not prefer God's truth! I would become spiritually impure, *cf.*, 11 John 9-11.

4. Building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.

There is nothing new in this statement. (*Cf.*, Ephesians 5:22-ff; 6:4-ff.) What does this unauthorized man-made creed provide that is not found in the teaching of the New Testament? Promise # 4 is redundant and superfluous.

5. Supporting the mission of the church by honoring and praying for his [spiritual shepherds] and by actively saving his time and resources.

This interdenominational conglomeration denies the Bible's teaching that there is but one church. They must, of necessity, believe that God approves all the conflicting and contradictory "faiths" (the man-made denominations).

Promise Keepers cannot obey the injunction of 1 Timothy 3:15 where the record reads: "but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." When I look at the term [spiritual shepherds] (the brackets supplied by them—jlw), I remember the "prayer partner" concept of the old Crossroads/new Boston movement, *i.e.*, a mentoring concept, supposed superior spirituality. You would think my brethren would have learned the lesson after our double-cross at the Crossroads; but you just can't warn some brethren! Crossroads advocated "I.ordship" baptism,

saying if you were baptized into Christ it would not do. You must also accept him as Lord. Listen. You cannot separate the two! Peter proclaimed in Acts 2:36, "...God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Christ is Lord! But how many different kinds of baptism are represented in one meeting of Promise Keepers? Your guess is as good as mine!

6. Reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

This is ecumenicalism, *i.e.*, the old "unity in diversity" mentality that some among us have promoted for years. It means we can teach and believe different doctrines and still have unity in Christ! God disagrees: Galatians 1:6-ff; Amos 3:3; 11 John 9-11; 1 Corinthians, chapters 1-3. I submit no gospel preacher can take part in this concept of holding hands with error and still be found pleasing to God. We cannot pretend the denominational barrier does not exist. It does!

7. Influencing his world, being obedient to the great commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and the great commission (Matthew 28: 19-20).

Those who sign the pledge do not obey fully either the commandment or the commission. The command is to "love the lord thy God with all thy heart..." consider this in light of 1 John 5:3. "for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." Yet, the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20 and Mark 16:15-

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9:00.....Abraham.....Eddie Parrish
 10:00.....Paul.....Gary Summers
 11:00..... Jezebel.....Jeff Sweeten
 1:30.....Samuel.....Bob Sweeten
 2:30.....Adam&Eve.....Charlie DiPalma
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Sunday, February 18

9:30..... Jeremiah.....Johnny Ramsey
 10:30.....Jesus Our Lord...Johnny Ramsey
 1:30.....Josiah.....Dub McClish
 2:30.....Judas.....John Moore
 3:30.....Hymeneus &
 Alexander.....Richard Melson
 7:00Cornelius.....David P. Brown
 8:00.....Demas, Mark, &
 Luke.....Darrell Conley

Monday, February 19

9:00.....Ezra & Nehemiah....Robert Stephenson
 10:00..... Ruth.....Kenneth Ratcliff
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18) points out that one must believe and be baptized in order to be saved. How many of the thousands of men who assemble for one of these "beach-ball banging bashes" would affirm the necessity of the one baptism for salvation? If this final point were fully obeyed then the Promise Keepers movement would disband immediately!

Many are now thinking that these seven promises are interdenominational in direction. That brings us back to our main point of this writing. Let us ask it again. Is the *Christian Chronicle* in good hands? Some may contend that they were just reporting religious news in a religious paper. But, in the September issue (1995) p. 18, the editorial title is: "Editor Defends Chronicle's Promise Keepers Centerspread." Howard Norton stated in part:

"...a moral and ethical movement can be good and worthy of our support...We (churches of Christ—jlw) usually tend to be followers rather than leaders...Those of our people who choose to wage a significant fight against evil threats to the community must enter into some kind of relationship with highly principled Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians or Catholics..."

I have often used bulletin, newspaper, radio and pulpit to speak against abortion, drug abuse, gambling, liquor by the drink, horse racing, and such like. Not because any man-made denomination has led the way, but because God's word demands that such evil be opposed by all New Testament Christians. I have often spoken of the evils of dancing, social drinking, instrumental music in worship to God, mixed swimming, using God's name in vain and such. Yet, I do not know of many man-made religious groups that are leading the way before me. Do you? Is it the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians or Catholics? I think not!

Howard's defense included a quote from the article:

"Lora B. Postelwaite, author of the Chronicle's article on the men's movement, hit the nail on the head when she said: 'more than ever, the estrangement of men from their roles as husbands, fathers and moral leaders is being cited as reason for the breakdown of family and society'."

I went back and re-read the article. Then I noted the closing acknowledgment of the authoress in italics:

"Lora B. Postelwaite is the owner of The Write Image, a public relations and desktop publishing firm. A graduate of Oklahoma Christian, Lora now lives in Rochester Hills, Michigan, where she attends the Rochester Hills congregation with her husband, Dan Isenberg."

(The emphasis in the quotation is mine—jlw). However, in light of the editor's defense of the article written and the direction of the article itself, I believe we need to take careful note of *her* last name and *her husband's* last name!

After noting that her name and her husband's name are *not the same*, take note of these words: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Ephesians 5:22-24). What name does the church wear that belongs to Christ? Does not she wear the name of Christ?

Here's a question for the editor of the Chronicle and those who think the publication is in good hands. If you are in agreement with the thrust that men should be better "husbands, fathers and moral leaders" why not have a woman to write such an article who respects her husband enough to wear his name!

Is the *Christian Chronicle* in good hands?

[Note: the author delivered a lesson on September 17, 1995: "Why I Am Not a Member of the Group Called Promise Keepers." A copy can be obtained for \$2.00 (tape, shipping and handling) through Central church of Christ, Post Office Box 1782, Ardmore, Oklahoma 73402, or by calling (405) 223-3289.

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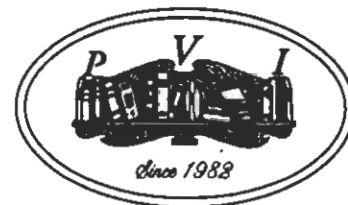
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"A Caterpillar Becoming a Butterfly"

Robin W. Haley

These are the words of Terry Bell, preacher for the newly named Southern Hills Church, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Local readers will be aware of what I am referring to if they have read the Saturday, July 22nd edition of the *Tulsa World*. For our out-of-town readers, let me quickly report:

For many years the Southern Hills Church of Christ has been traveling down the road of apostasy and denominational compromise. It was common to read of their fellowship with denominationalism and its practices of Easter Pageants, Christmas programs, and the like. As quoted from the newspaper, they have recently "voted to renounce the Church of Christ doctrine" and "voted to sever ties with the Church of Christ theology and become an independent congregation" and then "voted...to remain as a church." Could this be the end result of a failure to preach the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27)? Zeal without knowledge was not limited to the first century (Romans 10:2).

Let us consider an action of this kind. First, though congregations have the authority to "vote" on certain matters of expediency (assuming there are no elders, or the elders will allow such action), there is no authority for such "votes" to take place which decide "what kind of Church" a congregation of God's people shall be.

Next, an autonomous congregation cannot "become" what it already is: "independent." There are no earthly headquarters or diocese or boards to which they must answer. What they have accomplished is to promote division.

Third, the truth was stated by one who was helping this congregation to reorganize when he said, "the congregation must make changes to survive." I agree totally! Change was needed, but not this kind.

Fourth, those who want to please God and serve Christ never "struggle for some time with the doctrinal direction of the church." When we follow the doctrine of Christ, we follow Christ himself. It appears perhaps the struggle is between doing the Lord's will, or that of their own hearts.

Fifth, it was alleged that a new direction must be taken in order to "build the membership." The "direction" in which the church must go has long ago been settled. Building the membership was never assigned to men. Perhaps the Scripture has been overlooked which reads, "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase" (I Corinthians 3:7).

Sixth, to feel burdened by "operating under an assumed relationship with the Church of Christ" because the "ties with the Church were too confining...tying some down...keeping others out" is sad indeed. Remember, it was the Lord who said, "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 who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). And again, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). We do not "keep others out," it is the Lord who has determined who is a part of his body. He will tell us who is and is not a member.

Seventh, this congregation "notified the Church of Christ of its decision." Now, just whom did they notify? Letters were sent, but to whom? In all this, it seems strange that one has found this "exciting." Yes, the world has its attractions and is exciting, but brethren, let us beware lest there should be in any of us the attitude of Demas who "loved this present world" (II Timothy 4:10).

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DIRECTORY

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

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SOME THINGS THE CHURCH COULD USE TODAY

Victor M. Eskew

For the past year and a half, I have been out of the pulpit on a full-time basis. I have been working for a children's home as both a housefather and a caseworker. I have preached at various congregations when asked. Yet, for the most part I have been laboring as a member of a congregation located in Brookland, Arkansas.

This time period has allowed much time for reflection. Having been on par as the members of the congregation, I have seen what they have to face on a weekly basis. This time period also has allowed time for me to view the church more objectively. As I have looked at various congregations, I have become convinced that there are several things upon which congregations need to be focusing.

One thing which the church needs today is a return to sound doctrine. In the second chapter of Paul's short letter to Titus, he mentions the need for sound doctrine two times. In verse 1, we read: **"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."** Then in verses 7 and 8, Paul instructs Titus with these words: **"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."**

The word "sound" literally means "to be well, to be in good health." When applied to the teaching of Christ, it means "to be free from any admixture of error." The doctrine which issues forth from the mouth of a preacher or teacher of God is supposed to be true and incorruptible. There is not one hint of falseness or error therein. It is to be the kind of teaching that will nourish the soul instead of poisoning it.

UN SOUND DOCTRINES BEING FELT

Since the 1960's there has been a move within many churches away from the pure, uncorrupt word of God. Consistently, men have been coming forth from secular and denominational graduate schools with their minds intoxicated with the opinions and creeds of mortal men. Their lack of soundness is now being felt in a host of issues being discussed and debated within the church.

Men among the churches are claiming that the Holy Spirit acts upon the hearts of men separate from the medium of the word of God. They are proclaiming that the use of instrumental music in the worship of the church is merely an opinion. They would have us to believe that man is saved by grace alone. Christians, we are being told, are scattered throughout all the denominations. These Christians are not erring; they are sincere, knowledgeable and devout according to these proclaimers of error.

Others are saying such things as, elders do not have any authority in the local congregation; adultery is not a sexual term, rather it involves only the act of covenant breaking; women have the right to lead prayers, become elders, deacons and evangelists in the Lord's church; miraculous gifts are still for the church today; baptism is not essential to salvation—and on and on the list of errors could go.

FALSE MOUTHS MUST BE STOPPED

The mouths of these ministers of Satan need to be stopped. We need to return to the proclamation of the unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who said to those Jews which believed on him, **"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"** (John 8:31-32).

Truth mixed with error is not truth. Truth mixed with error will not save. Truth mixed with error will cause the souls of both men and women to spend eternity in hell.

Elders need to take the lead in this effort. If preachers or if Bible class teachers are proclaiming error, they need to be instructed more perfectly in the word of God. If they will not turn from their error, they need to be removed from their positions as instructors of God's word.

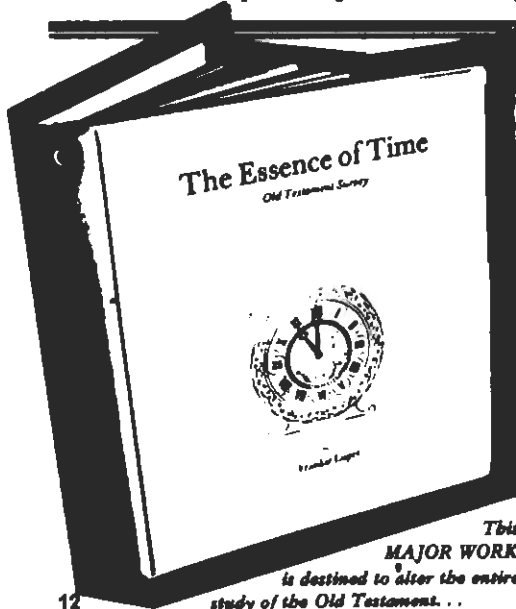
Secondly, the membership of the local congregation needs to wake up to its responsibility. No longer can members sit idly by while false doctrine is being proclaimed. They must demand the truth of the gospel from the pulpit. If nothing changes, they should seek a place where the gospel is going to be proclaimed.

Never should they resign themselves to the attitude which says, "Well, things could be worse," or "Well, there are other 'good' brethren who believe the same thing." Such a disposition causes error to prevail. The longer error remains without strong opposition the harder it will be to return to the Old Jerusalem Gospel at a later time.

ZEAL MUST BE RESTORED

Another thing which the church needs today is a restoration of the zeal of the first century church. In the opening days of the Christian dispensation, there was no stopping the proclamation of the gospel. Christians were arrested, stoned, beaten, burned, whipped, scourged, flayed, ridiculed, crucified and tossed to hungry beasts. However, they would not be stopped in their mission.

"And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of



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For example, see TABLE OF CONTENTS, right:

I	INTRODUCTION	
II	1 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 1-7
III	2 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 8-11
IV	3 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 12-14
V	4 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 15-17
VI	5 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 18-20
VII	6 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 21-24
VIII	7 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 25-27
IX	8 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 28-31
X	9 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 32-34
XI	10 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 35-37
XII	11 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 38-40
XIII	12 PULSE - Amos	Chap. 41-43



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Judea and Samaria, except the apostles...Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:1, 4).

Deep within their hearts, they were on fire. The good news of salvation in Christ literally boiled within their breasts. Their energy and activity in the kingdom could not be put out. Strong and great was their zeal for this new movement which had begun in the city of Jerusalem.

WHY BE SHOCKED?

This is the type of zeal needed within the church today. Some are shocked when such a statement is made. Listen, though, to the words of the apostle Paul found in Titus 2:14: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The response of those who have been cleansed with the precious blood of Christ ought to be one of zealous activity. They realize they once were dead in their sins. They understand that through the sacrificial death of the Lamb of God they were forgiven. They now with untiring energy seek to tell others of the healing prescription for the disease of sin which they have found.

Is the zeal noted above a picture of the saints within most congregations today? We think not. Preachers have to beg and plead with the membership just to attend the worship services. If brethren put in several nights in one week for a gospel meeting, they must be stroked for the massive service they rendered to their Master that week. This is not to mention how hard it is to find teachers to fill Bible classes, to raise money to support missionaries, and to keep various programs such as visitation, or personal work, intact within the congregation.

The Bible condemns a lazy, lukewarm attitude on the part of God's people. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16). On the other hand, it encourages and applauds a spirit of zeal and enthusiasm. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11).

GENUINE LOVE NEEDED

A third thing needed within the church today is a resurgence of genuine love among members. Twice in his final words to his apostles in the upper room Jesus commanded them to love each other. He said: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." And again: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved

you" (John 13: 34; 15:12). This love was needed for many reasons. One of the chief reasons was to display that one was a disciple of Christ before the eyes of a lost, hateful world.

This command has been lost in some congregations, or, at least by some of the members. Instead of love, they actually hate. Let us elaborate on this point lest some disagree. In I Corinthians 13, we have a description of agape love. "Charity suf-

fereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not: charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth..." Love is to be kind. Yet, there have been many times when God's children have been most un-

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kind. They have spread ungodly rumors about others. They have ceased to talk with their brethren for days, months, or even years. What is kind about such actions? Is this really love?

The text also says that love is not to behave unseemly. Yet, there have been times when members have acted most unbecoming. I know of times when members have cursed others. I have recently heard of an incident wherein one brother physically assaulted another brother. Brethren have intentionally lied upon their brethren in an attempt to get them into trouble. Are such actions to be held up as examples of love? Could we honestly say that these are the things Jesus wanted practiced when he commanded for us to love one another?

We need a resurgence in love within the church. We need brethren to love each other just as Christ loved them. We need a *giving* love. We need a *self-sacrificial* love. We need a love which always looks out for the needs of another first. We need a love which is willing to lay down its life for its friends. **"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love"** (1 John 4:7-8).

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

Lastly, within the church today we need a revitalization of Christian hope. Hope involves those things which are not seen. **"For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"** (Romans 8:24). The Christian's hope involves the resurrection of the body from the dark bosom of the earth. It involves that time when all of creation will appear to be judged before the great white throne of God. It involves that place of indescribable beauty called heaven.

These things are not the main things today on the minds of those who called themselves Christians. The topics of concern revolve primarily upon this world. The major area of interest is in material things. We work diligently to acquire them. We continually lay them up in our storehouses. We allow them to provide momentary joy, but soon discard them, only to begin seeking after more. Want, want, want are the buzz words of American society.

If it is not *materialism*, then it is *recreation* that we seek. It is amazing the amount of time, money and effort that some will put forth in recreational pursuits—cars, boats, equipment, horses, tickets to ball games, travel expenses, hotel costs, food expenses. People literally spend billions upon these things each year. Lasting joy, however, they do not bring.

Christians need to get our eyes off the world and place them on things above. John commanded us saying: **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."** And it was Paul who wrote: **"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"** (Colossians 3:1-2). Things which are seen are temporal. They are passing away. Only those things which are not seen are eternal, enduring forever. These are the things involved in our hope.

This hope needs to be studied diligently.

It is instilled through faith. **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"** (Hebrews 11:1). Preachers need to preach about it more often. We need to lift the eyes of our listeners from off this fragile world, and plant within them a hope which is steadfast, eternal in the heavens. When we do, worry and stress and anxiety will flee from the minds of many. For regardless of the toils and storms of life, we will have a sure, solid anchor in the realms of the unseen.

—404 Berry Road
Paragould, Arkansas 72450

Notes & Quotes...

When everyone shouts, nobody listens.

.....

Joseph D. Meador, Director, Southwest School of Bible Studies, Austin, Texas: "It is indeed hard to believe that it already is the fall of the year and that our first quarter at Southwest School of Bible Studies is just about ended.

"For the next three days our students will be knocking doors with the University church in San Marcos, where brother Jerry Moffitt is holding a gospel meeting. This is but one of the many ways that we seek to keep our students active on the evangelistic field.

"In addition, brother Eddie Whitten will be with us in a couple of weeks for our First Quarter Special Studies Seminar, Friday, October 27, 1995. Brother Whitten will be lecturing on the 'History of the American Restoration Movement,' a topic with which he is extremely familiar having conducted many restoration tours during his directorship of the Brown Trail School of Preaching in Fort Worth, Texas...

"I received a phone call from brother [Dalton P.] Ellis... who indicated that they are still reaping the fruit of our work together. Indeed, this is the most important work in which we can be engaged—that is, winning lost souls to Christ through the preaching of the gospel."

Bill Aitaffer, of Moorcroft, Wyoming, sent in a three-year subscription "for a brother who is struggling in a hard area of Wyoming," saying, "Keep up the good work with Contending for the Faith."

Amanda Twyman, who had been reading her brother-in-law's Contending for the Faith, decided to subscribe on her own.

Robert L. Patton, New Orleans, Louisiana: "I greatly appreciate the tremendous job you are doing against those who pervert the gospel and who pervert the Lord's church. Please keep up the good work!..."

"I was very pleased to see that at least a few brethren there in Opryland are courageous enough to stand up to the New World Order 'church of Chrsters.' At the time I was baptized 40 years ago, I was told that Nash-

ville was where the church was strongest. What a flip-flop!

"I look forward to hearing about your work in Russia."

Reg Rogers, Tulsa, Oklahoma: "J. T. Smith said in the Tulsa World, 'Today, many churches of Christ are involved in the 'sponsoring church' arrangement of cooperation for evangelism. Their pattern is that one church becomes the sponsoring church. The sponsoring church begs other churches to send funds to it so that the sponsoring church can do a great work (radio, TV program, or sending a preacher to some distant work). This is truly their pattern and not God's. They look with disdain on God's pattern for church cooperation in evangelism. God's pattern for church cooperation in evangelism is not the sponsoring church arrangement; it is concurrent cooperation—that is, each congregation doing its own work according to its ability and opportunities.'

"Smith speaks of an individual church as a detachment from the body of God, ruling out any cooperation in preaching the word. We are regarded as being in sin for participating in sinful practices. I am preparing a paper to show the error of Smith's anti-ism."

Marlow (Oklahoma) Church Discontinues Sponsorship Of Philippines Evangelism

Dear Supporters and Friends,

The elders at the Marlow congregation have resigned. The men of the congregation have decided to discontinue the oversight of Gideon Rodriguez. We are sending this letter to you to see if you, as a sponsor, would be willing to oversee Gideon's mission work through your local church. We are mailing a letter like this one to all sponsors in hope that one will pick up the work. We will allow 30 days for a response to see if anyone is willing to take up the work. If not, we will close out the account and send what remains in the account to Gideon to use as he sees fit. Hopefully his work will continue.

Sincerely,
Men of Marlow Church of Christ

Ed Floyd, Mountain City, Tennessee: "It saddens me to think of the harm [Rubel Shelly] has already done in the Lord's church. I had hoped he would not come to this area and spread his false doctrines in the name of the Lord's Church, but it seems that will not be the case.

CHRISTIANITY

To some people Christianity is little more than ritualism, pageantry, pomp and ceremony. Such was the attitude of the Pharisees concerning the religion established by the law of Moses. For them, ritualism, ceremony, pageantry and show were everything; character and conduct were nothing.

Christianity is not pageantry, pomp, ritualism and ceremony. You may be sure that the people who parade their Christianity (?) by pageantry and pomp, and by the wearing of gorgeous robes and sparkling jewelry have failed completely to understand what Christianity is.

Christianity is right living in the various relationships of life.

In the home, Christianity is love, kindness and the training of children in the way they should go.

In business, Christianity is diligence, honesty and fairness.

In society, Christianity is courtesy and helpfulness.

In the church, Christianity is faithfulness, humility, love, soberness, righteousness and godliness.

Toward God Christianity is reverence and obedience.

Toward the poor, Christianity is helpfulness.

Concerning self, Christianity is glorifying God with the body and the spirit.—Basil D. Shilling.

.....

One is reminded of the liberal-fundamentalist controversy of 50 years ago. The terminology has changed, the personnel have changed, the setting is different. But the issue remains the same.

.....

I'll Drink to That!

After giving the woman a full medical examination, the doctor explained his prescription as he wrote it out.

"Take the green pill with a glass of water after getting up. Take the blue pill with a glass of water after lunch. Then just before going to bed, take the red pill with another glass of water."

"Exactly what is my problem, doctor?" the woman asked.

"You're not drinking enough water," the doctor said.

.....

"The rich young ruler thought he wanted to go to heaven, but when he learned what he had to do, he walked off!"—David Brown, South Texas Summer Lectureship, Sunday a.m., July 30, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

.....

"Discipline is effective when it is implemented...Corrective, punitive discipline works."—Darwin Hunter, South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

What Are We Clapping For?

Steve Miller

It is becoming more and more common to find members of the Lord's church engaging in hand clapping in worship services. This is very popular at youth rallies and devotionals put on by brethren who would rather roll in the aisles than to worship "in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) People who try to justify hand clapping in worship have as much authority from the Scriptures to hand clap as they do to justify that a person wouldn't have to obey the gospel plan of salvation to be saved. There is simply no authority for it in the New Testament.

In various gatherings of our brethren where a spiritual message is presented, the majority applaud the speaker. Vain worship results when people invent their own way to worship Almighty God. (Matthew 15:9) Most likely if the people were polled, there would be a variety of answers as to why they clapped after the message. Some would say "I liked the speaker." Others would say "I liked the message," while still others would reveal that they did it because others were clapping. There could be no scriptural reason given because there isn't one.

If people are permitted to applaud a sermon or spiritual talk, why can't they do it at their home congregation? It's a matter of time. I know someone will say, "Oh you are getting excited over nothing." "It won't hurt anything." Listen, we should heed the examples of history and realize what is happening; In the beginning of the restoration movement members of the church never dreamed an instrument would be brought into the worship of the church of Christ. It happened. Several years ago members of the church never thought a chorus would one day perform in the worship services in congregations of the Lord's Church. It has happened. If we don't confront error when it occurs, we will be sorry down the road.

WHY SO POPULAR?

Why has hand clapping become so popular with our youth? One of the reasons could be that certain pharisaical music groups have had a big influence on our young people. When these

groups perform religious songs in our meetinghouses our youth are led to believe that hand clapping, shouting, and jumping up and down is part of the worship service.

The groups encourage these kinds of practices which have no place in our worship. They are pharisaical because they want to be seen doing something for the Lord. (Matthew 6:1-8)

Another reason may be the failure of preachers actually preaching the word. (II Timothy 4:1-5) Many congregations have gone for years without ever hearing a sermon on authority, instrumental music, or worshipping in spirit and in truth. The results of not preaching the full gospel (Acts 20:27) on these subjects and similar fundamentals of the faith have given the devil fertile ground for nurturing the seeds of error.

WHY HAND CLAPPING IS WRONG

Here are some reasons why hand clapping in worship is wrong.

1) It is false worship. Our worship must be directed and guided by the authority of the word of God. Everything that is to be included in our worship must have divine authority (Colossians 3:17). Otherwise it becomes vain worship (Titus 1:14). Paul's admonition "Let all things be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:40) would be violated by hand clapping.

2) It is response to entertainment. When a singer sings a song, we applaud. When someone puts on a show such as a circus, we applaud. Hand clapping belongs in the entertainment business. Leave it where it belongs! If singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, listening to a sermon, taking the Lord's Supper or reading the scripture is *entertainment* to us then we had better take a serious look at our spiritual life because we have been severely misled.

3. It is an innovation into the worship of God. If we accompany a song with hand clapping, we are *adding to God's order of things*. Hand clapping is just like instrumental music, in the sense that it is unscriptural accompaniment. It is also childish and produces unwholesome emotionalism.

OLD TESTAMENT JUSTIFICATION?

In an attempt to try and justify hand clapping in worship, some refer to the old testament. They seem to overlook the fact that we are no longer under the old covenant. "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). Many also attempt to justify instrumental music by the *old* testament which is also a failure. Our religious practices come from the authority of the *new* testament only.

It all boils down to whether or not we have Biblical authority for such

practices. Brother Roy Deaver concluded an article on hand clapping in worship by saying, "New Testament Christianity is the religion of Bible authority. To be pleasing to God, we are obligated (and privileged) to 'walk by faith' (II Corinthians 5:7), understanding that 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ' (Romans 10:17), and knowing full well that 'Without faith it is impossible to please God' (Hebrews 11:6). What's wrong with hand clapping in our worship assemblies and as part of our worship to God? The answer simply is: there's no authority for it!" (Biblical Notes, November/December

1990, p. 12) Amen!

Why worry about hand clapping when the world is going to hell? Simply because there will also be members of the church spending an eternity in hell for not following and obeying the teachings of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 13:47-50) There have been and always will be people in the church who are willing to go beyond or fall short of God-authorized worship. If these issues aren't addressed from our pulpits and papers, we may be applauded on our next sermon!

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT WOMEN TRANSLATORS

Bob Berard

INTRODUCTION

Recently a much respected and highly esteemed brother penned several questions that challenge the scripturalness of using women translators in church assemblies. His questions are quoted verbatim below. Other good brethren have expressed similar thoughts in one form or another. Bible-based answers are respectfully submitted to all who are concerned about the issue. The woman translator defended is one who speaks or signs a simple restatement (not an elaboration, explanation, commentary, and so on) of a message in a language other than the one in which the *present* and *controlling male* is teaching or preaching. This translation process, like that of reliable Bible translation, occurs in accordance with established rules of grammar and semantics governing both languages and in harmony with ethical guidelines that assure fidelity to the actual words or signs of the initial message.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. "Is she in a co-leadership role?" No, a woman functioning strictly in the capacity of a translator and not in the broader capacity of an interpreter, is by definition a follower. She is *following* the words of the *leading male* speaker. While the audience member who does not understand the male speaker's language is dependent upon the woman's speaking or signing for his understanding, the message he understands and *follows* is the *man's message*. The woman translator is the controlling male speaker's submissive helper. A judge's translator or a preacher's translator need not exercise any authority over the recipients of the translated judgment or sermon. The defendant serves or appeals the judge's sentence, not the translator's sentence; the audience takes to heart or rejects the preacher's message, not the translator's message.

2. "Is she helping to deliver a didactic discourse—the

very thing Paul forbade in I Timothy 2:12?" Helping to deliver a didactic discourse is not the very thing Paul forbade in I Timothy 2:12. Paul forbade a woman *teaching over* or otherwise exercising dominion over men. The woman translating for the present and controlling male speaker may help deliver *his didactic discourse* without exercising dominion. Priscilla helped Aquila teach and even correct Apollos, but did not teach over or otherwise exercise dominion over Apollos or Aquila (Acts 18:26). It is clear from this passage that a woman may teach men (not just translate) in a way that does not exercise dominion over them. A woman who sits in the back of the auditorium and signs a translation of the preacher's sermon to her husband is helping the preacher "deliver a didactic discourse" and has Bible authority for every component part of her behavior.¹

3. "In such roles is she learning in silence or quietness with all subjection (I Timothy 2:11)?" Yes, she can translate in quietness and with all subjection. The quietness (*hesuchia*) enjoined in the passage cited is also enjoined on men in their daily conduct and does not mean absolute silence (II Thessalonians 3:12).² Obviously a woman may be in subjection to a man while she is speaking to men (Luke 24:9-10).

4. "Is she 'in silence' or 'quietness' (ASV) in such instructive roles (I Timothy 2:12)?" Yes, if she conducts herself *properly* she may translate instructive material in quietness just as a man may do his work in quietness though his work involves speaking aloud and communicating instructive material (II Thessalonians 3:12).³ (By "properly," I mean what I believe most of my opponents in this matter would agree is proper conduct or demeanor for a woman who asks or answers a question in a gender-mixed Bible class being taught and controlled by a man.)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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Associate Editorial...

The Constituent Element Argument and the Female Translator

Simply stated, the major premise of the *constituent element argument* is this: when you prove all the parts of a practice to be scriptural you have proved the whole practice to be scriptural. Formally stated it reads, "All total situations the component parts of which are scriptural are total situations which are scriptural."

By the constituent element argument we prove the scripturalness of the *plan of salvation, the identity of the Lord's church, worship, Bible classes, "located preachers," child care agencies (orphan homes), congregational cooperation, and, yes, the female translator.* You cannot find all the details of the plan of salvation, the Lord's church, worship, Bible classes, "located preachers," child care agencies, congregational cooperation, or the work of women in a single passage of scripture. However, God wrote the whole Bible. Therefore, when one studies a given practice, he needs to identify the component parts (constituent elements) of that practice and ascertain that there is biblical authority for each one. Learning that all the component parts of the practice are authorized one is able to infer the scripturalness of the whole practice. It is a universal axiom that the whole of anything is the sum of its parts. By proving the component parts of a practice to be right; the *whole of the practice* is proven right.

One excellent way to analyze the right or wrong of a doctrine is by the use of true and false statements. To be true or false a statement must be worded to allow for no middle ground or gray areas. If a proposition implies error, then, said proposition is false. Hence, a good set of properly arranged true and false statements will show propositional coherence or incoherence. In other words they will demonstrate what other pieces of information will fit or not fit what has already been affirmed. Later in this article a number of these questions will be offered for the aforesaid purpose. We would like to hear from our readers whether the questions were helpful to them or not in studying this subject.

IDENTIFYING THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR THE PLAN OF SALVATION

The *right* preaching (Mark 16:15), plus the *right* faith (Romans 10:17), plus the *right* repentance (Acts 17:30), plus the *right* confession (Romans 10:10), plus the *right* baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21),

equal the *right* salvation. On the other hand the *wrong parts* or *only one wrong part* (a part without Bible authority) can *only* equal the *wrong plan*.

The denominationalists along with the "New Hermeneutikers" within the church will attempt to condemn the plan of salvation on the alleged basis that every item of the plan is unrelated. Comments such as, "You Campbellites (in their kinder moments the "New Hermeneutikers" call us weaker or traditional brethren) take a number of unrelated Bible actions and combine them into a new, non-biblical plan." Thus, these characters declare that the church of Christ has her own unwritten church manual. In actuality what they have done is expose their own ignorance of, or lack of belief in, the truth that the whole of anything is the sum of its parts. When we put the necessary scriptural parts together regarding just how a person is saved the whole plan naturally follows.

IDENTIFYING THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR THE LORD'S CHURCH

The *right* creed (I Corinthians 1:24), plus the *right* doctrine (Acts 2:42; II John 9), plus the *right* worship (John 4:24), plus the *right* organization (Acts 14: 23; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5), plus the *right* name (Romans 16:16; I Corinthians 1:2), *equal* the *right* church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:27; 20:28; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:4; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23). On the other hand the *wrong parts* or *only one wrong part* (a part without Bible authority) can *only* equal the *wrong church*.

The only way the church can be identified is by her identifying marks (component parts or constituent elements). The denominationalists without and within the church deny that there are any identifying marks. They charge that, "The thing you people in the church of Christ have is some sort of conglomeration that you call the church."

IDENTIFYING SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

The church is authorized to assemble on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) to: teach (Acts 5:42); sing (Ephesians 5:19); pray (Ephesians 6:18); observe the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7); and for each member to contribute of his or her means (I Corinthians 16:1, 2).

If all the aforementioned component parts (constituent elements) are right then the worship is right, for we advocate no more neither less than what has been set out in the aforementioned parts. On the other hand the *wrong parts* or *only one wrong part* (a part without Bible authority) can *only* equal the *wrong practice*.

Again, when faithful brethren have taught that the whole of the worship of God on the first day of the week may be determined by finding the New Testa-

ment authorized acts of worship, we have been met with derision from the aforementioned sources. Such mockery comes simply because men will not accept the universal axiom that the whole of anything is the sum of its parts.

IDENTIFYING THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR BIBLE CLASSES

The church has the scriptural obligation to teach (Galatians 6:6; II Timothy 2:2). The church has the scriptural obligation to teach the gospel (Mark 16:15; Romans 1:16). The church has the scriptural obligation to teach the gospel to the alien sinner (Mark 16:15). The church has the scriptural obligation to teach its own members (Romans 1:16). The church may teach the truth to alien and Christian alike in a private home, a public or private school building, a court room, a rented public hall, a tent, a brush arbor, a preacher's house, a church house yard, a church house foyer, a preacher's study in a church house, a church auditorium, dressing rooms by the baptistery or any other place conducive to Bible study (Acts 2:26; 5:12; 10; 13:5; 16:13; 19:9; 20:20; Philemon 1:2). Members of the church may have teaching going on simultaneously in the preacher's house, the church house yard, the church house foyer, the preacher's study in the church house, the church auditorium, and



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the dressing rooms by the baptistery (Acts 2:5-11, 14). Different subjects may be studied with different age groups and sexes in each of the aforementioned places simultaneously (Acts 2:14). In each one of these places where the Bible is being studied several persons may be in attendance at the same time (Acts 2:14).

If the aforementioned parts (constituent elements) are right, then Bible classes are right, for we advocate neither more nor less than what has been set out in the aforementioned component parts. On the other hand the wrong parts or only one wrong part (a part without Bible authority) can only equal the wrong practice.

In the past because many church members were correctly afraid of the denominational Sunday School system, they opposed simultaneous Bible classes and female teachers altogether. They opposed the classes on the alleged basis that said classes were dividing the worship assembly (an "assembly of exhortation," Hebrews 10:25), and that said assembly was the only authorized "coming together of the church" on the first day of the week. Hence, based upon this erroneous concept (that the Bible classes were dividing said assembly) they forbade a female to teach because of the prohibition that women were to remain silent in the assembly (I Corinthians 14:34). These brethren *could see* what the denominationalists *could not see* regarding the plan of salvation, the church and her worship; namely, that when one proves that all the component parts of a practice are scriptural, the whole practice is proven scriptural. However, these misguided brethren *opposed the same axiom* when it came to proving that Bible classes and female teachers were scriptural. By rejecting the constituent element argument they made a law for God and divided the church.

From November 26th through the 29th, 1951, brother Roy C. Deaver met brother Lester Hathaway in public debate at the church of Christ building in Munday, Texas. The debate pertained to the scripturalness or lack of it for Bible classes and female teachers. (The debate is available through Bible Resource Publications.) With telling effect

brother Deaver proved by the constituent element argument the scriptural authority for both Bible classes and female teachers. What brother Hathaway *could see* in *how to prove* the plan of salvation, the identity of the church, and worship, he *could not or would not see* regarding *how to prove* the scriptural authority for Bible classes and female teachers. All brother Hathaway could do was ridicule and mispronounce constituent element (he called it "constitumanalysis"). Yet, in opposing the argument brother Hathaway was opposing the *only* way to prove the plan of salvation, and so on. Such was, is, and always will be the plight of those who reject this basic principle of logic regarding rightly dividing the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15). Brethren, it is not a matter of what one likes or dislikes, but a matter of what the Lord has authorized ("likes") in his last will and Testament. We *must* be willing to learn *how* to ascertain his will and then "**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good**" (I Thessalonians 5:21).

IDENTIFYING THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR "LOCATED PREACHERS"

Gospel preachers are authorized by the New Testament (II Timothy 2:2). The New Testament authorizes the church to financially support gospel preachers (II Corinthians 9:14). The world is the place where the gospel preacher is authorized by the New Testament to preach (Mark 16:15). The world, the place to preach, has many different geographic locations (Acts 1:8). Each geographic location may be further subdivided into smaller units (Galatians 1:2; Revelation 1:11). One subdivision of a geographic location of the world is a city (Acts 16:6-13). The New Testament authorizes the gospel (doctrine of Christ) to be preached in a city to the alien sinner and church member alike (Mark 16:15; Romans 1:15). The New Testament records gospel preachers, with the Lord's approval, locating for different periods of time in various locations to preach the gospel to saint and sinner while being supported by the church (Acts 19:10; 20:31). Hence, today a gospel preacher may locate in a city, (a part of a geographic subdivision of the world) with a church and be supported financially by said church to preach the gospel to saint and sinner.

THE QUESTION

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ONLY

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If all the component parts (constituent elements) are right then the "located preacher" is right; we advocate neither more nor less than what is set out in each of the aforementioned parts. On the other hand the wrong parts or only one wrong part (a part without Bible authority) can only equal the wrong practice.

Again, brethren were correctly afraid of the erroneous "Pastor System." However, certain brethren reacted to the extreme in opposition to the aforementioned denominational practice. They rejected the component parts of the Scriptures that proved a congregation could support one or more gospel preachers to edify the church and evangelize the community and the world. What they *could see* concerning *how* to determine the plan of salvation, the church, and the worship of the same they *could not see* regarding the "located preacher," namely, that the whole of anything is the sum of its parts.

THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR CHILD CARE AGENCIES

God has authorized (obligated) the church to care for orphans (James 1:27). God has not specified the details concerning how a congregation is to discharge its obligation to care for orphans. An orphan is a child "bereft of parental care and guidance" (Greek—"orphanos"). God's love extends to all persons (Galatians 6:10). The church and the home are two distinct institutions (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5, 6; 16:18; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 5:22-25). Each one of these institutions is all-sufficient to accomplish what God has authorized each one to do (Ephesians 5:22-54; 1:22, 23; Acts 2:47). The needs of a child cannot be sufficiently met apart from its being a part of a home (Ephesians 6:1-4; I Timothy 5:8; 5:4). The New Testament authorizes a home to meet certain legal requirements (Romans 13:1). A child care facility is a home ("*in loco parentis*:" in the place of parents). A church may send funds to a child care facility (a home) to meet the needs of the children in its care (James 1:27; Galatians 6:10).

If all the parts (constituent elements) are right, then the child care facility is right and the church may send funds to it for the support of children "bereft of parental care and guidance." On the other hand the wrong parts or only one wrong part (a part without Bible authority) can only equal the wrong practice.

THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR CHURCH COOPERATION

Each congregation is obligated to preach and defend the gospel (Jude 3; Revelation 2:2). Each congregation may discharge this obligation by one or more ways (Acts 19:9; Acts 17:16-22; Philippians 1:7, 13-18). When an atheist (or any false teacher)

advocates his or her doctrine in a city, all congregations share in the scriptural obligation to refute atheism (Jude 3). One congregation takes the oversight of the effort to refute the atheist to expedite the specific details that are necessary to accomplish the task (Acts 20:28; I Corinthians 14:40; Philippians 4:15, 16). When one congregation assumes the oversight of said work other congregations are no longer "equally related" to this particular work (Acts 13:1; 14:27). Other congregations may fulfill their obligation to oppose error by cooperating with the overseeing congregation in refuting atheism by sending funds as well as providing other assistance (Acts 13:1; 14:27; Philippians 4:14-18; II Corinthians 11: 8, 9).

If all the parts (constituent elements) are right, then church cooperation is right. On the other hand the wrong parts or only one wrong part (a part without Bible authority) can only equal the wrong practice.

Because the church cooperation and orphan home controversy virtually go hand in hand, comments regarding objections to both of them will be given here. About 50 years ago due to a fear of human institutions taking over the work of divine institutions or one church violating the autonomy of another church[es] or for whatever reason, certain brethren began to oppose orphan homes and church cooperation. These brethren understood and used the constituent element argument in proving that the plan of salvation, the church, her worship, Bible classes, and "located preachers" were right.

Repeatedly in public debate throughout the '50s and '60s, yes, even to this present hour, such men as **Roy C. Deaver, Alan Highers, Thomas B. Warren, Guy N. Woods,** and a host of other faithful gospel preachers met those opposed to orphan homes and church cooperation. Faithful gospel preachers reminded those opposed to orphan homes and church cooperation that they had employed the constituent element argument in debate with sectarians when they proved the scripturalness of the plan of salvation and the identity of the church. Moreover, these same men had used logic and the constituent element argument in proving the scripturalness of Bible classes and female teachers. However, for the most part the faithful debaters were met with derision; logic and the constituent element argument were especially attacked. However, to "meet" something *only* with derision means that "the something" has not been refuted at all.

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As the Judaizing teachers of the first century were blind regarding the gospel and the salvation of the Gentiles, so others are blind regarding other matters. Furthermore, just as the judaizing teachers of the first century legislated for the Lord, so some of their modern day followers have done. (Acts 15:1-2; Romans 11:7ff; II Corinthians 3:13-16; Galatians 2:4, 5; 5:4; II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 4:18; II Peter 1:9; Revelation 3:17). The brethren opposed to church cooperation and orphan homes were and are blind to the hermeneutical principle of the constituent element argument whereby orphan homes and church cooperation are proven right. These brethren could see said argument (and used it in debate) when they proved the plan of salvation, the identity of the church, worship, Bible classes, "located preachers," and so on, but they were and are blind to said argument proving church cooperation and orphan homes.

ASCERTAINING BIBLE AUTHORITY FOR FEMALE TRANSLATORS

We are to do only those things that are authorized by the New Testament (Colossians 3:17). The New Testament authorizes a female to assemble with the saints and to hear the Bible taught (Acts 20:7). By the fact that the New Testament was originally written in Greek, a female is authorized to mentally receive and intellectually process the words of the Bible lesson

and to translate it into other words (Acts 17:11; I Thessalonians 5:21). The New Testament authorizes a female to speak and teach in an assembly containing men (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). The New Testament authorizes a female to speak alone. She may confess her faith in Christ or her sins to an audience containing men (James 5:16; I John 1:9; Romans 10:9, 10). The New Testament authorizes a female to speak words to a man, which words are necessary for him to understand if he is to comprehend the way of the Lord more perfectly (Acts 18:26). Which one of these component parts is *not* authorized by the New Testament?

If one by one, different women may scripturally engage in the aforementioned matters without exercising dominion over a man (and they did), then one female may engage in all of them without necessarily exercising dominion over a man. In other words if all the component parts (constituent elements) are right, then the female translator is right. On the other hand the wrong parts or only one wrong part (a part without Bible authority) can only equal the wrong practice. If not, why not??

Before anyone can find a constituent element argument wrong, one must: 1) show that a necessary component part of the whole practice is

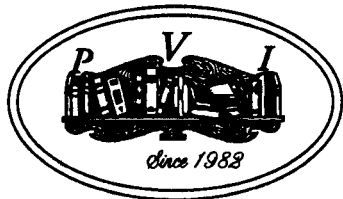
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wrong, or 2) a necessary component part has been omitted.

**"THE REGISTRY OF INTERPRETERS
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The organization whose name heads this section of our study makes available material to assist persons in finding and "using quality interpreting services" (*Sign Language Interpreters and Interpreting Services*, p. 1). Please read the reproduction of "The Registry..." on this page.

Isn't it interesting that in "...legal, medical and mental health, ...religious, ...business, industry, and government settings" translators are employed?

These are areas of communication that demand *precise language*. It is evident that this organization thinks the translator can translate to say exactly and only what the *controlling and present* attorney, judge, nurse, medical doctor, preacher, Secretary of State or President of the U. S. said.

Please notice that every effort is made to make sure that the translator is not thought of as the person delivering the message (the controlling and present doctor, lawyer, government official, and so on). For emphasis we quote:

...Do not direct questions or comments to the interpreter, even in an effort at some friendly interaction; doing so is awkward for all involved. Basically, an interpreter is that—an interpreter, present only as an intermediary without whom communication would be difficult. The interpreter is not present as another person involved in the conversation...(Emphasis theirs — DPB)

**IS THERE A DIFFERENCE IN THE
MEANINGS OF THE WORDS
"TRANSLATION" AND
"INTERPRETATION"?**

At this point in our study the difference between the words *translation* and *interpretation* will be noted and emphasized. In many instances in our daily usage in the United States we use both terms and their derivatives interchangeably when referring to: the act of *translating* (*interpret-*ing), the *translator* (*interpreter*), and the *translation* (*interpretation*). This is the case with the use of the term "interpret" in the aforementioned document from "The Registry..." In this given study we are interested in these terms as they pertain to the actual rendering of one language into another.

We must understand that while all interpretation is translation, not all translation is interpretation. Technically, interpretation is a more general term; its definition encompasses more than the definition of the word translation. The rules governing the translation of one language into another language *prohibit any didactic and commentary activity on the part of the translator*. However, the term interpreter (the broader and more general term) allows for one to engage in teaching.

When the risen Lord appeared to the two disciples on the road to Em-



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1. What is sign language interpreting and what does a sign language interpreter do?

Sign language interpreting is the process of facilitating communication between individuals whose native language is English and those whose native language is American Sign Language. A sign language interpreter acts as an intermediary in a communication-related situation so that the participants, both deaf and hearing, can understand each other.

2. In what settings do sign language interpreters generally work?

There are a number of settings that call for interpreters: educational, occupational, legal, medical and mental health, rehabilitation or social services, religious, television and artistic performances, business, industry, and government settings.

6. How can I most effectively use interpreter services?

There are several factors that you should consider to best utilize an interpreter's services. First of all, consider the logistics involved. An interpreter needs to be placed in an area not obstructed from the view of participants. Secondly, lighting must be sufficient in order for the interpreter to be seen. The background should be a solid color, although not a bright or strong color. Thirdly, it is helpful to be aware of some guidelines of interaction when using an interpreter. Do not direct questions or comments to the interpreter, even in an effort at some friendly interaction; doing so is awkward for all involved. Basically, an interpreter is that—an interpreter, present only as an intermediary without whom communication would be difficult. The interpreter is not present as another person involved in the conversation. Consumers should be aware that normal greetings between themselves and the interpreter are acceptable; acknowledge the interpreter and maintain a professional demeanor throughout the assignment. Also, when in need of spontaneous interpreting during an assignment (phone call, etc.), it is better to ask rather than demand the interpreter's services. Finally, it is always helpful if the interpreter has a copy of the speech, list of names, technical terms, etc., ahead of time in order to insure an accurate interpretation.

9. Is there a professional Code of Ethics?

The RID has a Code of Ethics which includes ethical principles to protect and guide interpreters and transliterators, and consumers. Underlying these principles is the desire to insure for all the right to accurate communication.

-Render messages faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker, using language most readily understood by the person(s) whom they serve.

-Not counsel, advise, or interject personal opinions.

10. What if I feel that an interpreter has violated one of the tenets of the Code of Ethics? Does RID have a grievance procedure?

Yes. If a consumer feels that an interpreter has violated one or more principles of RID's Code of Ethics, a grievance may be filed against the interpreter with the national office.

maus Luke records: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). The Greek word rendered "expounded" is "diermeneuo." It is from "dia" (through) and "hermeneuo" (to interpret). Our English word "hermeneutics" derives from *hermeneuo*. What was the Lord doing when "...he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself"? Was he *only* engaged in rendering one language into another (translating)? Or, was he engaged in *interpreting* the scriptures to them? After the Lord left them they said to each other that Jesus "opened to us the scriptures" (Luke 24:32).

From the Old Testament we have another example of expounding or interpreting the scriptures. When Nehemiah and Ezra were working together in restoring Jerusalem and the temple, Nehemiah, Ezra and several of the Levites "...caused the people to understand the law:..." How did Ezra and the Levites do this? "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:7, 8). While this study of the law could have involved translation, their efforts were not restricted to only rendering one language into another. When the teachers "gave the

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sense" of the law they were explaining the meaning and application of the law to the daily lives of the people. They were interpreting the law. As Jesus did with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, so Ezra and company "opened to [them] the scriptures" (Luke 24:32).

Assuredly a correct translation is necessarily involved in interpretation, but interpretation does not stop with the translation of a word or many words of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures or any other language. In fact, what we have been doing in this study of the two words, "translation" and "interpretation" is an excellent example of how interpretation (expounding) goes beyond translation. It is this *difference* between the definitions of the words "translation" and "interpretation" that causes many brethren to be deeply concerned with the proliferation of Bible versions. When it comes to the version of the Bible that I use, I want it to be an accurate translation of the original languages of the Bible and not an interpretation of the Bible.

"THE LIVING SERMON PARAPHRASED"

That the scriptural act of translation has been abused no one will question, and *no faithful person will defend the abuses. As The Living Bible Paraphrased* is neither living, a Bible, nor a paraphrase, so it is that the product of what some persons call translating is neither living, a sermon, nor a paraphrase. If in orally translating a sermon certain ones would apply the rules involved in translating the Greek language of the Bible they would be engaged in true translation and *not translation plus commentary (interpretation)*. Could it be possible that some people have purported to translate sermons, when in reality they did more than translate and added their own words of explanation? Hence, the product of their "translation" is a translation plus a running didactic commentary (interpreta-

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tion)? I wonder if someone who held this erroneous view of translating would be employed by the U. S. government to translate for the President. *No wonder that some people oppose a female translator when they have possessed a wrong concept of translating all along, and by the practice thereof, have produced a "living sermon paraphrased."* These people know that if a female did *what they call translating*, she had just as well be in complete control of the whole situation. Hence, what they actually oppose is not a female *translator*, but a female *preacher*. I deny that the female translator, *or for that matter a male translator*, is in the same relationship to an audience convened for religious purposes as the controlling male gospel preacher.

If the translator possesses the same authority and relationship to the audience as does the Bible teacher for whom he translates, how would you answer the following true and false statements?

1. T. F. Publicly or privately the translator is present as another person involved in the conversation.

2. T. F. In delivering a sermon the translator is present as another gospel preacher.
3. T. F. In a Bible class the translator is present as another teacher of the class.
4. T. F. If questions 2 and 3 are true the translator must be a Christian.
5. T. F. It is a sin for a translator who is a Jew to translate a gospel preacher's sermon the design of which proves the deity of Christ.
6. T. F. Only a faithful child of God is authorized by the New Testament to translate a Bible lesson being taught by a gospel preacher.

A "CODE OF ETHICS" FOR TRANSLATORS

Among the materials published by "*The Registry...*" is its *Code of Ethics*. The complete code may be ordered from the organization at 817 Colesville Road, Suite 310, Silver Spring, MD 0910.

There are eight rules in the code of ethics. Three of the rules are herein quoted. Two of them are especially significant and have explanations called "Guidelines" following them. They appear in *Appendix C, Code of Ethics*, pp. 24-26.

If it is *impossible* to translate an oral presentation with the same faithfulness to the speaker's message as the translators of the *King James Version* had for the original languages of the Bible as well as the English language, *why* even have a code of ethics regarding translating? Regarding these matters *how* would you answer the following true and false questions?

1. T. F. To translate properly one must occupy the position of an "editor." (In this sentence "Editor" is used as the "*Registry*" employed it in its "*Code of Ethics*.")
2. T. F. It is **impossible** for a translator to "...transmit everything that is said in exactly the same way it was intended."
3. T. F. It is **impossible** for a translator to convey the message of the speaker without being responsible for what the speaker said.
4. T. F. It is **impossible** to accurately translate a message without adding something to it.

It is obvious that the people who comprise the "*Registry...*" have a different concept of the responsibility and work of the speaker and translator than do some members of the Lord's church. If the "*Registry...*" would listen to these brethren they would find out that they *cannot* do what they are doing.

Appendix C

CODE OF ETHICS

Developed and Published by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.
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Silver Spring, MD 0910
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2. Interpreters/translators shall render the message faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker using language most readily understood by the person(s) whom they serve.

Guidelines: Interpreters/translators are not editors and must transmit everything that is said in exactly the same way it was intended. This is especially difficult when the interpreter disagrees with what is being said or feels uncomfortable when profanity is being used. Interpreters/translators must remember that they are not at all responsible for what is said, only for conveying it accurately. If the interpreter's/translators' own feelings interfere with rendering the message accurately, he/she shall withdraw from the situation.

While working from spoken English to sign or non-audible spoken English, the interpreter/translator should communicate in the manner most easily understood or preferred by the deaf or hard-of-hearing person(s), be it American Sign Language, manually coded English, fingerspelling, paraphrasing in non-audible spoken English, gesturing, drawing, or writing. It is important for the interpreter/translator and deaf or hard-of-hearing person(s) to spend some time adjusting to each other's way of communicating prior to the actual assignment. When working from sign or non-audible spoken English, the interpreter/translator shall speak the language used by the hearing person in spoken form, be it English, Spanish, French, etc.

3. Interpreters/translators shall not counsel, advise or interject personal opinions.

Guidelines: Just as interpreters/translators may not omit anything that is said, they may not add anything that is said, they may not add anything to the situation, even when they are asked to do so by other parties involved.

An interpreter/translator is only present in a given situation because two or more people have difficulty communicating, and thus the interpreter's/translators' only function is to facilitate communication. He/she shall not become personally involved because in so doing, he/she accepts some responsibility for the outcome, which does not rightly belong to the interpreter/translator.

8. Interpreters/translators, by virtue of membership in or certification by the RID, Inc., shall strive to maintain high professional standards in compliance with the code of ethics.

Obviously, some of the problems that certain members of the church have with female translators are *not* because females (certainly some of their problems are because of such) are translating. In actuality, much of their problem is a lack of a correct understanding of the word "translate," the relation of the translator to the speaker, and the responsibility of each. Speakers and translators may abuse their respective positions, but I am not defending their abuses. In fact it is impossible for a practice to be abused unless said practice is right. One cannot abuse wrong acts or practices; they are just wrong.

TRUE AND FALSE STATEMENTS DEALING WITH THE FEMALE TRANSLATOR IN GENERAL

Was the female's role revealed from the creation or did it originate with the revelation of the New Testament?

1. T. F. The matter of a female's role is *only* a New Testament matter.
2. T. F. Under the Patriarchal and Mosaical ages God authorized women to exercise dominion over men.
3. T. F. "...**And the head of the woman is the man;**..." (I Corinthians 11:3) is a principle that did *not* apply under the Patriarchal nor the Mosaic religions.
4. T. F. The basis for the legislation in I Timothy 2:12-14 has its origin in Genesis.

Did the Law of Moses authorize a Hebrew female to impart knowledge to a man without exercising dominion over him?

1. T. F. With God's approval **Huldah** taught five men by inspiration. (II Kings 22:14-20; II Chronicles 34:22-28).
2. T. F. Huldah exercised dominion over **Hilkiah** the priest, **Ahikam**, **Achbor**, **Shaphan**, **Asahiah**, and the **king of Judah** when she told them what God said (II Kings 22:14-20; II Chronicles 34:22-28).
3. T. F. Huldah told an audience containing men what God told her to tell them.
4. T. F. Huldah sinned when she told an audience of men what God told her to tell them.
5. T. F. Huldah in the account specified was less restrained by men than is a female who faithfully translates the words of a present and controlling male teacher to a religious assembly that includes men.
6. T. F. Though she was a God-ordained judge over Israel, **Deborah** had no authority over men.
7. T. F. Deborah exercised dominion over men.
8. T. F. Deborah sinned when she declared to **Barak**, "**Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor...**" (Judges 4:6).
9. T. F. A woman wrongfully exercises dominion over men whenever she teaches men any Bible truth regardless of her demeanor.
10. T. F. Deborah sinned when she declared to **Barak**, "**Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand:...**" (Judges 4:14).

11. T. F. Both **Huldah** and **Deborah** told men what God wanted them to tell the men without exercising dominion over men.

Does the New Testament authorize a female to teach a man? Is it possible for a female to teach a man without exercising dominion over him?

1. T. F. Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos "**and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly**" (Acts 18:26).
2. T. F. Priscilla was as dumb as an oyster while Aquila taught Apollos.
3. T. F. One *cannot* prove that *Priscilla* said anything to Apollos.
4. T. F. One *cannot* prove that *Aquila* said anything to Apollos.
5. T. F. Priscilla *could not* tell Apollos what God told her to tell him because she would have exercised dominion over him if she had taught him anything.
6. T. F. Acts 18:26 implies that Priscilla was teaching in the presence of two men.
7. T. F. If Priscilla *stood* before Aquila and Apollos, and *taught* anything concerning the gospel, she sinned.
8. T. F. Had a third man walked up while Priscilla was teaching Apollos in the presence of Aquila, Priscilla would be exercising dominion over men unless she immediately stopped teaching.

Does the translator share equal authority with the gospel preacher?

1. T. F. When a preacher speaks his sermon through a translator, said translator *shares equal authority* with the preacher.
2. T. F. When the President of the U. S. speaks in his official capacity through a translator, said translator shares equal authority with the President.
3. T. F. The scriptures authorize *the gospel preacher* to "**...speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority**" (Titus 2:15).
4. T. F. There is no difference in the authority exercised by a gospel preacher and his translator while the preacher is teaching and the translator is translating the preacher's message.
5. T. F. The translator who translated for a witness during the O. J. Simpson trial shared the same rela-

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—Lectureship study—

Isaiah II

tionship to the court as did the witness for whom the translation was done.

Being that uninspired men translated the King James Version of the Bible, does this mean that we do not have God's Word in the KJV?

1. T. F. When the Scriptures are translated by uninspired men God gives up *some* of His authority.
2. T. F. Today we have the word of God in English.
3. T. F. In the *King James Version* we have the translators' word, but not the word of God.
4. T. F. To correctly translate the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible into English the translator must *originate* words.
5. T. F. When a female secretary takes dictation *in short hand* from a male, the transcribed document *cannot* be only the male's message.
6. T. F. When a female secretary takes dictation *word for word* from a male, the transcribed document *cannot* be only the male's message.
7. T. F. When a female translator translates in *writing* the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible into English the transcribed document *cannot* be God's word in English.
8. T. F. When a female translator translates *orally* the Hebrew and Greek of the Bible into English the oral translation *cannot* be God's word.
9. T. F. Tertius penned the Roman epistle (Romans 16:22).
10. T. F. Paul wrote the Roman epistle (Romans 1:1, 7).
11. T. F. We do not have Paul's inspired words in the letter to the Romans.

In our worship assemblies (Hebrews 10:25) today, is a female authorized by the New Testament to utter a sound? Does the New Testament authorize a female to utter a sound from her place in the audience? Does the New Testament authorize a female to stand before the audience of said assembly? Does the New Testament authorize a female to stand before the audience of said assembly and make a certain sound?

1. T. F. While the preacher *is delivering* his sermon during a worship assembly it is sin for a female to tell her husband what the preacher said.
2. T. F. The *mere standing* of a female before a religious audience containing men is sin.
3. T. F. The *mere speaking* of a female before a religious audience containing men is sin.

4. T. F. When a female *stands* before an audience containing men and *speaks* the name of Jesus, she sins.
5. T. F. When a *female translator stands* before an audience containing men and *translates* the name of Jesus, she sins.
6. T. F. A female may *direct the minds of men* to new knowledge of the Bible in a worship assembly without exercising dominion over them.

Is it possible for a female to exercise dominion over men in a Bible class? Does the New Testament authorize a woman to speak in a Bible class that includes men?

1. T. F. A female may *direct the minds of men* to new knowledge of the Bible by asking or answering a question in a Bible class.
2. T. F. It is a sin for a female to translate *one word* of a male Bible class teacher's lesson to a class containing men.
3. T. F. In translating a Bible lesson to a Bible class a female who translates one sentence of ten words containing a total of 50 letters exercises as much freedom to speak as the female student who asks a question or makes a comment of ten words containing a total of 50 letters.
4. T. F. To translate properly the translator must *follow* the male teacher's *lead* as the male teacher delivers his message.
5. T. F. The translator is a follower, not a leader.
6. T. F. The Bible authorizes a female to translate a man's prayer in a Bible class.

Insofar as authority is concerned, is the translator equal to the present and controlling adult male teacher in a Bible class? Is a female who comments in a Bible class equal in authority to the present and controlling man teacher? Insofar as authority is concerned is the female translator equal to the present and controlling gospel preacher in a worship assembly (Hebrews 10:25)?

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1. T. F. Insofar as authority is concerned the audience hearing a translated speech is following the message of the initial speaker.
2. T. F. Insofar as authority is concerned the reader of a reliable translation of the Bible is following the message of the initial speaker (God).
3. T. F. The defendant receiving a capital sentence through a translator is sentenced to death by the authority of the translator.
4. T. F. A Christian lady sitting in a Bible class may in a proper demeanor respond to the male teacher's question and by her answer teach a Bible truth to the whole class and the teacher.
5. T. F. A Christian lady translator may in a proper demeanor translate a male teacher's sentence and by her translation facilitate the understanding of a Bible truth to the men in that Bible class.
6. T. F. A gospel preacher guides the thoughts of the audience through the translator.
7. T. F. Insofar as authority is concerned when the gospel preacher preaches a sermon with "all authority" he is the present and controlling male teacher in a worship assembly (Titus 2:15; Hebrews 10:25).
8. T. F. A ten year old female sins when she translates a sermon in an audience containing men to her grandmother.
9. T. F. When a Christian female is asked by an unbelieving man what to do to be saved, said female is authorized by the New Testament to tell said man what the Bible says without the Christian female exercising dominion over the unbelieving man.
10. T. F. Whether speaking (*audibly*) or signing (*inaudibly*) a male or female "...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 words of the speaker to those who otherwise could not hear." (See article on page 16 in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* entitled "Guy N. Woods...")

"IT'S DANGEROUS"

Some think that one deeming a practice to be dangerous is reason enough to declare it sinful. This sentiment is nothing new. From brethren opposing church cooperation we often hear that there is a grave danger inherent in a number of churches sending their money to one church for the express purpose of supporting a specific work under the oversight of the elders of the "receiving church." It is alleged that such is the case because the practice can lead to the elders of the receiving/sponsoring church exercising dominion over the churches that contribute money to the work that the elders of the receiving/sponsoring church oversee. Hence, they erroneously conclude that it is wrong to practice such church cooperation. Of course the evidence does not warrant their conclusion.

In like manner we now are hearing that it is dangerous to use a female translator because she could be cultivated and encouraged to become a female preacher of the gospel. (Of course others erroneously think that by her translating she is in the same position as a gospel preacher.) Though the evidence does not warrant their conclusion, they, nevertheless, have determined that it is a sin to use a female in the capacity of a translator.

Based on the aforementioned usage of the word "dangerous" we could as well argue that it is dangerous to become a Christian. If one becomes a Christian he might apostatize. If he dies in an apostate (lost) condition "**...the latter end is worse than the beginning**" (II Peter 2:20). Hence, it is better to die as an alien sinner. However, because one could apostatize, die, and suffer a worse condition in hell than a person who never became a Christian does not warrant the conclusion that one should not become a Christian. Why? Because one does not have to apostatize. One can remain faithful and go to heaven (Revelation 2:10).

If I were to use the aforementioned flawed reasoning I could with as much authority declare that it is dangerous to allow females to teach females, for they might progress to the point of preaching to males. Hence, it is a sin to have female speakers on our lectureships to speak to females only. Who believes it? *Because a thing is thought of as dangerous by certain brethren does not mean that they or anyone else are at liberty to make laws for God.*

I know some female church members who routinely, though never having occupied a pulpit as normally defined, preach to men at every opportunity. In fact some *preachers' wives*, and not a few *elders' wives*, are the *ever present and controlling agent in the lives of their husbands*. Moreover, I have witnessed one preacher's wife in the display area of a lectureship with an audience of three preachers teaching them about the evils of a female translator. She was very definitely the present and controlling speaker. If it is the case that the translator is in the same relationship to the audience as the gospel preacher, I wonder what relationship she had with her audience of three preachers? Did she exercise dominion over them? If she did not by her actions exercise dominion over the three preachers in the display area, would she have done so if she and they had engaged in the same thing in the front of the auditorium with no one else present but them? Did this woman exercise *more liberty* or *less liberty* than the female translator who *only* translates the sermon of the present and controlling gospel preacher? Some people in their misguided zeal to condemn an authorized act because

it does not "look good;" or they "feel uncomfortable with it" have, in their opposition to it, committed the very "sin" they were opposing.

Some audiences are in church buildings with stationary pulpits before them. *Other audiences are in transit with teachers of different genders, but the scriptures forbid a female exercising dominion over men anywhere* (I Timothy 2:11-15). O, consistency, consistency, thou art a jewel!

CONCLUSION

The *only* way to *enter* the "strait gate" and *remain* in the "narrow way" is for one to possess a correct attitude toward God and his word and do *only* those things that are authorized by the New Testament of Christ (Matthew 5:5; James 1:21; Luke 8:15; Colos-

sians 3:17; Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7; I Corinthians 4:6, *ASV*—1901; John 12:48). The *real and ever present danger* lies in people not learning and applying the principles of biblical interpretation; the laws of correct inference and the constituent element argument being two of those principles. Hence, they engage in unauthorized practices and thereby sin. "Anti-ism" (binding where God in his word has not bound) is *not the answer* to "liberalism" (loosing where God in his word has not loosed) and "liberalism" is *not* the answer to "anti-ism." May God help us to put aside our likes and dislikes and do *only* what God in his word has authorized.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*
25403 Lancewood Drive
Spring, Texas 77373

Answering Questions...

(Continued from Page 1)

5. "If she failed to speak what the missionary uttered, would there be any teaching?" Here the use of the word "teach" in more than one sense results in what logicians call a verbal dispute, a dispute which obscures consideration of the real issue at hand because the disputants are employing a key term (in this case "teach") in different senses. One person focuses on the audience and speaks of "teaching" (T₁) as a process which is not accomplished unless someone learns. He reasons that a person is not *taught* (past tense of "teach") unless that person learns; therefore, he concludes that no "teaching" (T₁) is accomplished until learning takes place.

The opposing person speaks of "teaching" (T₂) which focuses on the teacher and is seen as a process which is accomplished as the teacher utters the words of a lesson and before anyone learns or regardless of whether anyone learns. Consider the teacher presenting [teaching (T₂)] six points of material to two students at the same time and in the same way. One learns [is taught (T₁)] all six points; another learns [is taught (T₁)] only three. Would it be said that the teacher taught one student and only half-taught the other? Well, one could say that and be correct, but he would be thinking only of T₁ teaching. Normally, T₂ teaching would be supposed in this example, particularly if the focus were on what

the teacher did rather than what the students did. One would say that he taught (T₂) both students or he taught (T₂) the Bible class which consisted of two students. Focusing on the class members one might explain that one student did not learn [was not taught (T₁)] all of the lesson, but his failure to learn [be taught (T₁)] all of the lesson was not because the teacher didn't teach (T₂) all of the lesson. If the teacher did not teach all six points, how is it that the other student learned all six? When Jesus *taught* by parable, He *taught* both his disciples and the hard of heart. The disciples *learned*, but the hard of heart did not *learn*. Both were *taught*, (T₂) only one group *learned* (T₁) (Matthew 13:13ff; Luke 8:10).

With different senses (T₁ and T₂) of "teaching" in mind the question is now answered. Using T₁ as the questioner intends, the answer is "No, there would not be any teaching (T₁) without the translator speaking. Contrary to the questioner's point, the fact that her translation would make the learning [teaching (T₁)] possible, does not mean that she would be *teaching* (T₂) *over* the men in the audience. A judge's translator speaks the judge's judgment to the defendant so that the latter may understand (T₁), but she does not in so doing become the authoritative judge or a co-judge. The judge judges, the translator translates. The preacher preaches, the translator translates.

Using T₂ the answer would be "Yes," the male missionary does teach (T₂) and does so despite the fact that no

one is taught (T₁) at the very moment of his utterance. Like the Lord's teaching (T₂) to those who heard but did not understand [were not taught (T₁)], this preacher's teaching (T₂) could be authoritatively taught (T₂) as it came forth from his mouth and before the audience was able to understand [be taught (T₁)] it.

6. "May she interpret the prayers and not stand in violation of I Timothy 2:8?" A woman may not *interpret* the man's prayers to a mixed assembly if "interpret" is taken to mean going beyond the simple translation by adding explanation or other elaboration or commentary to the words being prayed by the male leader. To do so would make her also a leader over men.

I Timothy 2:8 ("I will...that men pray") *in and of itself* does not prohibit a woman from leading in prayer any more than Colossians 3:16 ("teaching...in songs...") *in and of itself* prohibits teaching other than by singing. A woman *may not lead* men in prayer, but this prohibition is due to: 1) the absence of any authority for her to do so (Colossians 3:17) and/or 2) because she is prohibited from exercising dominion over men (I Timothy 2:11-12). I Timothy 2:8 authorizes certain men (*aner*, male) to lead prayers; it does not *in and of itself* prohibit anyone from doing anything.

7. "May she interpret the prayers of thanksgiving at the Lord's Table without violating the tone and tenor of I Timothy 2:8?" See the same answer and remarks given in #6.

8. "May she interpret the songs standing by the side of the missionary song director?" She may *translate*, that is, state the equivalent meaning of the words of the present and controlling male song leader in another language just as she may translate a sermon or Bible class lesson for a present and controlling male preacher.⁴

9. "Could a sermon be flashed on an overhead projector page by page with her as the sole interpreter to the mixed audience?" The woman translator (not interpreter) being defended is one who translates the message of a *present and controlling male preacher or teacher*—hence this pre-supposition does not apply.

10. "Could an American preacher in Texas or Tennessee fax a sermon on Saturday to a Russian lady for her to interpret the next Sunday?" A woman may not scripturally preach with all authority as men should do and she may not teach over men; therefore, a woman could not preach a sermon to a mixed audience or teach it in such a way as to exercise dominion over men (Titus 2:15; I Timothy 2:11-12). The woman *translator* (not interpreter) being defended is one who *translates* (not interprets in its broader sense, or preaches) the message of a *present and controlling male preacher/teacher*.

11. "Are not such practices grooming these lady interpreters for more and more leadership roles?" If translating is not a leadership role,⁵ and it is not, then the use of women translators is not grooming lady interpreters for any leadership role that they have no right to take. True, translating will likely improve ladies' abilities to speak in public, but

there is no inherent wrong in that. Our ladies have numerous occasions to so speak to audiences of women and children for which they would do well to improve their speaking abilities. Lady translators should understand the scriptural limits of the work they may do with men in the audience and be governed accordingly. The fact that a practice may be carried beyond scriptural limits is not sufficient reason to forbid the practice.

12. "How consistent are we in telling a woman she cannot in total silence serve bread and fruit of the vine to the audience after she has spoken hundreds or perhaps thousands of words in the sermon that has just concluded?" Though the Lord's Supper servers are usually in a leadership role in this country, the Supper could be served without a server being in a leadership role. Consider a mission area church of four people (three men and one woman). Picture the same woman, who *served* by preparing the communion trays before the worship hour, sitting at the kitchen table with two of the men; a third man is sitting about eight feet away in a large reclining chair. At the Lord's Supper a man leads a prayer, partakes of the bread, and hands the bread tray to the other man at the table. He also partakes and hands the tray to the woman. She partakes and then gets up with the tray, walks over to the third man, and hands him the tray. He partakes of the bread from the tray held by the woman, and she returns the tray to the table and sits down. The fruit of the vine is *served* in the same manner. What action of the woman's activity would constitute exercising dominion over a man?

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8:00 PM Salt and Light—Matthew 5:13-16 Billy Bland, Memphis, TN

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

9:00 AM Jesus and the Law of Moses—Matthew 5:17-20 Billy Bland, Memphis, TN
10:00 AM Oaths and Retaliation—Matthew 5:33-42 Garland Elkins, Memphis, TN
11:00 AM Lust and Divorce—Matthew 5:26-32 Robert Taylor, Ripley, TN
2:00 PM Reconciling Differences—Matthew 5:21-26 Allen Weakland, Mineral Springs, AR
3:00 PM Almsgiving and Fasting—Matthew 6:1-4, 16-18 Ted Clarke, Mammoth Springs, AR
7:00 PM Treasures of the Heart—Matthew 19:24 Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, TN
8:00 PM Judging—Matthew 7:1-6, 15-20 Keith Mosher, Sr., Memphis, TN

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

9:00 AM Love, The Golden Rule—Matthew 7:12; 5:43-48 Keith Mosher, Sr., Memphis, TN
10:00 AM First Things First—Matthew 6:25-34 Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, TN
2:00 PM Prayer—Matthew 6:5-15; 7:7-11 Garry Stanton, Camden, AR
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We are consistent in the challenged matters since the Lord's Supper service, as the function is normally conducted in American churches, involves leadership and the woman translator service does not. However, the service on the Lord's table is a leadership role by virtue of our (American churches') custom or tradition. There is no *inherent exercising of authority* by serving the emblems (passing plates and cups) of the Lord's Supper. This is simply one instance of the fact that there is no inherent exercising of authority in serving (Matthew 20:25ff). Service is an act of submission, not an act of dominion.

This same principle of an action taking special significance by virtue of a custom or tradition appears in I Corinthians 11 in the matter of the woman's veil. It has never been an *inherently non-submissive* act for a woman to appear in public without a veil, but it was an indication of non-submissiveness for a woman to appear in public without a veil in the historical context of Paul's epistle. From Genesis man has been the head of woman, only later did men decide by their tradition (uninspired, but authorized) that the wearing of the veil by women was required to acknowledge man's headship. Those living in that historical context were bound to observe the custom or tradition. In like manner, we respect the tradition of our brethren in America and wherever else the tradition exists regarding those who serve the Lord's Supper as performing leadership roles. Therefore that role is properly performed only by *faithful men*.

The reasoning used by the questioner is *a fortiori*, or "with greater reason." If I understand him, he is alleging that a lady being permitted the latitude of speaking words to an audience, should *with greater reason* be permitted to serve bread and fruit of the vine since such service involves less latitude than the speaking. However, this reasoning backfires in view of its proponent's (proper) practice of allowing women to stand before the congregation and make confessions of faith or of fault (James 5:16; I John 1:9; Romans 10:9-10). How can it be that these women cannot *with greater reason* be allowed to pass cups and plates to those whom they have vocally addressed in their confessions?

Notice, that like a woman translator, confessing women are speaking singly in the presence of an audience that includes men and are not exercising dominion over anyone. There are additional elements in the total situation of the woman translator, but all of them have Bible authority.⁶ There is no tradition in this country (and many others) which makes the woman translator a leadership role.

MORE RECENT OBJECTIONS FROM ANOTHER SOURCE

A brother claims that oral translation cannot be done without the translator teaching *his own* message to some extent, thus a female translating to a church assembly necessarily assumes a teaching or preaching role. This allegation collides with the fact that confidence can rightly be placed in a reliable written translation of the Bible. Were the ASV translators teachers of *their own* message or were they translators of God's words and message? If it is impossible to translate a speech or document without interjecting the translator's own message, then no one but

those who read the original languages can read God's word today; everyone else reads a mixed message in who knows what proportions of God's words and translators' messages.

The objector asserts a greater difficulty with oral versus written translating, but fails to note the oral translator's advantage of being able to ask the *present and controlling preacher* to clarify or reword a thought until he or she (the translator) is certain of an equivalent meaning which will remain faithful to *the preacher's words and meaning*. It may be slow, but it can be done!

The objector alleges that a Russian Bible version's failure to supply an equivalent word for the word "baptism" in an English version being read by the preacher necessitates *a translator who understands the relevant Bible doctrine as taught in the original language*. Without denying that a problem of sorts exists here, one can't help but wonder if the objector demands the same of *male translators*. Problems with women translators which imply identical problems with male translators are problems which do nothing to help the anti-woman translator position.

A third objection alleges that an audience is in submission to the translator *to whom it listens*, and thus the translator inherently exercises dominion over the audience. Logical application of this thinking to a court situation makes the Spanish translator, rather than the English-speaking, sentence-pronouncing judge, the one who authoritatively sentences to death the Spanish-speaking, Spanish-listening murderer.

An audience is reproved, rebuked, and exhorted by the controlling male preacher and not by the translator. Were the *listeners* roused to the state of Stephen's audience, surely they would stone the preacher and not the translator. Mere translation without elaboration is inherently submissive (see response to #1 above).

CONCLUSION

Those who defend the woman translator (to my knowledge) do not insist that other preachers use women translators. It is simply affirmed that there is Bible authority to do so. Those who insist on labeling the defenders of the practice as digressives or liberals without proof of the sinfulness of the practice are surely driving a wedge of division that need not and should not be driven (Proverbs 17:15; 6:19).

Those interested in a fuller discussion of the issue may obtain a copy of the recent publication *May a Woman Translate to an Audience which Includes Men? A Debate Between Bob Berard and Robin Haley*. This book is available for \$7.00 (includes postage) through **Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, TX 77383-2273; (713) 350-5516**.

ENDNOTES

1. Bob Berard and Robin Haley, *May a Woman Translate to an Audience which Includes Men?* (Spring, TX: Bible Resource Publications), pp. 2-5, 14-16, 30-32.
2. Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), p. 281.

3. Ibid.
 4. Berard-Haley, pp. 2-5, 14-16, 30-32.
 5. Ibid. Also see responses to items #1 and #5 for an elaboration of why translating is not a leadership role.
 6. Berard-Haley, pp. 2-5, 14-16, 30-32.

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GUY N. WOODS

VOCAL FEMALE TRANSLATORS: NO NON-VOCAL FEMALE TRANSLATORS: YES

David P. Brown

In the May 1995 issue of *Contending for the Faith* an article entitled "Women Interpreters" by Billy Leavel was printed as part of brother Rice's editorial. The editorial was entitled "What Was Brother Woods' Position On The Use Of Women Translators?" Originally, the article ran in the September 20, 1979, issue of the *Gospel Advocate*. Brother Woods, who at the time was the associate editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, wrote an editorial note at the close of the article. Here again is brother Woods' editorial comment.

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 I Corinthians 14:34, 35 and I Timothy 2:11, 12.

Under the date of April 8, 1981, brother Edward Short, then evangelizing in Taiwan, wrote to brother Woods asking him if the aforementioned "Editorial note:" applied to "vocal interpretation by women." Brother Woods responded in a letter, the entirety of which is herein quoted.

Far be it from any of us to attribute to any person a position he did not hold. Hence, from his aforementioned reply to brother Short, brother Woods clearly revealed that as of April 21, 1981, he believed that

it was wrong "...for a woman to translate a speech and vocalize it,..."

Brother Short's letter and brother Woods' reply to it were first made public in brother Joseph A Ruiz's bulletin, *Taiwan/China Messenger*, December 1995. However, we are somewhat confused why brother Ruiz would be happy

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GOSPEL ADVOCATE!

GUY N. WOODS, Associate Editor

April 21, 1981

Mr. Edward Short
 Hsinso Camp P. O. Box 25-10
 Kachsiung, Taiwan 812
 Republic of China

Dear brother Short:

We are glad to hear from you in far-away Taiwan!

My comments regarding women interpreters for the deaf would apply only to the situation described in the article and would not extend to speaking in public by women in translation. The two are not parallel. If it is right for a woman to translate a speech and vocalize it, it would be equally acceptable for her to READ a speech written in her own tongue to the audience and then to memorize it and deliver it. Interpretation for the deaf is a silent, mechanical action far short of a speech delivered and thus not in violation of the principle taught in I Timothy 2:11, 12.

Best wishes in your work there.

Faithfully yours,

Guy N. Woods

GUY N. WOODS
 Associate Editor

GMW:vp

to print brother Woods' position, which position condemns the very thing brother Ruiz has practiced. Unless he has changed in the last two years, brother Ruiz has no problem whatsoever with a Chinese sister *audibly* speaking up from the audience to supply him with words he did not know while he was translating English into Mandarin Chinese. This happened not once but twice in the same sermon. This "vocalized sin" did not seem to cause anyone, including brother Ruiz, any concern. We can only conclude that brother Ruiz's conduct, at least then, was in harmony with what he believed. Hence, by said actions one would be forced to conclude that brother Ruiz believed that in a worship assembly containing men, a woman could audibly supply a male translator with a Mandarin word or two so that the male translator could accurately translate the English of the sermon into Mandarin.

In the use of female translators I have never advocated nor been involved in any more than what brother Ruiz practiced in the aforementioned case. However, if brother Woods' aforesaid position is correct, the Chinese sister who *vocalized* her words and brother Ruiz, who accepted her vocalized words, engaged in sin. So, unless he has changed his view and practice since 1993, we fail to understand how brother Ruiz can be so happy to publish a position that condemns his own action.

WHAT BROTHER WOODS AFFIRMED

Now, let us examine brother Woods' position stated in the aforementioned letter. By implication brother Woods affirmed that *it is the "vocalize[d]" translation of a sermon by a woman that is sinful.* (See Woods' editorial comment and his letter to Short.) By his own aforementioned editorial note, brother Woods clearly was *not* opposed to a woman *inaudibly* translating a gospel preacher's sermon to an assembly containing men. I know this not only by his own statement, but I have witnessed such "inaudible translating" while brother Woods was preaching. It is obvious that, at least in doctrine, certain brethren and brother Woods are not united on "inaudible" woman translators. *How strange it is when certain brethren participate in what brother Woods condemned (vocalized translating by a woman translator) and oppose what brother Woods practiced (inaudible translating by a woman translator).* The truth of the matter is, that among those who oppose a woman translator, division exists over just what the "exclusive pattern" is regarding the where, when, and how of their laws. If this matter is reason enough to split churches, an affirmative position on which *all* those who oppose "inaudible" and "vocal" woman translators could agree would be most appreciated.

HOW BROTHER WOODS' AFFIRMATION WILL BE ANALYZED

We are able to determine whether it is *only* the *vocalizing* of a female translator's translated message that constitutes a violation of I Timothy 2:11, 12 by a number of true and false statements. (Precisely stated propositions allow for no middle ground or gray areas.) By these true and false statements we are able to check what a proposition implies. Such is the case because a good set of properly arranged true and false statements will show propositional coher-

ence or incoherence. In other words, they will demonstrate what other pieces of information will fit or not fit what has already been affirmed.

Also, it must be remembered that *truth never implies error.* If a proposition implies error, then, said proposition is false.

For emphasis sake the foregoing is a repeat of what was said in the associate editorial. [Again, we would appreciate hearing from you regarding whether true and false questions help you in "thinking through" a given matter.]

Please note again that brother Woods, in his April 21, 1981 letter to brother Short, affirmed that *it is the vocalizing of the translated message by the woman translator that constitutes exercising dominion over a man, and thus a violation of I Timothy 2:11, 12.* (See Wood's editorial comment and his letter to Short.) Is this proposition true?

Are *inaudible* words incapable of transmitting ideas? Is teaching done *only* by audible words? Is it the *female's* *sounding* of a word that allows her to exercise dominion over an adult male? May a female who *only* uses inaudible words *preach a sermon* to an audience comprised *solely* of deaf men and *not* exercise dominion over them? Let us think the matter through.

1. T. F. Words are "signs of ideas."
2. T. F. There are *audible* words ("signs of ideas").
3. T. F. There are *inaudible* words ("signs of ideas").
4. T. F. There are *inaudible* words ("signs of ideas") made by a human's hands and fingers.
5. T. F. A female translating to an audience containing men *can* by *inaudible* words ("signs of ideas") exercise dominion over a man.
6. T. F. The *mere sound* of a female translator's translated words is the element that makes her otherwise scriptural work an exercising of dominion over a man.
7. T. F. It is *impossible* for a female translator by her *inaudibly* translated words to exercise dominion over a deaf man in a Bible class.
8. T. F. It is *impossible* for a female *inaudibly* translating to a deaf audience to "...READ a speech written in her own tongue to the audience and then to memorize it and deliver it." (See Woods' letter to Short.)
9. T. F. It is *impossible* for a female who cannot *audibly* speak to exercise dominion over men.
10. T. F. A husband who cannot *audibly* speak cannot exercise authority over his wife.
11. T. F. It is *possible* to have a worship assembly composed of *only* deaf men and deaf women.
12. T. F. The Scriptures authorize a *female preacher* who uses only *inaudible* words to preach to a worship assembly composed of *only* deaf men and women.
13. T. F. It is a sin for a female translator *audibly* to translate an erring brother's confession of sin to an audience containing men.
14. T. F. The Scriptures authorize a female translator *inaudibly* to translate an *erring child of God's* confession of sin before an audience containing men.

15. T. F. When a female translator for the President of the U. S. translates with *audible words*, said translator exercises dominion over the President.
16. T. F. When a female translator for the President of the U. S. translates with *inaudible words*, said translator exercises dominion over the President.
17. T. F. It is sinful for a female translator (*from her seat* in an audience containing men) *audibly* to translate *one word* from the gospel preacher's sermon to said audience.
18. T. F. It is sinful for a female translator (*from her seat* in an audience containing men) *audibly* to translate *two words* from the gospel preacher's sermon to said audience.
19. T. F. It is sinful for a female translator (*from her seat* in an audience containing men) *audibly* to translate *one sentence* from the gospel preacher's sermon to said audience.
20. T. F. It is sinful for a female translator (*from her seat* in an audience containing men) *audibly* to translate *two paragraphs* from the gospel preacher's sermon to said audience.
21. T. F. It is sinful for a female translator (*from her seat* in an audience containing men) *audibly* to translate the gospel preacher's *complete sermon* to said audience.
22. T. F. Sinning in small amounts is acceptable to God.
23. T. F. In a religious assembly containing men it would *not* be a sin for a Christian wife *inaudibly* to tell her deaf Christian husband what the preacher said.
24. T. F. In a religious assembly containing men it would *not* be sin for a Christian wife *audibly* to quote to her Christian husband what the preacher said.
25. T. F. To translate (*inaudibly or audibly*) one language into another is one way of telling someone what another person has said.
26. T. F. In a religious assembly containing men it would be sin for a Christian wife to *audibly translate* to her Christian husband what the preacher said.
27. T. F. In a religious assembly containing men it would *not* be sin for a Christian wife to *audibly translate* to her Christian husband and his twin brother what the preacher said.

28. T. F. In a religious assembly containing men it would *not* be sin for a Christian wife to *audibly translate* to her non-Christian husband, his family, friends and neighbors what the preacher said.
29. T. F. A female translator who *audibly* translates a Bible lesson is *not* "...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..." (See Woods' aforementioned editorial note.)

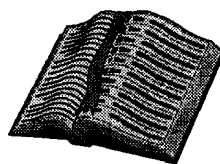
The only difference in signing (inaudible) and speaking (audible) translation is the *method*. The method in this instance is a difference that makes no difference as to the requisite Bible authority. That this point is accepted among us is obvious from our widespread use of the signed for the spoken communication. Those opposing the female translator evidently have no problem with a female *speaking or signing* a confession before a worship assembly, asking a question in a gender-mixed Bible class, or responding to a teacher's question in the same class situation. If the *sound* of her voice in these situations makes wrong what is otherwise permissible, that is the signing of her translation, *how* is it that they allow that same sound in so many other situations?

The foregoing material refutes the idea that the audible comments of a female translator is wrong. Yea, verily, neither the audible nor inaudible translating of a female is wrong.

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Brotherhood News

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Stephen Wiggins, 8 PM. Saturday—Tim Ayers, 2 PM, Mike Wyatt, 3 PM, Joseph Meador, 7 PM, Dub McClish, 8 PM. Sunday—Jim Dobbs, 9:30 AM, Buster Dobbs, 10:30 AM, Joe Gilmore, 6 PM, Bill Lockwood, 7 PM. Saturday evening meal will be provided. For further information, call (903) 938-4422.

The **West Coast Firm Foundation Lectures** are announced by the church of Christ at 525 South Bayshore Boule-

vard, San Mateo, California, March 13-17, 1996. This year's theme is "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be." 18 subjects will be discussed. Speakers are listed in order of appearance: Greg Weston, Tommy Hicks, Dub McClish, Randy Maybe, Gil Yoder, Tom Bright, Buster Dobbs, Joe Gilmore, Gary Anderson, Jack Stewart, Allen Robertson, David Brown, Gus Eoff, and Ira Y. Rice, Jr.



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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.

Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherley, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

.....

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.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P. O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10, 11 AM, 5:30 PM, Wed.: 7:00 PM. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

.....

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) 758-7406.

—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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(June 16-19, 1996)

This Year's Subject:

Isaiah Vol. 2

"CHARACTERISTICS OF 'ANTI' PREACHERS AND OTHERS"

In October of 1957 the "anti-cooperation" and "anti-orphan home" battles were at their peak. At that time brother Thomas B. Warren delivered a series of sermons in which he proved the scripturalness of "church cooperation" and "orphan homes." Also, in these sermons brother Warren fully exposed the falsity of the "anti" positions. The lectures were put into a book entitled *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes*.

In their efforts to prohibit females from translating Bible lessons, some are employing the same kind of tactics as that of brethren who espoused the anti-Bible class, anti-woman teacher, anti-orphan home, anti-cooperation, and various other "anti" positions. It seems that their mindset toward logic in general and the constituent element argument in particular is on a par with those brethren of the various anti persuasions. In view of these matters, we beg the reader please to consider the following timely excerpt from brother Warren's book. We deeply appreciate brother Warren permitting us to quote his material.—Associate Editor

Under the heading of "CHARACTERISTICS OF 'ANTI' PREACHERS AND OTHERS" brother Warren noted that, "... 'anti' preachers are characterized by a denial that proving all of the parts of a thing to be scriptural proves the whole thing to be scriptural..." (Emphasis—TBW). Furthermore, he wrote:

...You must remember that the Bible is not a book of "Systematic Theology," as men write books of theology. The Bible does not have an index into which you may look to find which chapter tells all about the church, another chapter which tells all about the plan of salvation, and another chapter which tells all about worship. We all have known down through the years that we must search all the Bible to find the truth on various subjects. You cannot find all of the plan of salvation in a single verse or paragraph. You cannot find all of worship in such a passage. You cannot find all of the details of our Bible classes in a single passage. You cannot find all the details of the work of a "located preacher" in a single passage. But, when you prove the parts of each of these matters to be scriptural, you have thereby proved the whole thing to be scriptural!...

...Of course, the preachers who oppose Bible classes oppose the argument. When you prove simultaneous teaching, they cry, "But where are the women teachers?" When you prove women

teachers, they cry, "But where are the classes?" Or, they'll cry, "But the church didn't call this meeting." You see, they demand all of the details in a single passage. Just like some of these fellows who oppose cooperation and homes do on those subjects...

...Many times these fellows can be led, a step at a time, to admit every single point involved in a thing. I recall that an anti-class debater did this very thing in a discussion I had...I asked my opponent in that discussion this question: "If, as a part of the regular teaching program of a congregation, the elders of that congregation have a woman to go into the women's dressing room so that, following the baptism of each woman, instruction may be given as to what God expects of His children—would you agree that this is scriptural?" He answered, "Yes." I asked the same thing about a man going into the men's dressing room for the purpose of teaching. He also agreed that this would be all right. I asked if the man could teach the newly baptized men at the same time the woman was teaching the newly baptized women. He agreed that this would be all right. I then showed that he had admitted that every point involved in our Bible classes on Sunday morning was scriptural. I further pointed out that, logically, he would have to accept our Bible classes as scriptural. Of course, he would not accept that logical conclusion...They will admit each and every point in the whole thing—and then turn right around and deny that the whole thing is scriptural!...So we see that it is a characteristic of an "anti" to deny the "constituent element" argument—to deny that when you have proved all of the parts of a thing to be scriptural, you have proved the whole thing to be scriptural. And bear in mind, that these men will not make that error on any subject but their own little hobby... [Thomas B. Warren *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes* (Jonesboro: National Christian Press, Inc., 1957), pp. 26-34.] This book may be purchased from Bible Resource Publications for \$7.00 plus \$2.00 for shipping and handling.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

PLAYING THE "PAPER CHASE" GAME WITH RUBEL SHELLEY

J. E. Choate

The ~~harsh~~harsh critic of the conservative churches of Christ today is **Dr. Rubel Shelly**. This is a strange turn of events due to his strong defense of the conservative churches in past years. How is this to be explained, if it can be explained? As **Will Rogers** said, "All I know is what I read in the newspapers." The most effective way to address this problem is to follow the paper trail.

Dr. Shelly likes to tell the story that he was a full time preacher at 14. A parent drove him to his Sunday appointments. In one community, the churches shared a joint worship and dinner on the ground. Afterwards the graves of their loved ones were decorated. He says that he learned then the lesson of "unity in diversity."

This is Dr. Shelly's defensive rationale why he joined liberal Disciples of Christ and other denominations in 1994 for a joint post-Easter celebration. The Woodmont Hills church of Christ worships each Sunday in the church building of the *First Christian Church* in Nashville, and engages in *joint worship services* with them.

Was it at 14 that the idea entered his head that God had endowed him with a genius that he was destined to blossom in Lutheran and Calvinistic splendor? Had not God endowed him with a genius surpassing that of **Alexander Campbell** and the "homespun," **David Lipscomb**? Time would tell.

We can see him all too early who no longer plays children's games. Had God called this precocious lad to begin preaching in his tender years? People do get peculiar ideas. [The temple priest began service at 30, and Jesus was baptized at 30.]

Did he somewhere along the way develop the idea that he possessed a knowledge of Scripture equal to that of the

ripest Bible scholars? This notion has grown to mythic dimensions in the minds of his devoted fans. And somewhere along the way did brother Shelly develop a "martyr complex?" [He is always so misunderstood and misrepresented. One reason is that his brethren lack his mental acumen.] The FHU 1995 lectureship committee feared that Dr. Shelly would emerge as a martyr by calling his name more than one time. What nonsense.

DID RUBEL, LIKE SAUL, SEE A "GREAT LIGHT"?

In his early years after his Harding Graduate School M.A., this budding preacher proclaimed to the satisfaction of even the "hardliners" the old Jerusalem gospel. He wrote brilliant essays condemning instrumental music in worship. He fought the "antis", premillennialism, and the Herald of Truth until he, too, saw a "great light" and learned that he was wrongfully persecuting his liberal brethren. This led to contrition and apologies.

Now he confesses that he has a problem with his ego. I am puzzled why he thinks so. He fears that he leaves the impression that he confronts his peers with a condescending arrogance. He would have us believe that a kind and humble Rubel Shelly reposes behind this facade.

Then we follow this gifted brother down the paper trail. He comes to Vanderbilt to pursue his doctorate in philosophy. There is not anything which distinguished his academics other than he was the usual "run of the mill" gifted university doctoral candidate. There are no publications and no recognitions for his scholarly achievements coming from men of letters.

However, the "myth" of the "genius" persists. The
(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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March/1996

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor
David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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Editorial...

IS LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY IN BETTER SHAPE TODAY THAN IT EVER HAS BEEN?

That Lipscomb University President Emeritus Willard Collins is a lovable character goes without saying. He and I go 'way back—a long way. He was 19 and I was 17 when we competed in a speech contest 61 years ago at Rush Springs, Oklahoma, the watermelon capital of the world.

Also in that contest was George Stephenson, who took first place; Collins was second; and Trine Star-nes and I tied for last. I enjoyed hearing brother Willard speak that night and have done so all the times I've heard him since. In all these years, I've never heard him personally teach anything I thought was wrong.

DOES COLLINS HAVE A BLIND SPOT?

Nevertheless, wherein Lipscomb University is concerned, I often have wondered if brother Collins has a blind spot so that he simply cannot see what truly is going on. In a recent fund-raising letter from him, among other things he said, "Today, with more than a half-century perspective, I look at the work of Harold Hazelip and his administration and **I think Lipscomb University is in better shape today than it has ever been**" [emphasis his—IYR Jr.]

When my family and I lived in Nashville for seven years (from the mid-'60s to the early '70s), I wondered why such false teachers as George Howard and John McRay were kept on the Lipscomb faculty long after it was clear they were teaching outright heresy?

Howard, in his Lipscomb classes, was denying 1) that the law of Moses ended at the cross, 2) that baptism in the Holy Spirit ended in the first century A.D., and 3) that the churches in the New Testament were locally autonomous. He denied that churches of Christ follow the New Testament pattern in the appointment of elders in each congregation.

McRay, in his Lipscomb classes and elsewhere, cast doubt 1) on the five items of worship, 2) that doctrine is a matter of principle, 3) said that, for the sake of unity, he would be willing to give up the name "Church of Christ." He and Howard kept on teaching so many wrong things at Lipscomb, no wonder "uncertain sounds," especially in those days, seemed to be everywhere. It was not until after *Contending for the Faith* publicized their heresies that these two false teachers finally were forced to leave.

OTHER KNOWN HERETICS HARBORED

Even after Howard and McRay were gone, still other known teachers of error were harbored on the Lipscomb campus.

When **Athens Clay Pullias** finally gave up the presidency (and entirely abandoned not only Lipscomb but the churches of Christ, as well), many of us dared hope that, with brother Collins as the new president, things would be different.

If they improved very much during the years of his presidency, it was not obvious. In fact, across the years, it seemed almost a constant battle to keep some new heretic from being appointed to the faculty.

WHY WAS HAZELIP HIRED?

When the time finally came for Willard, also, to retire, this afforded one more hiatus when “*someone*” could have been brought in who would turn things back around. Great numbers of faithful gospel preachers, elders and other brethren dared hope—for a time—that “the right man” might be brought in.

You can hardly imagine our dismay when probably the *worst possible choice* was made with the hiring of **Harold Hazelip** to be president.

During his long tenure as Dean of Harding Graduate School (a few miles from my home here in Memphis), Hazelip was never known to side with truth against error—not even once! No matter how evident it was that error was being taught at HGS, whenever it was pointed out, Hazelip *always* sided with the false teacher. As a result, class after class of HGS-trained teachers went out with Master’s Degrees during Hazelip’s deanship believing and teaching contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

SEARCH COMMITTEE COULD HAVE KNOWN

It is not that Lipscomb’s “search committee” *could not* have known what Hazelip allowed to be taught at Harding Graduate School. It was not done “in a corner.” All they needed was to inquire of any faithful gospel preacher in the Memphis area; we *all* knew what was being taught.

There appeared to be a studied effort *not* to inquire of those who believed, taught and contended earnestly for the faith (Jude 3). [If you ask all the wrong questions of all the wrong brethren, you are bound to get all the wrong answers!]

WHAT THEY SHOULD HAVE FOUND OUT

As to what specific doctrinal errors Harold Hazelip allowed teachers to teach under his deanship here at Harding Graduate School, they were so many as to be almost incredible, including,

1. That the story of creation is a *myth*.
2. That instead of God miraculously closing the *Red Sea* on Pharaoh’s army, they merely bogged down in the mud of the *Reed Sea* and drowned.

3. That the Bible is *not inspired*. (**Carroll Osburn** said in one of his Greek classes that he did not believe in verbal inspiration and did not care to hear a discussion of it.)
4. That the Bible relies on *non-inspired sources*.
5. That, instead of being inspired, Matthew and Luke merely *copied* Mark and “Q” (an unknown source document).
6. That there is *no such thing as absolute truth*.
7. Several instructors implied that there are *Christians in all denominations*.
8. That the brotherhood has *no scholars*. (It was not acceptable to quote from *any* brotherhood scholar on papers or examinations.)
9. That *all* the scholars are *in the denominations*—hence denominational scholars *had* to be cited on papers and examinations, not our own brethren.
10. **Richard Oster** taught that *Holy Spirit baptism* continues. (He *still* teaches this at HGS to this day.)
11. That *hot-dog buns* on the Lord’s Table are just as acceptable as unleavened bread.
12. That God’s mercy *always* supercedes God’s law.

Why would one as intelligent as Hazelip *appear* to be allow these and similar erroneous views to be taught and/or practiced through his years at HGS? Even if, once in a while, an HGS teacher taught the truth during those years, it must be understood that Hazelip’s *own* views of religion are *subjective, not objective*—what is true for you may not be true for me.

WHAT HAZELIP ALLOWS AT LIPSCOMB

Where has Willard Collins been that he seems unaware that Hazelip’s direction at Lipscomb University is but a *repeat* of what it was here at Harding Graduate School. Following is but a sampling from Lipscomb teachers and others under Harold Hazelip:

1. The water was hardly hot after his arrival at DLU until he was putting a far-out liberal—**Mac Lynn**—over the Graduate School in Bible. [Lynn’s tapes clearly show that he approves of instrumental music in worship.]
2. While brother Collins himself finally saw through the Nashville “Jubilee” and Rubel Shelly—and spoke out against both—Lipscomb teacher **Randy Harris**, a participant in and with the Christian Church in its Forums, both speaks on the “Jubilee” and collaborates with Rubel in writing apostate books like *The Second Incarnation*.
3. **Doug Varnado**, who supposedly teaches Bible at Lipscomb, also is “pulpit preacher” at the

Hendersonville *Community Church*—an apostate church if there ever was one.

4. Rather than teaching that miracles ceased in the first century, **Carl McKelvey** related in a speech (when he and Willard were speaking over near Portland, Tennessee), how *miracles* had occurred in his (Carl's) life.
5. When **Gayle Napier** charged conservative churches with encouraging incest and pornography at home, what did Hazelip do to correct this? Nothing at all!
6. When Lipscomb Student-Recruiter **Walt Leaver** participated in a so-called "five-day revival" with preachers from the *Christian Church*, the *Presbyterian Church*, the *First Church of the Nazarene*, and *St. Paul's Southern Methodist Church* at the *Donelson Presbyterian Church*, was that all right with Hazelip? Leaver is still on the Lipscomb staff!
7. When Lipscomb High School Chorus went out to Inglewood *Baptist Church*, sang and conducted the Sunday night service, what did Hazelip do to try to stop it? He just let it happen!
8. When a Lipscomb student claimed to have the *gift of prophecy*, instead of correcting the student, Hazelip got upset with the outside brother who did!
9. Why are some faculty members and some retired faculty full of consternation, disgust and alarm over what is being *tolerated* at Lipscomb?
10. Why are so many faithful Christian parents heart-sick over their children returning from Lipscomb and bringing home their *skepticism*, *liberalism* and flat-out *denials of the faith*?
11. The **Libertarian Party** has taught on the Lipscomb Campus that "you have the right to *believe in whatever religion you choose*, but if your God requires the sacrifice of virgins, you must find a virgin willing to be sacrificed without the initiation of force." Did Hazelip try to

correct this? Instead, he passed it off as a "political" rather than a "religious" issue. Who can believe it!

12. In his September 26, 1994 statement concerning Rubel Shelly and "Jubilee," brother Collins, among other things, said, "...Before Jubilee this year, the congregation where Rubel preaches, joined with six protestant churches to have a post-Easter service. Everything accepted, bands, choruses, instruments; everything accepted, nobody said much against it, far as I know nothing against it..." And *which* congregation do the *largest number* on the *Lipscomb faculty and staff* attend?—"THE CONGREGATION WHERE RUBEL PREACHES"—some 42 of them and their families at a recent count!

SO WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE?

[No, brother Collins, Lipscomb University is NOT in better shape today than it has ever been. We all might wish it so; but that is all it would be: wishful thinking.]

My family cannot claim the 51 year connection with Lipscomb that brother Collins can; however, my wife and one daughter both are Lipscomb graduates—and all five of our children attended Lipscomb grade school and/or high school.

I personally soon shall have completed 64 years as a gospel preacher. My *first* loyalty is to the church of my Lord. If I truly felt that Lipscomb University shared this commitment, nothing would please me more than to contribute personally and to help raise the finances that Lipscomb seeks.

However, in view of the *doctrinal questionability* and *uncertain soundness* of the work of Harold Hazelip and his administration at Lipscomb, I cannot, in good conscience, do so—my old friend Willard Collins notwithstanding.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Playing "Paper Chase . . ."

Continued from Page 1

nimble brain and the glib tongue must be backed up with a storehouse of facts. Thereafter, he joined the Lipscomb faculty where he confronted peers who do not play second fiddle. He was just another faculty member. *Students did not fight for a place in his classes*. He resigned at the end of the school year.

Some think he underwent profound changes in personality while at Vanderbilt. What is perhaps a more accurate appraisal is that he was undergoing radical changes in his psychic make-up. He suddenly realized that he had no clear perception of his personal identity and mission in life.

Dr. Shelly lost his moorings when he began his assaults on the conservative churches of Christ about 1983. Dr. Shelly surprised even his most unforgiving critics when he was the featured speaker in the 1994 interdenominational post-Easter celebration service. He ridiculed and poked fun at the conservative churches of Christ to the amusement and laughter of the audience. [I was present and personally reminded Rubel during a two hour conversation with him what had happened. He said that I did not understand his sense of humor. I did, and found it in poor taste.]

IS IT RIGHT TO CALL NAMES?

Some of brother Shelly's *apologists* are openly critical that I call names. Dr. Shelly calls names by expressing his scorn for "inept" preachers who preach "threadbare ser-

mons for churches that are withering on the vine.” Dr. Robert E. Hooper, church historian and Woodmont church elder, called Marshall Keeble an “Uncle Tom” in his book, and on the Jubilee floor. He branded Foy E. Wallace, Jr., as the chief troubler of the churches in modern times.

To brethren who are annoyed with me for name calling, I remind them that Paul sought out the “thinkers” in the market place, and spoke to the great men of Athens in defense of his faith. When Paul spoke of Demas, he did not mean Diotrephes. I call names when I have a particular brother in mind to make a point.

My squeamish brethren should study the history of church doctrine to learn that the exchange of ideas between men of letters in an open forum is an honorable profession. Paul debated in the agora, and Martin Luther faced John Eck who had formulated 404 theses with which he labeled the Protestants as heretics. The great theological debates over 1500 years are, namely: Augustine versus Pelagius on the doctrine of sin, grace, and free will; Luther’s affirmation of the grace of God and the denial of the doctrine of indulgences; and of Calvin’s teaching on predestination and “double election.”

Our present liberal brethren do believe in calling names when they think they have their conservative brethren on the short end of the stick. [I remember years ago that a DLC librarian made the facetious remark that “two percent of the people think, 80 percent think they think, and the other 18 percent would rather die than have a thought.” Our liberal brethren should remember Harry Truman’s dictum about kitchen temperature.]

DECADES OF “BRAINWASHING”

I do not know all that much about my brethren in other places. It may be a different story in Tennessee and Kentucky. I have heard the following clichés until I have grown weary of them, and especially from brethren who have defended everything from premillennialism to the “anti” institutional brethren.

They say do not call names because you will be judging. (Marshall Keeble said when he saw the skull and crossbones and “poison” on a bottle, he was not *judging*, just *reading the label*.) What if you have nothing against your brother, just reading the warning label. And if you have something against a brother, go to him first. But what if you do not have anything against him?

These sweet-tempered Bible-“quoting” brethren carry a pocket full of rocks for their critics. When an elder of a large and once influential church was asked about the sins of a certain preacher—confessed, but not specified—he responded, I keep a rock in my pocket to give to that brother to throw who is without sin. A clever response? Perhaps! But the logic of it is nauseating.

POSTSCRIPT

I am doing exactly what my liberal brethren are doing which is calling names. They would pull churches into the dragnet of postmodern theology. I abhor the latest craze in modern theology which is called “deconstructionism,” and which is lifted from the philosophy of Jacques Derrida. Postmodern theology erodes and undermines any notion of coherent unity in the truth of the inerrant word of God.

Phillip Morrison and Rubel Shelly with other Woodmont Hills brethren handed out a “white paper” in 1994 during a 20th Century luncheon branding me a liar who had circulated nine lies about the Nashville Jubilee. Now look at who’s calling names! Brother B. C. Goodpasture told me this story: that his father advised him never to pick a fight, but once another does, then give a good account of yourself.

Contending for the Faith is widely circulated across the country. Members of three avant garde churches of Christ receive the paper. The members were advised to refuse delivery. A few did. One brother said that he had rather see my name on a paper in the gutter than on **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**. My response was that my name would not be seen *in the gutter*, on *Image* or *Wineskins*, nor on the *Jubilee program*.

We live in a free society. And I will above all other things exercise my constitutional and my religious freedom in Christ to oppose biblical error. To my liberal brethren who sit under their own fig trees and do what they think is right, you may expect me to do the same. Do not expect me to sit around and whine that you ought not to call names. Brother B. C. Goodpasture also told me the story that Cordell Hull’s father advised his son when he was a boy to stay with the truth. He said that truth crushed to earth will always come back, and bring you up with it.

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

SHALL JUBILEE’S WALL SOON COME TUMBLING DOWN?

Say what you like, brother Al Thompson, who finally left Madison after 13 years as a member there, has a way with words. Not only did he leave, but in a letter to your Editor, under date of November 8, 1994, he stated his reasons why. [If you did not read his letter earlier, you still need to do so; it was published in our February/1995 edition of *Contending for the Faith*.]

Now comes yet another insightful letter by brother Thompson. I had written to him just a few days before.

“In that letter,” brother Thompson replied, “you said that ‘Rubel and Woodmont Hills would be trying to carry on ‘Jubilee’ all by themselves this year.’ I remarked to Caroline, ‘Does he mean that it is simply the Woodmont Hills time to be in charge this year, or could it possibly mean that the other two churches (Madison and Antioch) have bowed out?’”

“And then I picked up the December, 1995 issue of *Contending for the Faith*, and there it was in black and white! Your editorial said plainly that both Madison and Antioch were indeed pulling out! I couldn’t believe my eyes! And the

part about 'There is no anti-Jubilee feeling at either place,' well, I don't believe a single word of that!

"I firmly believe that Steve Flatt, Dan Dozier, and the elders at Madison huddled together and decided on the following action:

"In regard to 'Jubilee,' in view of the front page controversy it has generated, the huge division in the brotherhood it has caused, the relentless criticism of some of the speakers we invite, the exodus of hundreds of our members because of our involvement in it, the dramatic drop in attendance at the 'Jubilee' itself, and the 'stigma' we suffer by being associated with Rubel Shelly's liberalism, it would be in Madison's best interest to divest ourselves of it. Let's just tell the congregation that we've decided the time has come to turn our attention to other fertile areas of service to the Lord.

"Ira, I honestly think that the scenario I have just suggested falls pretty close to the mark. I'm convinced that they would NEVER tell the congregation the real truth, because to do so would be to admit ERROR! I'm sure that you have not missed the enormous impact or the significance of this dramatic turnaround of events. Think of it: because of your constant, relentless bombardment of truth to all concerned, you have achieved (and are achieving) SOMETHING AKIN TO THE BRINGING DOWN OF THE BERLIN WALL! That wall that appeared so firm and sound, CRUMBLED

AND FELL. 'Jubilee,' which appeared so firm and sound, appears now to be crumbling and may very well fall. And you, and all those who have fearlessly stood with you, deserve the credit. To think that the tiny, little part that Caroline and I may have played in all this just warms our hearts no end. God bless you, Ira Rice, for your inspirational stance on behalf of truth!"

[EDITORIAL NOTE: As much as I appreciated receiving this extraordinary communication from brother Thompson, truly I felt that he gave me personally too much credit. "...In your bottom paragraph on the first page," I replied in part, "I feel that you have given me more credit than I deserve. Actually, it is not what any single one of us has done, but rather the combination of all our efforts together which is bringing about the developing circumstances—not least the part that you and Caroline have played.

"I realize, of course, that outwardly at least the 'Jubilee' wall still stands. However, like you, I, too, believe it is crumbling from the inside and soon will fall. We'll have a clearer picture, Lord willing, in July. Since Madison and Antioch will not be contributing to it this year, I am curious where Rubel and Woodmont Hills are coming up with the money..."—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

Rubel Shelly Ties Himself to Baptists and Don Finto!

Jon Gary Williams

For several years we have been sadly witnessing the progressive liberal trend of Rubel Shelly. The evidence of this is overwhelming, having been documented by many brethren. Long ago I was so convinced of the dangerous direction he was headed I warned brethren that he was "only a lap behind" the ultra liberal and self-proclaimed "apostle," Don Finto! I also said that he was bordering on fellowship with denominationalism!

Comparing my correspondence with both Finto and Shelly I could

clearly see a common pattern. Some brethren, though aware of Rubel's liberal views, have found it hard to believe he would go this far. Now, however, evidence has surfaced which confirms my suspicion and which cannot be ignored.

On January 12, 1996 I received an invitation to attend a breakfast meeting at Don Finto's Nashville based Belmont church.

[NOTE: For word-for-word reproduction of invitation brother Williams received, see below. IYR Jr.]

Area preachers were invited to come hear what God was doing in the lives of several "Nashville pastors." Among these "pastors" were Jerry Sutton (Baptist), Don Finto and Rubel Shelly. The invitation pointed out that these men had been "praying and working together" and that they would tell "how God has blessed as they've come together." (See box.)

Surely, no one can see this and not be convinced of just how far afield Rubel has gone. Due to the wide exposure Rubel receives, more brethren need to be warned about his digression.

—Post Office Box 35
LaVergne, Tennessee 37086

Recognizing Reality

The Southern Hills church, 5150 East 101st Street, has publicized their disassociation from churches of Christ in this city and elsewhere. While it grieves us, it was not unexpected.

Some years ago an elder of the Southside congregation talked with me regarding our usage of the property which they owned on 51st Street. He wanted to see these facilities used by a congregation that would be true in its preaching and worship to the New Testament order. A group of brethren did take it over and, along with some other preachers in the city, I did some fill-in preaching for them until they acquired a resident preacher.

With the passing of time, it became evident that some leading persons in that congregation did not wish to be confined to the limitations which we believe are

January 10, 1996

Dear Minister,

This Tuesday, January 16 from 7:30 am - 9:00 am, Nashville area pastors will gather for breakfast at the Fellowship Hall of Belmont Church on Music Square to meet one another and hear what God is doing in our area. Several Nashville pastors including Jerry Sutton, Rubel Shelly, and Don Finto have been praying and working together. They want to tell us how God has blessed as they've come together.

necessary in the restoration of New Testament faith and practice. Preachers and teachers, both within their membership and those brought in, only kindled their determination to be different from their sister churches of Christ. The question of baptism for Christian fellowship, the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, the function of ladies in the leadership of the public worship services, and other matters were decided, placing them at variance with their sister congregations. They are, to all practical purposes, what is generally regarded as a Community Church.

The announcement of their separation from us is now a recognition of reality. Since they are determined to be interdenominational in their fellowship, it is best that they make this publicly known. Henceforth, members of the church who want no part of denominationalism will not be mis-led into attending there when they are seeking a place to worship and serve according to the teaching of the New Testament.

—Hershel Dyer
10th & Rockford Church of Christ
Tulsa, Oklahoma
[Via Bixby, Oklahoma Weekly Bulletin]

They Wear Sheep's Clothing

Joe E. Galloway

There are times when I am amazed at the naiveté of members of the Lord's church who either talk with, or hear, a known false teacher and then pronounce him "sound" in the faith! Surely it would help if we would consider some basic, common-sense principles for determining whether or not one is preaching the truth.

It is not the usual practice of false teachers to say, "You need to be careful! I am teaching error." Instead, a

false teacher will claim to be teaching the truth of God's word. Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). Regarding Satan's ministers, Paul wrote: "It is no great thing if his ministers be transformed as the ministers of righteousness" (II Corinthians 11:15).

Even elders have been known to decide that a preacher was all right by

merely asking him "Are you sound in the faith?" or, "Are you a liberal?" What false teacher is going to say, "No, I am not sound in the faith?" Even a denominational preacher is going to claim to be a teacher of truth!

ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

To determine the soundness of a religious teacher one will have to ask him specific questions on a large number of basic Bible topics. When an answer is not conclusive, more probing questions will need to be given.

Questions especially need to be asked in areas where there is reason to be concerned because of the teacher's background or his associates. Although rumors are never to be accepted without being validated, what one is rumored to believe and teach should be a reason for careful questioning.

To be in position to effectively interview a religious teacher one must (1) have a good knowledge of what the Bible does teach, and (2) be acquainted with the various errors that are currently being taught by some in the brotherhood.

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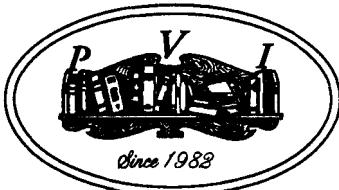
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IS QUESTIONING WRONG?

What about the objections often made that Christians must be more trusting, and that our attitude is wrong if we feel that we have to question another's beliefs and teachings? Some preachers seem to feel personally "attacked" if they are expected to answer such questions regarding their faith and practice. I have heard some say that they are not about to be subjected to a "religious inquisition." Others of us have always been pleased to answer questions at any time on what we believe on any matter of our faith and practice.

The Bible clearly teaches what our attitude should be regarding this. Regarding our willingness to be questioned, I Peter 3:15 tells us, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Concerning our trying to determine whether one is a teacher of

truth or of error, we are told, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). I John 4:1 requires us to not believe any and every teacher, but says, "Try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Then in verse six we are given the sure way to do this testing. Speaking of the inspired apostles, John said, "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." We can know that one is a false teacher if he does not teach what the apostles taught in the New Testament!

SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED?

Why be so concerned about identifying false teachers? False teaching destroys the Lord's church and condemns souls! Paul warned against "grievous wolves" entering into the church at Ephesus who would not spare the flock, but speak "perverse things, to

draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29, 30). Peter warned of "false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies," saying that they would "bring upon themselves swift destruction." He further pointed out, "Many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," and concluded by saying that "their damnation slumbereth not" (II Peter 2:1-3).

We, too, are living at a time when false teachers are destroying entire congregations. Their "mouths must be stopped" (Titus 1:11). Elders especially have the God-given responsibility to do this (Titus 1:9-11), but all Christians should do all within their power to also "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

—218 Pinecrest Drive
Greeneville, Tennessee 37743



From the Banks of Onion Creek

Charles Hodge, preacher at Duncanville, Texas, has been long and widely known for his uncertain sounds and questionable doctrinal positions. Someone sent in his following diatribe "from the banks of Onion Creek." As near as we can tell, it is just so much more hodge-podge:

FOOTWASHING

Read John 13...re-read John 13. Familiar scripture needs to be read more closely. The last night with Jesus before the cross. The final sermon—the last object lesson, *The Towel*—your editor has been carrying a towel for years. Servanthood. Ministry. Humility. We give out towels here. I give them to special people throughout our brotherhood. As the years have passed I have learned many things in the text. I have missed so much.

So John Hoover "spun me around like a top." Footwashing is footwashing! It is more than symbolic. There is culture yet some things are more than culture. What about footwashing in the churches of Christ? "It is wrong." "We are agin it." Foot washing is not a church ordinance. Yet we even glorify the towel while denying the footwashing.

Footwashing is not wrong; we must not be agin it. True, it is not a facet of worship, a church ordinance, yet Jesus practiced footwashing! Jesus commanded footwashing. There must be something to it. Are you willing to consider it? Think about it? Practice it? Was Jesus wrong? Did culture end?

Husbands! Come home—wash your wife's feet! She will be both thrilled and thankful. I dare you! Now a *betcha*. She will demand to wash yours! Try me out! There will be a bonding. In counseling footwashing could be a great

therapy. Try it!

Elders / deacons / staff. What a blessing this could be. What do we have in our culture that is a fair symbol?



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Footwashing could save homes, churches, souls. If you are on the outs with someone go over and wash his feet. Is a brother not worth that?

POW! The last lesson—verbally, and visually of Jesus—was footwashing. It must have been crucial—it still may be.

(Signed) —Hodge

[NOTE: Has brother Hodge never been along those dusty roads where Jesus walked? I have—and I can easily understand why those disciples needed their feet washed. They were dirty!

None of the footwashing I've ever heard of on THIS side of the pond is for that same reason. Before anyone ever allows his feet to be washed "over here," first he scrubs his own feet so clean they almost bleed. No connection. IYR Jr]

SHALL WE APPLAUD IN WORSHIP?

Regarding such innovations as instrumental music, infant baptism, and the like, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., wrote:

"It is an unquestionable fact of history that all these things originated with man, and not with God. Man chose to follow his own will and to make the service of God, in large measure, an external show for the entertainment of the people.

"Before the close of the fourth century, Mosheim informs us, 'The public prayers had now lost much of that solemn and majestic simplicity that characterized them in the primitive times, and which were, at present, degenerating into a vain and swelling bombast.' Vol. I, p. 304.

"During the same century, alluding to departures from the mutual exhortation taught in the New Testament, Fisher says: 'The sermon in the fourth century became more rhetorical. Its brilliant thoughts or witty expressions were sometimes received with loud applause.' Church Hist., p. 120.

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"And, to show the progress which will-worship had made by the sixteenth century, Mosheim says: 'The public worship of the Deity was no more than a pompous round of external ceremonies, the greatest part of which were insignificant and senseless, and much more adapted to dazzle the eyes than to touch the heart.' Vol. III, p. 22.

"Such is man's tendency to follow his own will instead of the will of God."

—East Main Informer

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LECTURESHIP

(June 16-19, 1996)

This Year's Subject:

Isaiah Vol. 2

J. D. Tant—Texas Preacher

Kevin Cauley

I have just finished reading one of the most delightful books that I have ever read. It is entitled, *J. D. Tant—Texas Preacher*. I am sure that many of the brethren have read this book, and I would encourage more to read it. As a young gospel preacher, I found it particularly encouraging because in this biography we have an example of a man who confirmed in his life the very principles to which we have committed ourselves as gospel preachers. In this book, brother Tant stands as an everlasting example to preachers everywhere as to what a gospel preacher should be. Let us briefly look at how this man followed the Lord in his life. Then let us follow his example as he followed Christ.

J. D. Tant is an example of what a gospel preacher should be in being *honest*. When J. D. Tant first started preaching, he was a Methodist preacher. One day, a "Campbellite" preacher came to town and Tant went to hear this man. He was convinced that Methodist doctrine was wrong and he became a Christian. He had been immersed with Methodist "baptism" and was told that if he was satisfied with his "baptism" then he would not have to be "baptized" again. A few years later, J. D. Tant came in contact with a man who taught that *sectarian* "baptism" was not New Testament baptism even if it was done in the form of immersion. Being convinced that his "baptism" was valid, Tant engaged this man in a debate. Tant "licked" his opponent. However, his opponent came back with new rebuttals. In the *second* debate, Tant was forced to see the necessity of being immersed with the *knowledge* that immersion was *for the remission of sins*. Although he was not baptized by the man with whom he debated, he sought out another gospel preacher and was scripturally baptized. Truly he is an example to the gospel preacher on being an honest man.

HE PREACHED WHEREVER HE COULD

J. D. Tant is an example of what a gospel preacher should be in *preaching* the gospel. He went everywhere he could to preach. When he first started preaching, he would simply go to people's homes and preach to them right in their own houses. Soon, a church of Christ was established and he would go to another place to preach once more.

In his day, they had what were called "protracted gospel meetings." They would meet every day for seven hours a day for a

period of three to four weeks. This is what they called a gospel meeting

(This embarrasses me when I think of the series of sermons we style "gospel meetings" today. It is no wonder that the church grew during that time, and it is no wonder that we are not growing today. The people *wanted* to hear gospel preaching and were willing to devote *large amounts of time* to hear and study the gospel message. Would to God that we get back to real gospel meetings instead of this Friday to Sunday nonsense!)

Brother Tant was not ashamed to preach the gospel anywhere he could. If there was a church in the town, then he would go there and ask to use the building to preach a gospel meeting. If there was no church, then he would go to the "digressives" (Christian Church) and ask to use their building to hold a gospel meeting. If there were only denominations, then he would go and ask to use one of *their* buildings to preach the gospel. If all three of these were not present, or did not allow him to use their buildings, then he would go to the courthouse and hold a gospel meeting there.

He did not stop until he found a place to preach the gospel. When he left, he usually left a small congregation. Often times, he left a fairly large congregation with a meeting house which, more than likely, he helped build. At the end of his life he had baptized over 8000 people and had trained more than 100 gospel preachers. Truly he was a great example in preaching.

TANT CONTENDED FOR THE FAITH

J. D. Tant was an example in *contending*, "... earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). When he *did* preach in Christian Church houses, he made it plain that he was *opposed* to the mechanical instrument of music and to the *missionary society*. When he preached to Methodists and Baptists, he made it plain that these people had to come out of Methodist and Baptist doctrine to be saved.

Very often, the Methodists and/or the Baptists would realize what was happening

and challenge him for a debate. He was more than happy to comply, stating that he would "affirm anything they would deny and deny anything they would affirm." Often times he did not even worry about signing a proposition until he arrived at the debate location knowing that he was going to oppose error and defend the truth.

Not only did he debate the denominations, but he also debated his own brethren in regards to the question of whether a person *must know* that he is being baptized for the remission of sins when he is baptized. He affirmed that a person *must know* this and was instrumental in convicting many brethren of this truth.

He also was militant in his writing. He would not hesitate to write in the *Firm Foundation*, or the *Gospel Advocate* who, where, and what he had condemned through the power of the gospel.

Toward the end of his life, many churches asked him to come and straighten out congregational problems that had arisen. He would not hesitate to mount the pulpit and call all names of individuals and tell the sin in which they were involved. At the end of his articles, in which he would report these things, he would write, "Don't forget, brethren, we are drifting." Had he lived to see today, no doubt he would have written, "Brethren, we have drifted." J. D. Tant was an example in contending earnestly for the faith.

There are many other things in which J. D. Tant is a good example for gospel preachers. He was an example in bravery, sincerity, charity, loyalty, sacrifice, humor, and many more wonderful Christian virtues. We would do well to buy this book; read it; learn from this man's life, and follow him as he followed Christ.

—202 East Oak Knoll Circle
Apartment 232J
Lewisville, Texas 75067-8850

[NOTE: Any wishing to order *J. D. Tant—Texas Preacher* may send \$23.95 plus \$2.40 for packaging and postage together with your order to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118. IYRJR.]



1995—Third Annual

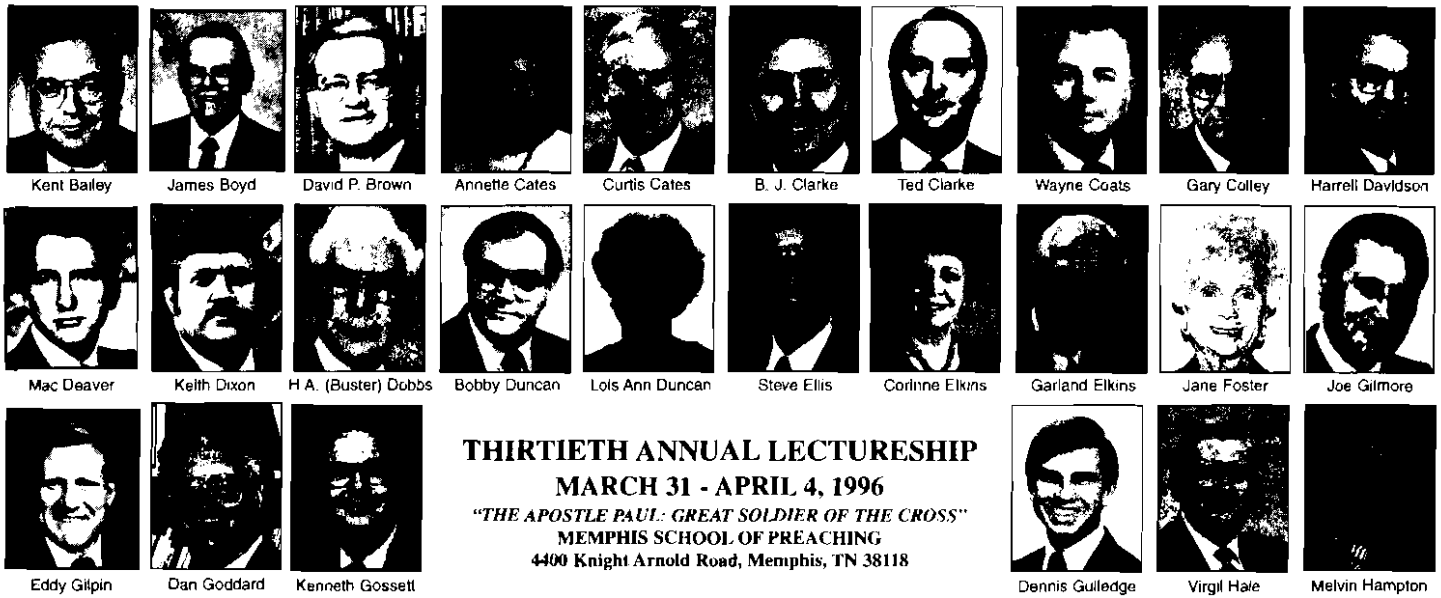
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THIRTIETH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
MARCH 31 - APRIL 4, 1996
"THE APOSTLE PAUL: GREAT SOLDIER OF THE CROSS"
MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING
 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118

SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 1996

9:30-10:20 A.M. "Birth, Early Life, Education, and Early Career of Saul of Tarsus" Eddie Whitten
 10:30-11:30 A.M. "Saul a Prominent Pharisee and Persistent Persecutor" Steve Ellis
 6:00 - 7:00 P.M. "Conversion of Saul—Great Evidence for Inspiration" Garland Elkins

MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1996

9:00 - 9:50 A.M. "First Missionary Journey" Glenn Hitchcock
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Paul—Defender of the Faith" Thomas B. Warren
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Wives, Be in Submission to Your Husbands" (Women's Class) Corinne Elkins
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Paul's View of the Nature of Man" David Brown
 Class 1: "Paul's View of Truth and Inspiration" Gerald Reynolds
 Class 2: "A Study of the Apostleship—and Paul" Jessie Powell
 Class 3: "Paul and the Gospel Plan of Salvation" Eddy Gilpin
 Class 4: "The Work Ethic in Paul's Writings" Jerry Jacobs
 11:50 - 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. "Lessons from Paul on Morality" Gary Colley
 1:10 - 7:00 P.M. Class 1: "Paul in Athens: Discourse on the Living God" Dan Jones
 Class 2: "Paul's View of the Christ and of the Cross" Ted Clarke
 Class 3: "Salute Prisca and Aquila My Fellow-Workers" (Women's Class) Irene Taylor
 "Paul's Teaching on Benevolence and Church Cooperation" Bobby Duncan
 2:10 - 3:00 P.M. "Open Forum" Garland Elkins
 3:10 - 4:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
 4:00 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:00 - 7:30 P.M. "Great Example in Prayer and Trust" H. A. "Buster" Dobbs
 7:30 - 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1996

9:00 - 9:50 A.M. "Second Missionary Journey" Kenneth Gossett
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Paul—Defender of the Faith" Thomas B. Warren
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Phoebus: A Servant of the Church" (Women's Class) Zelma McDaniel
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Paul's View of the Law of Moses and Judicialism" Virgil Hale
 Class 1: "Dealing with False Teachers in Paul's Writings" James Boyd
 Class 2: "Paul's Teaching on Church Organization" Kent Bailey
 Class 3: "Paul and the Name 'Christian'" Joel Wheeler
 Class 4: "Authority in Paul's Writings" Waymon Swain
 11:50 - 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. "Lessons from Paul on Preaching" Harrell Davidson
 Class 1: "Before Felix: Reasoning on Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment" Melvin Hampton
 Class 2: "Paul's View of Christ's Second Coming, Judgment" W. D. Jeffcoat
 Class 3: "Euodia and Syntyche, Be of the Same Mind to the Lord" (Women's Class) Vada Rice
 2:10 - 3:00 P.M. "A Study of Election and Apostasy in Paul's Writings" Dub McClish
PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS SEMINAR Rosanne Hayes
 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. "Great Example in Evangelism and Love" Tom Holland

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 1996

9:00 - 9:50 A.M. "Third Missionary Journey" Jim Laws
 10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "Paul—Defender of the Faith" Thomas B. Warren
 10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "Women: Adorned in Modesty and Humility" (Women's Class) Lois Duncan
 11:00 - 11:50 A.M. "Paul's View of 'Ugly and Diversity' vs True Ugly" Curtis A. Cates
 11:00 - 11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Paul's View of Grace, Law, Faith, Works, Love" B. J. Clarke
 Class 2: "Paul's Teaching on the Role of Women [A Male Chauvinist?]" Paul Sain
 Class 3: "Paul and the Seven Unities of the Spirit" Jessie Powell
 Class 4: "Paul's View of Sin and its Consequences" Kelth Dixon
 11:50 - 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. "Lessons from Paul on Encouraging Young Preachers" Flavil Nichols
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Paul Before Agrippa: A Christian Soldier Just Like Paul" Roger Jackson
 Class 2: "Paul's View of Worship: Singing, The Lord's Supper" Dan Goddard
 Class 3: "Women: Grave, Not Slenderer, Temperate, Faithful" (Women's Class) Lavonne McClish
 Class 4: "A Study of the 'Gospel' vs 'Doctrine' Heresy" Wayne Coats
 2:10 - 3:00 P.M. "Open Forum" Garland Elkins
 3:10 - 4:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
 4:00 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:30 - 8:30 P.M. "Great Example in Encouragement and Endurance" Kenneth Randolph

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1996

9:00 - 9:50 P.M. "Journey to Rome: Prisoner to Rome: Before Nero" Edwin Jones
 10:00 - 10:50 P.M. "Women: Helpers in Christ Jesus in Molding Morality" (Women's Class) Annette Cates
 10:00 - 10:50 P.M. "Paul—Defender of the Faith" Thomas B. Warren
 11:00 - 11:50 P.M. "Paul's View of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" Joe Gilmore
 11:00 - 11:50 P.M. Class 1: "Paul's View of Change Agents and Restructuring the Church" David B. Jones
 Class 2: "Paul's Teaching on Miracles and Spiritual Gifts" M. L. Sexton
 Class 3: "Paul and Financial Support of Gospel Preachers" Dennis Gullede
 Class 4: "Hope in Paul's Writings" Robert Rawson
 11:50 - 1:10 P.M. LUNCH
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. "Lessons from Paul on Fellowship" Lindell Mitchell
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Paul and Philomena: A Study in Human Relations" Toney L. Smith
 Class 2: "Paul's View of Worship: Teaching, Giving" Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
 Class 3: "Honor Widows: Widows as Special Servants" (Women's Class) Jane Foster
 Class 4: "A Study of the Bodily Resurrection in Paul's Writings" Mac Deaver
 2:10 - 3:00 P.M. "Open Forum" Garland Elkins
 3:10 - 4:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
 4:00 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:00 - 7:30 P.M. "The Old Soldier's Farewell" Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
 7:30 - 8:30 P.M.

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WILL GREAT LAKES CHRISTIAN COLLEGE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT FALSE TEACHERS?

Tyler Young

Brethren in the New York and Ontario, Canada areas are familiar with **Great Lakes Christian College** in Beamsville, Ontario. In years gone by this school has done a great deal to provide many young people with solid Christian education. The good which the brethren there have done in the past for the cause of Christ should be appreciated. Unfortunately, just as many other churches and schools in our brotherhood have forsaken the Old Paths, so GLCC has been moving down a course which is taking them away from the truth of God.

Those who have been supporting GLCC need to be aware of the fact that in recent years the school's board and administration have done great harm to the Lord's cause by repeatedly supporting false teachers who are dividing and destroying the body of Christ. Rather than marking and turning away from heretics in the church, GLCC has gladly and repeatedly received and supported them, and therefore has been a partaker in their evil deeds (Romans 16:17; II John 9-11). The evidence to support this charge is too overwhelming to be ignored.

FALSE TEACHERS INVITED

For example, several years ago **Rubel Shelly** was invited to speak at GLCC. Brother Shelly is one of the most influential and notorious false teachers in the brotherhood. He openly fellowships with denominational churches and encourages others to do the same. Faithful brethren have documented and exposed his false doctrine. It is hardly possible that the brethren at GLCC would be unaware of the views of one who has for so long been so outspoken in his advocacy of soul-damning error. Because we love them, our hope and prayer is that they will repent of welcoming and providing a platform for a brother who has been dividing the body of Christ with his heresy.

In 1993, **Great Lakes Bible College** (an adjunct of GLCC which operates in connection with the school) hosted a performance of the popular singing group **Acappella** at the Buffalo Christian Center. Acappella is also well known for its support of denominations such as the Christian Church and Baptist Church, and regularly appears on programs with false teachers such as **Jeff Walling**. Brother Walling, like

brother Shelly, is on record as teaching that there are faithful Christians in all the various denominations and that instrumental music in worship is acceptable to God. By supporting denominations and false brethren, Acappella is violating the law of Christ (Romans 16:17; II John 9-11; Ephesians 5:11), and thus, Great Lakes Bible College welcomed brethren with a well-established reputation of supporting error and dividing the church and from whom the scriptures teach we are to turn away.

That same year GLCC had **Steve Flatt** come for their lectureship. While there he spoke to the students in GLCC as well. Brother Flatt is the preacher for the Madison church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee. Madison is infamous for its support of false teachers such as **Rubel Shelly, Rick Atchley, Max Lucado, Lynn Anderson, Mike Cope**, and many others through its sponsorship of "Jubilee." Like others whom GLCC has supported in recent years, Flatt is a high-profile figure in the church whose persistent promotion of error has long been a matter of public record. One of our elders, a former board member of GLCC, and I personally and kindly confronted Flatt at the lectureship. We voiced our objections to the school's board and the lectureship director.

WARNINGS TO NO AVAIL

In fact, for some time now concerned brethren have expressed objections to leading members of the school's administration over the use of these brethren. Evidence has been brought to their attention to verify that the brethren they have been participating with are leading souls astray and that faithfulness to God's truth demands they cease fellowshiping them. Apparently all warnings and pleadings have been to no avail, for more recently GLCC continued its support of false doctrine by bringing in **Thomas Olbricht of Pepperdine University**. Brother Olbricht was the instructor for GLCC Spring Seminar in early May, 1995.

As far back as the 1960's Olbricht's views have been published in the *Restoration Quarterly* and the now defunct *Mission Magazine*. He is part of what has been termed "the Scholarship Movement" and has spoken for and directed the so-called "Christian Scholars Conference." These

conferences have served as a platform for brother Olbricht and fellow self-appointed "scholars" such as **Gary Collier, Mike Casey, and Alan J. McNicol**. They serve to promote the unscriptural philosophies which are the basis for the "New Hermeneutic" movement which has been plaguing the church for years. It is no secret that these "scholars" have been teaching we must reject the concept that the New Testament is a pattern for the church and find a "new" approach for interpreting scripture. In fact, brother Olbricht was invited to speak at the GLCC seminar on—of all things—*hermeneutics!*

Informed brethren have been aware of the views of brother Olbricht and the alleged "scholars" of his type for years. Those who may not have known of brother Olbricht's teachings before needed only to attend his seminar at GLCC to learn of his lack of respect for God's truth. I personally attended most of the seminar, and obtained tapes from sessions delivered when I was not present. I listened carefully to the tapes and scrutinized the hand-outs. By the end of the program, I had taken over 35 pages of hand-written notes, thoroughly documenting what brother Olbricht said. Further, I asked several questions during the Question/Answer sessions. I note this because brother Olbricht often complained of being misrepresented. There is no misrepresentation here.

OLBRICHT'S CHARGES WRONG

As these "scholars" have been doing, Olbricht discussed at the GLCC seminar the alleged problems with the way the Bible has been viewed in the churches of Christ. He distributed and reviewed a good deal of his own material from *Restoration Quarterly* and an outline titled, "The Need to Restore Our Biblical Identity." Throughout the program he repeatedly made baseless charges and misrepresentations typical of the "New Hermeneutikers."

For example, he stated, "Our way of looking at scripture as fact and regulation has caused us to miss God at the center of the scripture;" a ridiculous allegation for which he gave no proof because there is none. This idea that we, like the Pharisees, have supposedly been so caught-up in binding commands that we have missed the

story of Jesus is pure foolishness. He went on to conclude, "The Bible therefore is not a book of facts and regulations." It is incredible that he finds fault with looking at the scripture as fact and regulation. Is the Bible *fact or fiction*? Is the word of God not composed of regulation/commands to be followed? (John 14:15; I Corinthians 14:37) He further claimed, "We have had a rule of thumb in some corners of our movement which says every verse is of equal importance," and thus charges that "the flat view of scripture is endemic to our model." This charge is simply false. *Which* brethren have said that every passage or every command in scripture is of equal importance? *Faithful* brethren were upholding the necessity of keeping both the "weightier" and "lesser" matters of God's law (Matthew 23:23) long before Olbricht and his self-styled "scholars" came along. It is regrettable that GLBC had him come all the way from California to repeat his unfounded charges that "our movement" has majored in minors and missed God at the heart of scripture.

Just what exactly is "our movement" anyway? Why is it that Olbricht and his fellows seldom, if ever, speak of the "the Lord's church" or "the church"? Are we in the churches of Christ the one, exclusive New Testament church which Christ built—or just a "movement"? Faithful Christians are members of THE church—not a movement. Yet this simple truth is considered too exclusive and arrogant by many in Olbricht's liberal camp.

ASSERTIONS WITHOUT FOUNDATION

One of the more serious charges Olbricht made in the seminar is that conservative brethren have neglected to emphasize Christ and the Sermon on the Mount. In material he distributed he said, "Neither Campbell nor Scott concerned himself much with the word and work of the earthly Jesus. Nor have preachers in the Churches of Christ since." He asserted that some brethren are preoccupied with applying rules of logic to scripture and said, "Maybe these guys need all this logic to sweep under the rug these things [in the Sermon on the Mount] they don't want to deal with." He went on to say, "We take the writings of Paul, but not the sayings of Jesus....Can you really decide we can push aside the commands from the Sermon on the Mount and only be concerned with the question of marriage and divorce and the matter of instrumental music. Are those the only commands we need to take a look at?"

Let it be noted first that Olbricht thinks some have focused on marriage and divorce to the neglect of the Sermon on the Mount, when the truth is *marriage and*

divorce are included in the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:32)! Second, his complaint that the words of Jesus have not been stressed is utterly false. Neither Olbricht nor any of his fellow "scholars" can substantiate the charge that we have neglected the words of Christ. Third, what makes him think that those concerned about marriage and divorce and instrumental music have not been concerned about the person and work of Christ? How is it he thinks he knows brethren have thought such issues are "the only commands we need to take a look at"? Does he, like God, "**know the hearts of all men**" (Acts 1:24)? He has misrepresented brethren concerned with instrumental music as caring about *nothing else* in the Bible.

For example, in one Q/A session I asked him his view on instrumental music; later I listened to a tape from a session when I was absent and Olbricht told the audience that the one who had asked about instrumental music [I was the one] was only concerned with that issue and nothing else. Just how did he come to that conclusion from a simple question I had asked him? Showing concern for one issue does not imply there is no concern for any other. Considering all of his complaining about being misrepresented we say with Paul, "**wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practice the same things**" (Romans 2:1). Liberals never seem to have a problem reserving for themselves the right to do what they falsely charge us with doing!

IS CORRECT REASONING NECESSARY?

Again brother Olbricht professed that the way brethren have traditionally understood the Bible focuses on "the rules of logic rather than on the Godhead" and that "the focus is logic, not God." What brother has ever focused on logic merely for logic's sake? Correct reasoning has been stressed as the necessary tool to understanding God's revealed will, and to say that some have focused on logic as opposed to God is simply another misrepresentation. Such a charge merely serves as a basis for emphasizing his subjective approach to scripture.

The views Olbricht taught in the seminar for interpreting the Bible are no different than **Bill Love's** "Core Gospel" concept that we need to focus on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as the only thing really essential to the faith. Like **James Woodruff** in *The Church in Transition* and **C. Leonard Allen** in *The Cruciform Church*, the basic view he presented is that every issue in the Bible is to be measured by how much it relates to the love of God as demonstrated in Jesus. This pro-

vides a conveniently subjective approach to the Bible: do not look at the Bible as facts and commands to be understood by logic, but just view everything in the light of Christ—whatever that means! If something (like instrumental music or marriage and divorce) is perceived as not having much to do with the "core gospel" message of Christ crucified, then it really is not crucial. The concepts Olbricht and his fellow "scholars" have been teaching boil down to little more than the denominational idea that all that matters is belief in Jesus.

DOES TRUTH REALLY MATTER?

One of the key themes of Olbricht's GLBC seminar was "Unity-In-Diversity." Each night he discussed voices in the church coming from those on what he called the right, the left, and the "broad middle." He referred to a number of well known, sound brethren such as **Thomas Warren**, **Buster Dobbs**, **Roy Deaver**, and false teachers like **Max Lucado**, **Rubel Shelly**, and **Lynn Anderson**. Next he mentioned issues including the biblical account of creation, authority of elders, baptism, worship, the role of women, marriage and divorce, and even the Boston/International Churches of Christ cult. Then he appealed to Romans 14 and Philippians 2 to suggest that we need not oppose any of the different viewpoints in the church but simply agree to disagree. He said we must be willing to "share life together even though we interpret things differently" and added, "The church has a lot of different points of view, and we're not to put out those who disagree or differ with us." If this is always true, we are made to wonder why Paul wanted to "put out" those who practiced sin or taught error (I Corinthians 5:1ff; Galatians 1:6-9; 2:4-5; 5:12; et al).

The truth of the matter is that whether or not we "put out" or turn away from those who disagree or differ with us depends on just what matters over which we disagree. However, in Olbricht's view, it appears that either no one is wrong and everyone is right, or if everyone is wrong it does not matter. In contrast to Olbricht, the scriptures teach that those who are not abiding in the truth must be marked and avoided (Romans 16:17). If we are abiding in the truth, and others differ with us on some essential matter of doctrine, then there must be division (I Corinthians 11:19). Fellowship with those who are not abiding in the truth is sin (II John 9-11; Ephesians 5:11). Olbricht's promotion of "Unity-In-Diversity" or "fellowshipping-despite-our-differences" is damnable heresy.

Further, after referring to **James D. Bales'** teaching that only those in the church are subject to God's laws on divorce

and remarriage in Matthew 19:9, brother Olbricht was asked during the Question/Answer session if brother Bales was a false teacher for holding such a view. What was his response? He tried to dismiss the matter by saying, "I'm not bright enough to tell...." Is it not strange that *Dr. Olbricht* proposes to educate us on the intricacies of hermeneutics, yet claims he is just too stupid to "prove the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1)? Of course the problem is not *intelligence*, but *respect for the truth*. Such a side-stepping of the question might appear to be a mark of humility to some, but in reality it is little more than a lack of conviction for the truth. Of the question on brother Bales he added, "No one comes up all the way, we're all just saved by the grace of God." Does the grace of God or the fallibility of man mean no one can be judged as a false teacher? Olbricht seems to think so. The apostle Peter says he is wrong (II Peter 2:1ff).

At one point, he actually affirmed that the apostles did not discipline false teachers, and therefore we are not to oppose

those who teach and practice error but, tolerate and receive them. How anyone could read the New Testament and reach the conclusion that the apostles did not discipline false teachers is remarkable. It must be that either Olbricht has never read passages like Romans 16:17 and Galatians 2:4-5, or he thinks we can simply ignore them.

WHO IS RIGHT—OLBRICHT OR GOD?

When asked about his view of denominations, his comments about those who have never been immersed were quite revealing: "*If God wants to save them that's his privilege.... It is not my privilege to tell them for certain that God will condemn them.... Who are we to rule out that God can make exceptions to his law?*" He thus plainly indicated that we could not say for certain that baptism is absolutely essential to salvation for *everyone*. Brother Olbricht does not even believe Mark 16:16 or Acts 2:38! Did God tell the truth when he said that "those who obey NOT the gospel" will be punished eternally (II Thessalonians. 1:7-9; John 12:48)? According to Olbricht we cannot know if God is really going to keep his word or not —after all,

he may just make exceptions! The Bible says God cannot lie and his word can be trusted (Titus 1:2). Brother Olbricht says otherwise.

It is tragic that GLCC and GLBC would invite a false teacher such as brother Olbricht to come to their facility, invite brethren to hear him, allow him to teach contrary to the word of God, and then praise him for it. This is exactly what they did. Faithful brethren cannot continue to support schools which are welcoming and holding up the hands of those who, like brother Olbricht, are denying God's truth and leading souls to eternal damnation. Those in the Northeast need to be informed of these matters and urge GLCC to stop promoting error and division. In prayer we are watching, waiting, and hoping for fruits of repentance to be brought forth. We plead with the brethren who oversee the work there to cease partaking in the evil deeds of these false teachers. In love we beseech them to be faithful to God's word that we might stand with them and work together to further the cause of Christ.

9003 Brookside Avenue
Niagara Falls, New York 14304

Theological Doubletalk

B. J. Clarke

The word "doubletalk" is defined by Webster as meaning "a language that appears to be earnest and meaningful but in fact is a mixture of sense and nonsense: inflated, involved and often deliberately ambiguous language."

There is a growing tendency among prominent preachers among us to engage in theological doubletalk. When questioned about a statement that they made in an article or public speech, these brethren reply in evasive terms and employ deliberately ambiguous language to avoid being "pinned down" with a certain position and its attendant consequences. When a request is made for further clarification about something that they have said or written, these brethren often will reply in some coy or sarcastic manner in an attempt to cloud the issue and to avoid accountability for the implications of their statements. Some refuse to reply at all and state that they will simply not discuss previously written or recorded statements.

This makes one wonder what these brethren are trying to hide. Why won't some brethren just be honest and lay their cards on the table for all the brotherhood to see?

It is time to quit playing "word games" and engaging in semantic gymnastics. Such tactics bring real meaning to the Lord's warning that false teachers would manifest themselves in sheep's clothing to hide what they really are (Matthew 7:15). It is time for plain talk! It is time to eliminate confusing ambiguities from our writings and

sermons! It is time to read from the book of the law of God distinctly, to give the sense and to cause our hearers or readers to understand (Nehemiah 8:8; Ephesians 3:3-5). It is time to make our message so plain that he may run that readeth it (Habakkuk 2:2).

An anxious and concerned brotherhood is trying to sort out the bewildering and confusing messages that are being promoted by preachers of the day. We must not further "muddy the waters" by not being forthright about where we stand on the problems that face the church today. Let us speak forth loudly, clearly, certainly and lovingly.

Remember that a doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8). Let us eliminate theological doubletalk from our pulpits, papers and conversations. Our lost and dying world needs a clear, distinct and certain message. Will we proclaim it?

—Church Bulletin
Marlow, Oklahoma

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15th Annual Southwest Lectures

April 14-17, 1996

"Precious Bible, Book Divine"

Saturday, April 13 Youth Day John Moore

Sunday, April 14

9:30 a.m. Precious Bible – Its Origin and Mission (Bible Study) Perry Cotham
 10:30 a.m. Precious Bible – The Importance of Study Gary Colley
 2:00 p.m. *Area-wide singing*
 6:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for the Pattern H. A. (Buster) Dobbs
 7:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Christian Education Joseph D. Meador

Monday, April 15

9:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for the Holy Spirit's Operation Tom Bright
 10:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Repentance Joe Cox
 Ladies: On the Road to Evangelism Cindy Colley
 11:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Confessing Christ Dave Rogers
 1:30 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching the Necessity of Baptism Glenn Colley
 2:30 p.m. Discussion Forum Bright/Dobbs
 6:15 p.m. *Singing*
 7:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Faith Jerry Moffitt
 8:00 p.m. Precious Bible – Inspired, Inerrant, Infallible Johnny Ramsey

Tuesday, April 16

9:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Christian Living Bill Lockwood
 10:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Good Works Dub McClish
 Ladies: The Great Divide Cindy Colley
 11:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About Worship Bob Patterson
 1:30 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About the Church Paul Sain
 2:30 p.m. Discussion Forum Lockwood/Cates
 4:00 p.m. *SWSBS Supporters Dinner*
 6:15 p.m. *Singing*
 7:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About Evangelism Curtis Cates
 8:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About Edification Glenn Colley

Wednesday, April 17

9:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for the Role of Men in Public Worship Bob Patterson
 10:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for the Role of Women in Public Worship Al Macias
 11:00 a.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About the Christian Home Tim Ayers
 1:30 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Our Mission in the World Curtis Cates
 2:30 p.m. Discussion Forum Cates/Lockwood
 6:15 p.m. *Singing*
 7:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Teaching About the Lord's Second Coming Bill Lockwood
 8:00 p.m. Precious Bible – All-sufficient for Judgment Paul Sain

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Now It Is Different!

Steve Miller

In the front cover of a little book my grandfather had written down "page 22." After turning to that page one very quickly sees an arrow pointing to the following paragraph.

It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism," and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, "baptism was the door into the church." Now it is different;...

This quotation is taken from the 1946 edition of *The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches*, authored by **Edward T. Hiscox**.

My grandfather used this quotation, along with various others in his sermons, to expose the denominations and their unscriptural practices. In those days it was common practice for gospel preachers and men like my grandfather, who filled the pulpit from time to time, to fulfill Paul's advice to Timothy to **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine"** (II Timothy 4:2).

Besides preaching the gospel when it is wanted and when it is not, preachers are told to reprove. To "reprove" means to expose error. Jesus warned in Matthew 16 to "beware" of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Paul also warned to **"mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them"** (Romans 16:17). In exposing error, we still have scripture to support it even though many brethren have given in to the false belief that "now it is different."

ARE WE "JUST ANOTHER DENOMINATION?"

Another area in which many brethren are saying "now it is different" is the uniqueness of the church. A quote that is heard too often among members of the church is "the church of Christ is just another denomination." The denominational world has been saying this all along, but is it really true?

The scriptures still reveal that Jesus established ONE CHURCH (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4). Christ himself is the head, the founder, and the savior of the body, which is the church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23).

Since Jesus established one church—and that is the only one we read about in the New Testament—then it is safe to declare that the church of Christ is NOT a denomination. Obeying the gospel plan of salvation still puts us *into Christ* (Galatians 3:27) as well as *into his church* (Acts 2:47).

The church is commanded to go into all the world and spread the pure, unadulterated, simple gospel of Jesus Christ to every creature among all nations (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 19:10). A host of brethren today look at this command and say "now it is different."

In order to try to make the church like the denominations, some have arisen among us speaking perverse things and have started programs with guest speakers who by their **"good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple"** (Romans 16:18).

Here are some examples:

"There are sincere, knowledgeable, and devout Christians scattered among the different denominations..."

"It is a scandalous and outrageous lie to teach that salvation arises from human activity. We do not contribute one whit to our salvation."

"We should put aside doctrinal differences and behave like porcupines in November, warming up to each other even if it hurts."

"I have no problem with women serving as elders today. Our hope is for how much fellowship we can have while we differ over that issue."

"I see in the future joint services and mergers which will be acappella-non-instrumental. I see some churches having both instrumental and non-instrumental services."

SOUNDS AND SIGNS OF APOSTASY

This is just a taste of the sectarian false teaching that is coming out of the mouths of some of our compromising brethren. Statements like these can be heard at some of the big gatherings our liberal promoters put on. From Boston to Tulsa to the sands of Malibu, sounds and signs of apostasy are continually flowing.

Who would ever have thought about the churches of Christ having a "jubilee" down in Nashville, Tennessee, complete with women teaching men, solos, compromising speeches, performed by some of our most famous false teachers? The march is on into Satan's field of error. I'm sure years ago that members of the church never dreamed that these practices would be sponsored by anyone in the church. *But now it is different*. Some would rather preach the doctrines of men than to preach the word of God.

Formerly members of the church of Christ were content to worship as God prescribed in the Bible. *But now it is different*. People want to be *entertained* today. Many would rather clap, stomp, and sing to a few songs, have a sermonette that would be accepted in any denomination, have a short Bible study, and get out in time to meet the noon deadline. Some would rather substitute their *own* singing with a *choir* or *solo*. Anything goes in some congregations.

The following scriptures reveal standards of true worship: John 4:24; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; I Corinthians 16:1-2; I Corinthians 11:23-29; and Acts 20:7. *We need not be different from the first century church.*

WHAT ABOUT "FAITH ONLY" OR "GRACE ONLY"?

Many faithful gospel preachers still preach and believe that a person must obey the gospel plan of salvation before he becomes a Christian. A disturbing number among us are now saying "it is different."

Salvation by grace only or saved by faith only is a common doctrine in the denominational world. This belief clearly overlooks what the Bible actually teaches about salvation. The Bible teaches we are saved **"by grace through faith."** But to say we are saved by one of these *alone* is teaching *contrary to what God has revealed*.

God has supplied his grace—and for us to get into that grace we have to go through his Son Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11). Paul says **"we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God"** (Romans 5:2). Developing a working faith in Jesus Christ gets us into God's grace. The Bible commands us to be *obedient* to God's will: **Believing** (Hebrews 11:6), **repenting** (Acts 3:19), **confessing Christ** (Romans 10:10) and **being baptized into Christ** (Galatians 3:27) are NOT works of merit but ARE requirements prescribed by God for man to get into God's grace (James 2:24-26). This is the Bible way to become a Christian. There is

only one way to become a member of the Lord's Church, and that is through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

Even though denominational creed books, manuals, catechisms, heretics, and preachers who no longer preach the gospel say that certain beliefs are *different*, God says they are *not* different. Though the majority may go into error and travel the broad way to hell, we still have divine commandment to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11) and do everything with a "thus saith the Lord" (Colossians 3:17. I'm beginning fully to realize what Jesus meant when he said "few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

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8:00 PM Salt and Light—Matthew 5:13-16 Billy Bland, Memphis, TN

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

- 9:00 AM Jesus and the Law of Moses—Matthew 5:17-20 Billy Bland, Memphis, TN
10:00 AM Oaths and Retaliation—Matthew 5:33-42 Garland Elkins, Memphis, TN
11:00 AM Lust and Divorce—Matthew 5:26-32 Robert Taylor, Ripley, TN
2:00 PM Reconciling Differences—Matthew 5:21-26 Allen Weakland, Mineral Springs, AR
3:00 PM Almsgiving and Fasting—Matthew 6:1-4, 16-18 Ted Clarke, Mammoth Springs, AR
7:00 PM Treasures of the Heart—Matthew 19-24 Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, TN
8:00 PM Judging—Matthew 7:1-6, 15-20 Keith Mosher, Sr., Memphis, TN

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

- 9:00 AM Love, The Golden Rule—Matthew 7:12; 5:43-48 Keith Mosher, Sr., Memphis, TN
10:00 AM First Things First—Matthew 6:25-34 Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, TN
2:00 PM Prayer—Matthew 6:5-15; 7:7-11 Garry Stanton, Camden, AR
3:00 PM Obey for There Is No Other Way—Matthew 7:13-14, 21-27 Kurt Nelson, Lincoln, AR

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THE POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY (II Peter 2:20-22)

Lawson Mayo

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

—II Peter 3:18

I. Brethren, the danger of apostasy is real!

- A. Apostasy is a falling away from God, turning from his way to try and direct our own steps, our own lives! **“It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps”** (Jeremiah 10:23).
- B. All we have to do is turn back to the first pages of the Bible for examples from the Old Testament. Apostasy is not new; it has been around a long time.
 1. Remember King Saul? When he disobeyed God and did not do what God had commanded, God told Samuel: **“...he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments”** (I Samuel 15:11). Later, Samuel confronted Saul with these words: **“Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice!”** (I Samuel 15:22). It is much better to do God’s will and be pleasing in his sight than to follow the dictates of one’s own conscience or the desire of the crowd. Saul’s defense: **“but the people...”** carried no weight; he was still accountable to God’s law. Turning away from God’s commands brings destruction.
 2. Amaziah (II Chronicles 25:14-27) was king of Judah and did battle with the Edomites and destroyed many of them. Then he took their gods and brought them with him to set them up before him to be his gods. The prophet of God asked **“why do you bow before gods of a people that you could defeat? Because you would not obey God you will be destroyed”** and in verse 27, following his fleeing to several places, it reads **“they sent after him and slew him.”** Apostasy, or turning away from God’s way is disobedience. Disobedience always brings destruction.
- C. Examples from the New Testament
 1. Hymenaeus and Alexander (I Timothy 1:20) are mentioned by Paul as two who were guilty of what he had just described: having made shipwreck of the faith. Note how he encourages Timothy to be faithful: **“Holding faith and a good conscience”**; and then mentions these two who had apostatized, had turned away from the faith, or as he expressed it, **“had made shipwreck”** or totally destroyed the vessel of faith in their lives. Leaving the faith devastated on a rocky reef is apostasy.
 2. Demas (II Timothy 4:10) turned back to the world through love of the world. This is a strong attraction for many, as we will notice in just a few moments. When put to the test, Demas made a choice based on what he wanted rather than what pleased God. This is apostasy!
 3. Galatians 5:4 expresses one of the saddest commentary thoughts about Christians that one can imagine. **“Christ is become of no effect unto you...you are fallen from grace.”** Christians who have lost the effectiveness of Christ in their lives! How can this be? What awful calamity could possibly sever this beautiful relationship between a Christian and his savior? Apostasy! The turning back to the old law rather than accepting the grace found in Christ. Paul marvels that the Galatians were so soon removed from the true gospel unto some false position, but they had!

II. What possible reasons could there possibly be for apostasy? What would cause a Christian today to turn away from grace, from forgiveness in Christ, from the hope of life eternal with God and wander lost and lone in the world?

- A. Persecution—Matthew 24:9, 10—in the earliest days of Christianity could well have been a problem for many in holding fast to the faith.
 1. Stonings, beatings, scourgings, and death came to the first followers of Christ who would not renounce their faith in him—and many *did* renounce him, but many more *held to their faith* in spite of the consequences they faced.
 2. Today’s Christian in most parts of the world does not have that horror to contend with. Perhaps some shunning, some slighting, some ridicule—but these are the most the church has to contend with in the present age. That which could have cost the life of an early day saint increased their faith; that which causes some embarrassment to a follower of Christ today often causes apostasy!
- B. False teachers are the most damaging force in creating apostasy that the church has ever known. They were actively working and hindering Paul’s work in early New Testament times (Galatians 1:6-9) and they are still diligently seeking to destroy the true identity of the Lord’s Church. The false teachers were foretold by Jesus in Matthew 24:9-11: **“...and many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”** How easily God’s people are led astray. It seems it only takes one or two things to cause whole congregations, or nearly whole generations of God’s people to turn from following the truth and step aside to false doctrine. Those two elements would be:
 1. A charismatic type preacher, one who sways people more to himself than to the Lord; one who leads men wherever he chooses they should go; and because he has made a “name” for himself, they believe whatever drivel he spouts forth.
 2. The second would be the desire to hear soft preaching: love, grace, happiness. No hatred of evil, no anguish over the lost: no heartache over the hundreds headed for hell—just love and joy and peace; and God’s grace will provide it all.
 3. I saw a cartoon picture with an old bearded man in a flowing robe standing in the middle of a children’s playground, surrounded by swings and slides and merry-go-rounds; and a voice in a cloud from above saying, “No, No, Noah, I said ‘ark’ not ‘park’.”
 - a. While the cartoon may be cute it is also sad, for this is what the church seems to want: a park and not an ark! a social meeting and not a saving message! a helping hand and not a healing word!

- b. Paul describes it: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and be turned to fables" (II Timothy 4:3, 4).

III. There are numerous other reasons for apostasy. Each has played a part in the breakdown of the separateness of the church from the world.

- A. Temptation to evil practices allures many. They are like the seed planted in rocky soil. They quickly grow and just as quickly wither (Luke 8:13).
1. Some refer to this as worldliness, and we must admit the pleasures of the world attract many away from Christ's pathway.
 2. Paul wrote Timothy and said "**Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world**" (II Timothy 4:10). No doubt this happens because they have a defective knowledge of Christ (I John 2:19). Thus they never were really "with us" in the first place.
- B. Moral lapse, turning back into the world after having come to a knowledge of the truth can also happen (Hebrews 6:4-6).
- C. Forsaking worship and spiritual living, described in Hebrews 10:25-31, gives another view of why people apostatize. It is a matter of losing touch with the body, as a coal slowly dies out when removed from the fire. Unbelief causes some to depart from the living God (Hebrews 3:12).
- D. If there is one common factor, a common denominator in this whole list, it is the fact that those who depart lose touch with the body and have not maintained spiritual growth—they have tried to find a spot and settle there, but that cannot work! The lack of continued growth in knowledge allows them to wither and die. The swift flowing stream remains clear and clean; and the pool at the side is still and stagnant!
- E. Some years back, an article carried these *Steps to Apostasy*.
- Step 1—Success, growth, prosperity.
Men and institutions are more easily destroyed by wealth, power, prominence, and prestige than by poverty. We've gone from the fastest growing religious body in the world to zero growth in one generation!
- Step 2—Degree mania, sectarian schools.
Our schools have become saturated with men trained at the feet of liberal sectarians, and we reap the sad cycle of it.
- Step 3—"Upgrading" brotherhood schools and accreditation.
Christian schools were established to teach the truth! In order to be like the world, accreditation was sought and again the cycle winds down, not up. **N. B. Hardeman** once said: "If I could start all over I would have a school in which only the Bible would be taught."
- Step 4—Acceptance of new versions of the Bible.
G. K. and Foy E. Wallace, Jr.; B. C. Goodpasture, Guy N. Woods, Roy J. Hearn, Robert Taylor and a host of other faithful brethren have been warning for nearly four decades that the acceptance of the new versions would destroy the church. When false doctrine is printed in the book as though it were scripture, then the work of Satan is done.
- Step 5—Domination of preachers and churches by colleges.
Nearly two decades ago, Foy E. Wallace, Jr. wrote: "Our attitude is not that of opposition to the colleges, but of apprehension for the increasing flow of liberalism and the menace of modernism which are already evident..." Brethren, we need to walk in the old paths, and not be looking for new trails to blaze!
- Step 6—Adoption of new versions "terminology."
"Uncertain sounds" are emanating from our pulpits, and the culprit is the terminology of the new versions which is confusing and misleading. It has been branded as "inaccurate and imprecise," "questionable and immature," "false, misleading and erroneous." It actually sounds like "another gospel!" and Paul said without stuttering, "There is no other gospel!" Listen to what they say. This was in a sermon in San Antonio earlier this year, in a large congregation, by its young minister: "We are maturing, we are coming to know what real grace is. Somewhere in the 60s we lost that concept, but now we've regained it and we're growing." By their speech ye shall know them!
- Step 7—Accommodation to the errors of the new versions.
When you use the book, accept the text, employ the language, then what can be expected but that you bring in the errors! How sad that many brethren simply refuse to "heed the warnings" and continue on in willful ignorance of the dangers they promote. I have a letter from **Dorsey Traw** in which he tells of a friend of his giving an evaluation of a large, fashionable congregation in Austin, Texas. They have three services on Sunday morning: the first for the old fogies—that's us, brethren! The next is for those who are rather charismatic in nature, while the third service is for those more progressive brethren who would use the instrument without much hesitation! This is the accommodation to the new hermeneutics which is just the same old sinful practice of centuries ago: when you leave the word of God there's nowhere else to go! Here is an invitation from the congregation nearest ours in Australia—nearest *geographically*, not *doctrinally*. It offers a 45 minute Bible class followed by an hour coffee/tea break and then worship. Talk about a *social* gospel!
- Step 8—Apostasy! This is what we label the result! Our thanks to brethren **John H. Renshaw** and **Ira Rice** for the eight steps of apostasy diagram.

IV. Our history of recent apostasies begins with the introduction of the use of instrumental music in worship.

This is simply a loss of respect for the authority of the scriptures. It makes us wonder whatever happened to "Thus saith the Lord"; whatever happened to "book, chapter and verse"; whatever happened to "the Bible teaches"? Where did we lose the concept of allowing the word of God to direct our lives and our worship?

- A. Two recent listings, from *The First and Second Annual Lectures of the Shenandoah Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas*; give the following departures from the truth. In the First Lecture, **Oran Rhodes** listed ten; and in the Second Lecture, **Goebel Music** listed a dozen. These include:
1. Attacks on the inspiration of the Bible.
 2. False view of the church.
 3. False view of marriage-divorce-remarriage.
 4. Theistic evolution and attacks on the eldership.
 5. Women being used in public services of the church.
 6. Increasing participation with denominations.
 - a. In joint meetings for "unity."
 - b. In worship services and training sessions.
 - c. In producing and providing Bible class material for the use of the church.
- B. These are just some of those they listed. Most can be listed under the heading—Loss of Respect for the Authority of the Bible.
- C. Brethren, these things are still happening! Listen to a portion of this letter inviting us to participate in the World Convention of Churches of Christ: "*As secretary of the Australian Committee World Conference of Churches of Christ, I write to you to invite you to be a part of our world wide communion of Restoration movement churches. We as a world wide fellowship of Churches of Christ hold a World Convention each four years. Our convention attendees comprise members from all streams of the Campbell Stone movement throughout the world. In the U. S. A. we have a Central Executive Committee on which we have members from Churches of Christ (ACappella), Christian Church (Disciples) and Christian Church (Independent). At present we have three members from the churches of Christ (ACappella) stream on our World Committee.*" A mistake? Not us? Accidental that we received a letter from this group? NO WAY! Listen on: "*Our newly appointed General Secretaries...have made a number of contacts with the ACappella churches in USA, and some of them are showing considerable interest in attending our next convention in...1996.*" These are some of "us" they're claiming!
- D. In the most recent Spiritual Sword Lectureship in the U. S. A., it was pointed out that "some congregations of the churches of Christ are beginning to use both men and women in the public worship services of the church. Some of the proposed plans of others have announced the future appointment of both male and female deacons. Others have said that by their way of thinking there would be nothing wrong with women serving as elders."
- E. Notice in these and in the other departures I've cited that there is *no reference to dangers from without* affecting the churches *as these within!* These that arise from within are those based on:
1. Encouragement to evil living given by false teachers within the body.
 2. Lack of faith or disbelief in the Lord's coming again, which also was spurred on by false teachers.
- F. Peter reminds his readers of these things so:
1. That the readers may believe, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, they should fall from their steadfastness;
 2. That they might grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Savior.

V. There is a terrible toll in apostasy.

- A. Peter describes the latter end as worse than the beginning.
1. Better never to have known Jesus
 2. Better never to have obeyed the gospel
 3. Better never to have named the name of Christ than to have obeyed and fallen away.
 - a. If you never knew the love of God, the comfort of Christians and the fellowship of the saints; then you won't miss it.
 - b. But when you have had it, then are deprived of it, you miss it.
 - c. It would be better never to have known it.
- B. Two illustrations in this passage are very graphic.
1. Each expresses a well known truth. They are as repulsive, as repugnant, as nauseous as anything could be. The dog returns to its own vomit. A true but disgusting practice. And how apt a description for one who rejects the truth and turns again to a false way.
 2. The sow returns to wallowing in the mire. No matter how clean she was, when she wallows in the mud, the filth of that clings to her.
 3. Look at Matthew 7:6 and compare the thought with this: "**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.**" Is it possible Peter had these words of Jesus in mind and thought of those who rejected the Lord and his salvation as the dogs and swine that would trample precious things underfoot and then turn against those who had provided them? Possibly!
- C. No matter how pure one was, when the purity of God's word is rejected, then the soul is stained with sin. To leave salvation means returning to eternal damnation.
1. The gospel is God's power to save.
 2. When the gospel is rejected, God's power is not available.
 3. If God's saving power is not available, one is lost!

VI. There is a way to avoid apostasy.

- A. Hold to the truth. "**But that which ye have already hold fast till I come**"; "**Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast...**" (Revelation 2:25; 3:3). Remember so that ye may be mindful of the principles, prophecies, and the truth that you had been taught before; and keeping it in mind, hold fast to it!
- B. Constantly compare your own life with the scriptures (II Corinthians 13:5).
- C. Be faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10).

STRANGE THINGS

The above is the title of a very timely article written by Dub McClish a few years back that I believe we should read very carefully. Not only read, but heed! There are indeed some "strange things" that we see from day to day, especially in the spiritual realm. In this article brother McClish deals with some of these things:

Once the Lord healed a man of palsy and the reaction of the bystanders was amazement as they said, "**We have seen strange things today**" (Luke 5:26). While the days of miracles are past, the days of "strange things" are still very much with us. Consider the following as some samples.

CHRISTIANS WHO DON'T KEEP THEIR PROMISES. Often when someone who has been negligent in his/her worship attendance is visited he/she will promise to be present next Sunday and to "do better." Many never do. Strange isn't it? It is bad enough to sin through neglect (James 4:17), but lying makes it even worse.

CHRISTIANS WHO "DROP OUT" AND START BACK AS IF NOTHING IS WRONG. Some forsake the assembly for years while they go fishing, hunting, work in the yard, watch TV and such like. If they decide to begin attending again they often will casually "slip" back in as if they had done no wrong. What a "strange thing" it would be if a man should leave his wife and after a few years suddenly show up for supper some evening, offering no explanation or apology! It is a sin to forsake the assemblies of God's people (Hebrews 10:25) and sin must be repented of and confessed to be forgiven (Luke 12:3, I John 1:9).

CHRISTIANS WHO FAITHFULLY ATTEND, STUDY THEIR BIBLES AND SERVE IN MANY WAYS, BUT DON'T GIVE GENEROUSLY. Truly, some people have "tunnel vision" when it comes to supporting the Lord's work with their money! What a "strange thing" that some are good Bible students and would even defend the truth against its enemies, but they have never applied the Lord's teaching on giving to themselves. They can buy houses, clothes, cars and even spend money foolishly, but they give little or nothing to the Lord. Strange indeed!

CHRISTIANS WHO ARE SO CAREFUL ABOUT THEIR BODIES, BUT CARELESS ABOUT THEIR SOULS. Many saints are meticulous in the care and feeding of their bodies. They exercise, they eat good food regularly, they wear attractive clothes, all of which is commendable. It surely is a "strange thing" to see the same people never engage in spiritual "exercises" (visiting, regular worship attendance, prayer, attending gospel meetings and lectureships, teaching their families, and such like). The same folk never take advantage of wholesome spiritual food regularly (daily Bible study). Further, the "clothing" of their daily behavior may be a shame and disgrace to the pure life a Christian is to live. The "inward man" should get our first attention and it is strange that any Christian would not see that (II Corinthians 4:16-18)!

—*Virgil L. Hale in The Beacon,
Birdwell's Chapel Church of Christ*

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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.

Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherley, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

• • • • •

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.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P. O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10, 11 AM, 5:30 PM, Wed.: 7:00 PM. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

• • • • •

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) 758-7406.

—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.

"Arrogance, Humility, and Truth"

Brock Hartwigen

When a person claims to know something as true he often is accused of being "arrogant." When a person says that he believes something to be true, but admits that he could be wrong, he often is called "humble." Is it arrogant to profess unquestionable knowledge of truth? Should a person always qualify his knowledge of truth with doubt?

A common conversation about truth often goes this way: Sam: "I know thus and thus to be true." Mark: "Could you be wrong?" Sam: "No, thus and thus is true." Mark: "Do humans sometimes make mistakes?" Sam: "Yes." Mark: "Are you human?" Sam: "Yes." Mark: "Then could you be mistaken about what you said was true?" Here is the supposed logical trap. If Sam denies that he is wrong, he appears to be contradicting himself and comes across as arrogant. If he admits that he could be wrong, then he comes across as humble.

Sometimes the conversation runs another way: Sam: "I know thus and thus to be true." Mark: "Could you be wrong?" Sam: "No, thus and thus is true." Mark: "Oh, so you are perfect and have never been wrong before?" Sam: "No, of course not, I've been wrong before." Mark: "Have you ever believed that you were right and later found out that you were wrong?" Sam: "Yes." Mark: "Then how can you be so sure that you are right this time?" Here again is the same supposed logical trap. If Sam denies that he is wrong, he appears to be denying what he just said and comes across as arrogant. If he admits that he could be wrong, then he comes across as humble.

ARE THESE ARGUMENTS SOUND?

These arguments about humility and arrogance appear at first glance to many to be sound, but in reality they are not. Yes, it is true that humans make mistakes, and no one is perfect. Yet, it is also true that we can know some things without the possibility of being wrong. I know that I am male. No, I cannot be wrong about it. I know that I am writing this article. No, I can't be wrong about it. You, the reader, know without a doubt what sex you are. Don't you? You know that you are reading this article. Could you be wrong about either of these facts?

When it comes to *religious facts*, Jesus said, "Ye shall **KNOW the TRUTH and the truth shall make you free**" (John 8:32). It is true that there are difficult passages in the Bible and Christians do not always agree about all of them. It is also true that there are difficult concepts that

Christians do not always agree on. Jesus said though, that we could "**KNOW the TRUTH**" that could "**make**" us "**free**." Understanding about what all the visions in Revelation represent is not needed to be "free." Fully understanding the concept of the Trinity, or what the thorn in Paul's side was, is not needed to make us "free."

We can "know" without any question or doubt "the truth" that will "make" us "free." We can "know" that no man can come unto the Father and be "free" except through Christ (John 14:6). We can "know" that no one can be "free" unless they believe (Mark 16:16). We can "know" that no one can be "free" unless he repents and is baptized (Acts 2:38). There are other facts that we need to "know" before we can be made "free" and Jesus promises that we can "know" them and be made "free."

It is not "arrogance" to say that you know truth when you are simply repeating the truth contained in God's word. It is not "humility" to say that when it comes to the truth contained in God's word that you could be wrong. No, just the opposite, it takes an arrogant person to say that no one can know the truth. Such a statement contradicts Jesus. Surely if anything is arrogant, it is believing that you know more than Jesus knew and that you are right and he was wrong. The humble man will accept the reality of what Jesus said and not contradict him.

Do you humbly know the truth, or do you arrogantly deny that it can be known?

—12521 Holly Springs New Hill Road
Apex, North Carolina 27502



Notes & Quotes...

Footwashing is not the *only* silliness coming out of Texas in recent years. Someone sent in something from the Brenham church's so-called "Family News", as follows:

MCMOMENTS

LAST WEEK the area-wide Youth Ministers met in Navasota to discuss renewing the "Sunday Night Live" program. This program was very successful last year, so we (the youth "guys") decided to change it to Saturday nights. The event will be called "Saturday Night House Party." The theme for this year's get togethers is "I Am..." ...ALSO, the Youth Ministers/Directors met last week. We discussed our goals to get some type of activity for after the Friday night football games. We came up with the name "Fifth Quarter." All youth are invited to participate in these "Fifth Quarter" functions. They start on Sept. 11th from 9:00 to midnight. The "Fifth Quarter" will be hosted by the First Baptist Church. It will be held at the house next door to the FBC (corner yellow house on N. Market).

FIFTH QUARTER SCHEDULE

- Sept. 25—First Methodist Church
- Oct. 6—(HERE) Church of Christ (hopefully at Community Ed. building. (*I will need adult volunteers who would like to help plan this with me.)
- Oct. 30—None—HOMECOMING
- Nov. 6—Christ Lutheran

We hope and pray these will be an alternative for those that want something to do after home games...

[NOTE: Is not Brenham, Texas a true church of our Lord? If so what are they doing interdenominationalizing with the Baptists, the Methodists and the Lutherans! It is not possible to believe, teach and practice non-denominational Christianity, as in the first century, and follow such a plan as proposed in the Brenham Bulletin. In Texas, especially, it appears to be much later than some think! [YR.J.]

Much appreciation to Sherrill S. Creamer, of Childress, Texas, for the generous contributions of \$50.00 and \$100.00 toward the costs of our "Special Mailings," which are having such strong effect in the cause of truth in many areas.

Adron Doran, 111 Woodland, Lexington, Kentucky 40502 let us know that the Gospel Advocate had reprinted 500 copies of **The Christian Scholar**. These can be obtained at \$15.00 per copy (plus \$1.25 postage) from his above address or from **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH** at 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118.

Manuel K. Pelayo, Manila, Philippines: "Can you spare some more copies of **Contending for the Faith** and **Far East Newsletter** for distribution to the members of the Makati Central church and even to other congregations? There have been inquiries for copies.

Jess Toothman, elder, Goodlettsville Church of Christ, Goodlettsville, Tennessee: "We appreciate the work you have done through **Contending For The Faith** during the twenty-four plus years the paper has been published. I don't know where we would be now if you had not kept us aware of what was happening.

"I would like to have the bound volumes in our church library. What is the cost of the entire set?"

[NOTE: "I am entirely grateful to you for what you wrote," I replied, in part. "When we returned from 4 1/2 years of missionary work in Southeast Asia, in 1959, the brotherhood in general still seemed to be on the right track, doctrinally speaking. However, when we got back from another 3 1/2 years' work, in 1964, strange winds of doctrine were blowing.

"At first, I could not tell exactly where all that false doctrine was coming from. However, when Vada and I moved to Connecticut the following year (1965), I soon realized that because we were sending our preachers for their doctoral degrees to sectarian so-called 'divinity schools,' they were being overwhelmed by their false teachers at those schools, hence were bringing the same doctrines back in among our schools and churches.

"It has been a long, hard battle—more like a war—but thankfully some are beginning to see what was happening all along and are doing something about it. God bless you for caring."

As for the cost of an entire set of bound volumes of Contending for the Faith, please send \$185.00 through June 30th—after that \$195.00—postage included. Such orders should be addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, Tennessee 38118**. By the time you see this our bound volume No. XXVI (for 1995) should be back from the bindery ready for delivery. IYR Jr.]

Loran Gearhart, of Cheyenne, Wyoming, enclosed \$100.00, saying, "Please use it for the special mailings fund."

Ruth Manoli, of Oxnard, California, sends repeatedly and sacrificially to the support of these mailings. In one letter, she said, "Lord willing, with what you are doing, we can bring back our liberal, lost brethren and make our colleges and universities Christian schools again along with it. Keep up the good work...I'll help as much as I can."

Mr. & Mrs. W. Leon Taylor, of Tempe, Arizona, enclosed \$25.00, saying, "Keep up the good work. We believe the paper with the truth about certain groups is taking hold on good Christian people. We are praying for you."

Harold Heath, of Casa Grande, Arizona, enclosed \$50.00, saying, "I want to help with your special mailing of 'Behold The Pattern.' We continue to pray for brother Music that he may regain his full measure of good health. I feel that the church of Christ cannot afford to lose another great soldier of the cross—'The Lord's will be done.' We also pray for your continued fight for 'the faith'."

.....

Regarding the eldership, Carl Garner, who also is an elder, said, "Everyone has his say; no one has his way."—South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, at Beeville, Texas. Also, regarding elders who insist on having a huge bank account in the church treasury they oversee, he wondered if they ought not take another look at I Peter 5:2, which says, in part, "not greedy of filthy lucre..." Good point!

Lectureship Circuit Is Alive and Well

What one disgruntled brother tried to stigmatize as our "lectureship circuit" appears to be off to another strong start for 1996. Those of us still believing, loving and standing for the truth saw long ago that if most of our colleges and universities were going to follow the lead of perverse men arising to lead away disciples after error, the least we could do was to sow down the brotherhood with lectureships guaranteeing that the truth of the gospel be heard.

So far this year, such lectureships have been featured (in January) by the Florida School of Preaching, at Lakeland, Florida, and also (in February) by the Shenandoah Church of Christ, in San Antonio, Texas.

The next one (in March) appears to be as follows:

WEST COAST FIRM FOUNDATION LECTURES

CHURCH OF CHRIST

525 South Bayshore Boulevard

San Mateo, California

March 13-17, 1996

Director: Noah A. Hackworth

Theme: "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be"

Wednesday, March 13

- 7:00 p.m. — "I Want To Go To Heaven" by Greg Weston
- 8:00 p.m. — "There Is A God In Heaven" by Tommy Hicks

Thursday, March 14

- 10:00 a.m. — "Man's Everlasting Home" by Tommy Hicks
- 11:00 a.m. — "My Father's House" by Dub McClish
- 12:00 p.m. — Lunch for speakers provided by San Mateo
- 2:00 p.m. — "My Name Is Written in Heaven" by Randy Maybe
- 3:00 p.m. — "Heaven Wherein Dwelleth Righteousness" by Gil Yoder
- 4:00 p.m. — Dinner for speakers provided by San Mateo
- 7:00 p.m. — "Our Eternal Inheritance" by Tom Bright
- 8:00 p.m. — "Our Citizenship Is In Heaven" by Buster Dobbs

Friday, March 15

- 10:00 a.m. — "At Home With the Lord" by Joe Gilmore
- 11:00 a.m. — "Great Is My Reward In Heaven" by Gary Anderson
- 12:00 p.m. — Lunch for speakers provided by San Mateo
- 2:00 p.m. — "Who Is Going To Heaven?" by Tom Bright
- 3:00 p.m. — "A Prepared Place For A Prepared People" by Jack Stewart
- 4:00 p.m. — Dinner for speakers prepared by San Mateo

- 7:00 p.m. — "Heaven Is The Work of God's Hands" by Dub McClish
- 8:00 p.m. — "Thy Word Is Settled in Heaven" by Buster Dobbs

Saturday, March 16

- 10:00 a.m. — "Our Hope Laid Up in Heaven" by Allen Robertson
- 11:00 a.m. — "The Former Things Are Passed Away" by David Brown
- 12:00 p.m. — Lunch for speakers provided by San Mateo
- 2:00 p.m. — "Heaven Holds All To Me" by Guss Eoff
- 3:00 p.m. — "The Precious Things of Heaven" by Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
- 4:00 p.m. — Dinner provided for speakers by San Mateo
- 7:00 p.m. — "Heavenly Recognition" by Curtis Cates
- 8:00 p.m. — "Heaven: Where Death Is Swallowed Up in Victory" by Eddie Whitten

Sunday, March 17

- 10:00 a.m. — "What If I Fail to Reach Heaven?" by Eddie Whitten
- 11:00 a.m. — "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All" by David Brown
- 12:00 p.m. — Potluck for everyone
- 2:00 p.m. — "Heaven: Where The Spirits of Just Men Are Made Perfect" by Eldon Lewis
- 3:00 p.m. — "Heaven: Our Eternal Habitation" by Tom West
- 4:00 p.m. — Dinner provided for speakers by San Mateo
- 6:00 p.m. — "Bearing The Image of the Heavenly" by Curtis Cates
- 7:00 p.m. — "Our Heavenly Inheritance" by Michael Hatcher

The 30th Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship in Memphis, Tennessee, comes next. Scheduled from March 31st through April 4th, this may be the final such event at their present location. Plans are to have brand new, much larger facilities by a year from now. In any case, more than 1,000 are anticipated to attend this year.

Then comes the annual Southwest Lectureship, in April. Brother Gary Colley writes from Austin, Texas,

"The Southwest church of Christ is pleased to announce that the 15th Annual Southwest Lectureship will be held April 14-17. The theme for this year's lectureship is "Precious Bible—Book Divine." Speakers from several states have been invited to come and lecture to an expected record number of brethren who will gather in Austin from across the nation to attend this year's lectureship series.

"During the lectureship a public demonstration of the Firm Foundation on computer CD-ROM will be conducted, and exhibits of various brotherhood publishers, mission efforts, and works from

around the country will be on display (upon prior approval).

"In addition, the sermons and lessons delivered during this series will be published in hard-back book form and will be available during the lectureship along with audio and video tapes of this year's as well as past Southwest Lectureships.

"The annual Southwest School of Bible Studies Supporters' Dinner also will be held on lectureship Tuesday. For further information regarding this dinner, please contact Joseph D. Meador.

"R.V. and camper spaces are available at the Southwest building. For additional information and accommodations, you may contact: Gary Colley, Lectureship Director, at Southwest Church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748-5399. Phone (512) 282-2438 or Fax (512) 282-2486.

Wayne Coats, of Mount Juliet, Tennessee, wrote concerning the Villages' determination to "build the auditorium on top of the church basement," saying, "We have elected to build a shell and do all the work ourselves. We need a Nehemiah and all his workers. We will arise and build. Hopefully, we can have a good lectureship if the facilities can be completed by next spring."

.....

"The Book of Romans is the crown jewel in the canon of the New Testament."—Joseph D. Meador, South Texas Summer Lectureship, Sunday a.m., July 30, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

.....

"The word of God is just what it is—the word of God—and it will help those who will read it and be corrected by it."—David Brown, South Texas Summer Lectureship, Sunday a.m., July 30, 1995, Beeville, Texas.

Virgil Bowen, age 86, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, writes: "I am enjoying my work as a volunteer instructor at our Christian Service Center, sponsored by Putnam City Church and others...I am getting closer to the time when I will have to sell out here and move back to Texas where my son and family live. I am on the waiting list of a Christian Care Center in Mesquite, Texas."

Joe E. Galloway, Greenville, Tennessee, January 11, 1996: "Yesterday Duke Gregory, preacher for the Cherokee church that oversees my TV work, told me he had just received a phone call from the advertising manager for the WJHL-TV station over which our program appears. She expressed their satisfaction with both the nature of the program and the prompt way we have always paid our bills in the ten years the program has been aired. A contract is ready to be signed for the next year. We have been very fortunate that no rate increase has been made for the past several years.

I completed the lessons from the book of Ephesians the last program of 1995. Last week I began answering questions I've received from viewers, answering questions at that time regarding the Sabbath, why the Lord's Supper should be observed on the first day of every week, and why foot washing is not a part of the observance of the Lord's Supper. I have several other good questions to respond to for the next few programs. Then I plan to begin a study of the gospel according to Mark.

Due both to lack of time and of finances to greatly expand the Bible correspondence work, I have not mentioned the Bible correspondence courses very much to TV viewers this past year. Yet during 1995 I mailed out 1,860 les-

sons—some 354 more than during 1994! My work load has not permitted me to make as many trips into various parts of the TV viewing area to personally contact those enrolled in the Bible courses as I'd like. Those I've made show good interest. In past reports I've mentioned some of these contacts attending gospel meetings I've preached in some of these areas. We've had an increasing number of enrollments from some area prisons and jails. Duke Gregory will be doing follow up work with some presently enrolled who are incarcerated in the Washington County facility."

[NOTE: We mailed 25 sets of our Basic Bible Course to brother Galloway for use with his TV Sunday School program over WJHL-TV, which is telecast weekly out of Johnson City, Tennessee. IYR Jr.]

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and sanctification does the
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through the Word of God?"

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

"To A Contemporary Bunk Shooter"

By Carl Sandburg [1915] And...

BUNK SHOOTERS TODAY

J. E. Choate

Reading the great world literature—English and American literature in particular—has been a lifelong rewarding experience. In 1915, **Billy Sunday**, an ex-professional baseball player, was the preaching sensation of the time. He was a "hell fire and damnation" preacher, and noted for his physical acrobatics on the pulpit platform. **Carl Sandburg** had Billy Sunday in mind when he wrote *To A Contemporary Bunk Shooter*. The absurd religious shenanigans and charismatic stories of preachers today make the antics of Billy Sunday seem mild by comparison.

The lines of Sandburg picturing the antics of a "bunk shooter" are as timely as if written yesterday, e.g.:

I like a man that's got nerve and can pull off a great original performance, but you—you're only a bug-house peddler of second hand gospel...I don't want a lot of gab from a bunk shooter in my religion.

GENERATIONS OF "BUNK SHOOTERS": PAST AND PRESENT

Every generation has its parade of sensational preachers who fit into the "bunk shooter" classification. We recall **Aimee Semple McPherson** of the 1930s, **Oral Roberts** in the 1950s, and **Jim Bakker** and **Jimmy Swaggart** of recent days. We now have a new generation of "power crazed" religious "bunk shooters" who are coming to public attention. We shall address two groups because of their

impact on churches of Christ. We shall profile the most vocal and influential of the contemporary "bunk shooters" and their fellowships.

The names of persons to follow mean nothing to members in churches of Christ at the moment. **C. Peter Wagner**, a professor of missions at the School of World Missions in Pasadena published a book in 1988 titled *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*. According to Wagner, the *First Wave* was the rise of Pentecostalism in the early decades of this century. The *Second Wave* refers to the Charismatic Movement in the 1960s.

The Third Wave: Wagner explained that the *Third Wave Movement* began in the 1970s. The emphasis of the Third Wave was on miraculous, or "power healings;" deliverance from demons and demonic powers; and "words of knowledge" that come as immediate revelations from God. The Third Wave Movement is based on the superstition that the age of miracles never ceased.

THE VINEYARD MOVEMENT

We shall address first the *Vineyard Movement* for reasons that will be made clear. The Vineyard Movement had its official beginning in May 1982. It is not yet a household expression among churches of Christ. The Vineyard Movement is closely associated with the Third Wave Movement. The American part of the Vineyard Movement can be traced to **C. Peter Wagner**, **John Wimber**, and **Ken Gulliksen**.

(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVII, No. 4

April/1996

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*
David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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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 also 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 38116. Telephone: (901) 363-6498.

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...

Is Rubel Determined To Break All Ties With Churches Of Christ?

Just when it seems that Rubel Shelly and his Woodmont Hills [so-called] Church of Christ cannot possibly get any farther away from the truth, somehow they manage to do so.

We have known now for several years that Don Finto and the Belmont Church in Nashville, Tennessee, where he preaches, had broken all ties with the churches of Christ—particularly so, since ordaining himself an *apostle*!

When Jim Bevis followed suit and appointed himself an apostle, too; that did it. Both of them broke away from the churches of Christ and are looked upon—even by doctrinally naive churches in Nashville—as apostate.

SHELLY JOINS FINTO AND BEVIS

When Shelly and Woodmont Hills started having joint services with the denominations in Nashville a year or two ago, that was strain enough on the fellowship they formerly enjoyed with faithful churches of Christ.

However, when he joined Finto and Baptist Pastor Jerry Sutton in an invitation-only “prayer breakfast” this past January, eyebrows all over Middle Tennessee were raised.

But that was not the end of it. In a printed brochure distributed by something calling itself the MID-SOUTH 1996 CONFERENCE ON SPIRITUAL RENEWAL, Rubel now joins Bevis *also* in an interdenominational, area-wide “Concert of Prayer” and events to follow, April 17-20, 1996, first at the Highland Baptist Church and later at the Florence Conference Center in Florence, Alabama (*see centerfold*).

CHOATE FOCUSES FULL ATTENTION ON APOSTASY

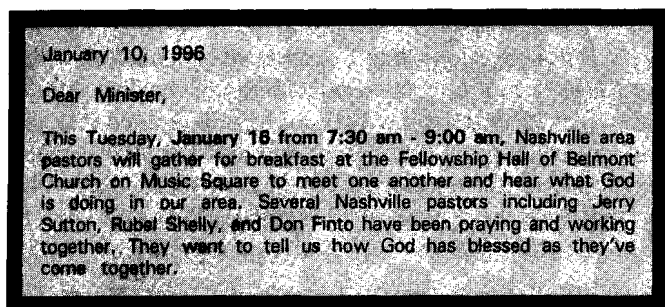
Although we are confident that faint-hearted souls will cry out in dismay, in our lead article this issue, J. E. Choate, now retired after teaching 40 years at Lipscomb University, focuses full attention on the apostasy of Don Finto, Jim Bevis and—now—Rubel Shelly.

Writing under the heading “TO A CONTEMPORARY BUNK SHOOTER” BY CARL SANDBURG [1915]—AND BUNK SHOOTERS TODAY,” in his own inimitable, unanswerable, kind

way, brother Choate traces these three proven heretics through their labyrinthine machinations to their present evil departures from the faith.

If not already, please turn back to Page 1, read (and study) his article straight through without stopping; you will be astonished—and saddened—where Rubel and Woodmont Hills now stand. [*“Jubilee-ers,”* in particular, need to take notice to decide if they want to stand there, too!]

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*



BUNK SHOOTERS TODAY

(Continued from Page 1)

Gulliksen was the pastor of a group of seven Vineyard churches. Wimber was the charismatic pastor of a small church which started in 1978; which church grew to a membership of 700. When he called for people to come forward, they did. This was the beginning of “power evangelism.” Young people began to “shake, speak in tongues, and fall to the floor.”

By May 1982, the name of Wimber’s church was changed to “the Vineyard” in order to identify with Gulliksen and his seven Vineyard churches. Under the leadership of John Wimber, the Vineyard Movement began its phenomenal growth. The parent church in Anaheim now numbers 6,000.

This was the beginning of a new cult-like ministry described as *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing*. Wagner agreed to a healing from high blood pressure and claimed recovery. A conference was held in the Fuller Theological Seminary to bind the demons of homelessness, the demon of sickness, and the Bermuda Triangle.

THE KANSAS CITY PROPHETS (KCP)

The Kansas City Prophets are a group of evangelistic preachers who claimed to have the power of miraculous prophecy as did the Biblical prophets. They are identified with the Kansas City Fellowship established in 1984 by **Mike Bickle**. [The reader is requested to keep Mike Bickle in mind for reasons to be made apparent.] **Paul Cain, John Paul Jackson, Bob Jones**, and others make up the ministry of the Kansas City Prophets.

In May 1990, the Kansas City Fellowship joined the Vineyard Fellowship. The personal experiences as related by the “prophets” are not unlike what we have heard before from the likes of **Oral Roberts**, and his vision of the giant Jesus. The personal experiences are called “power encounters.” The stories are bizarre indeed.

Mike Flynn, an Episcopal minister, embraced the Vineyard Movement. He tells of a woman suffering with damaged emotions because of spousal abuse who came for healing. He did not know what to do. He saw Jesus leave his throne and kneel beside her and put his right arm around her shoulder. He reached with his left arm until his left hand shrank and evaporated. Then he reached into his own heart, and took out a glob of white Jell-O which he carefully inserted into the woman’s heart, and she was gloriously and immediately healed.

Wimber and **Jack Deere**, former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary “admit the whole thing is weird...” However, “weird” is hardly adequate to describe this “white Jell-O healing” when placed alongside other miraculous recitations.

Paul Cain, KCP prophet exemplar, who never makes a mistake according to his fellow prophets, told his story akin to the birth of John the Baptist. His mother was then dying with cancer at 44 when an angel informed her that she would be healed, and give birth to a unique boy whom she would name Paul. The angel promised the mother she would live many years yet—60 in all. Paul himself began receiving angelic visits at eight. Jesus materialized himself in Cain’s Lincoln automobile in the 1950s to inform him that he was jealous of his fiancée, and that he should live a life of celibacy.

THE TORONTO WAVE

In January 1994, the Vineyard Fellowship Church launched a four day campaign in Toronto. During the first evening of worship, waves of “holy laughter” swept the congregation and many worshipers swooned in the spirit. The laughter and swooning continued nightly thereafter. The holy laughter is contagious. The “Toronto Wave” worship service made this Vineyard Fellowship Church the “in group” in charismatic evangelical circles. The “Toronto Wave” exercises moved to Hong Kong and London with similar behavior. Leaders fainted in the Lord, and the people were laughing their heads off.

A SECOND STORY OF TWO CHURCH OF CHRIST BUNK SHOOTERS

Don Finto and **Jim Bevis** are two high-profiled charismatics on the Nashville scene. Each one has a story. Don Finto came to Nashville in the 1960s out of the German mission field sponsored by conservative churches of Christ. He served as the preacher for the Una church of Christ, and chaired the foreign language department in David Lipscomb College. Finto was let go in the church and college because of his religious behavior unacceptable to the Una church and the officials of David Lipscomb College.

Don Finto finally severed all connections with the churches of Christ. He was early on associated with the charismatic movement of the 1970s. When a leadership crisis arose at the Belmont Church, Dr. Finto had to move fast to hold on to his control of the Belmont Church.

Dr. Finto prepared a paper detailing a personal encounter which he claimed to have had with God in the New Mexico desert. The paper is titled "*A Question of a United Leadership*, June 26, 1988, Belmont Church." He tells of a direct encounter with God in New Mexico while praying in a small desert chapel. He alleges God said to him that he was to be the leader of leaders at Belmont, and that he was chosen to be an apostle like unto the twelve. But he protested too much, and, like Moses, asked, "Why me, Lord?"

Jim Bevis, founder of the famed *Campus Evangelism* in the 1970s, was the Executive Pastor at the Belmont church of Christ. He immediately perceived that his power base at Belmont was threatened. He took the floor and said that God came to him at the same time with the same vision, and that he, too, was chosen to be an apostle second only to Don Finto. Finto was the "Peter" of the duo team, and Bevis was the "Paul." Bevis bills himself today as *Ambassador-at-Large* with Mercy Ships, a ministry of "Youth with a Mission."

THE CONNECTIONS WITH CHURCHES OF CHRIST

These are intriguing stories. Who could have thought 15 years ago that Rubel Shelly would team up with Don Finto and Mike Bickle and endorse their ministries. The reader must keep in mind facts presented earlier in this article. Does Rubel Shelly endorse the Third Wave Movement as embodied in the Vineyard Movement which is identified with the Kansas Prophets, and the Toronto Wave? Only brother Shelly can answer these questions.

The invitation was mailed out to Nashville area pastors for a prayer breakfast on January 16 in the Fellowship Hall of the Belmont Church to hear from them what God is

doing in our area. The invitation read that Rubel Shelly, Don Finto, and Jerry Sutton (Baptist preacher) had been working and praying together. They wanted to tell how God has blessed them when they came together.

But who among even the most liberal-minded brethren in the churches of Christ was ready for this one? A brochure was sent out titled "Mid-South 1996 Conference on Spiritual Renewal"—the Conference theme is "Preparing the Bride" to be held April 18 through 20 at the Florence Conference Center, Florence, Alabama. Among the featured Nashville speakers are Rubel Shelly and Jim Bevis. Mike Bickle, Senior Pastor of Metro Vineyard Fellowship identified with the Kansas City Prophets, will represent the Vineyard Movement.

Don Finto has a long standing fraternal connection with the Kansas City Prophets—Paul Cain in particular. Rubel Shelly, just 15 years ago, could not have imagined that he would be teaming up with Don Finto and Jim Bevis as he is presently doing, or that he would now be joining with the leaders in the Vineyard Movement church. It would have been unthinkable.

POSTSCRIPT

Don Finto, Jim Bevis, and Rubel Shelly were nurtured by parents in the church of Christ from their birth. They were educated at the expense of church members. They preached from pulpits in well-furnished churches, and taught in our colleges. Today they are the avowed enemies of the conservative churches of Christ. Don Finto and Jim Bevis broke with churches of Christ years ago.

Today, Rubel Shelly speaks in our colleges and lecture-ships. And he does so to the applause and acclaim of admiring brethren. He preaches in sectarian pulpits where he ridicules the conservative churches of Christ. What does this mixed picture tell us and what does it mean? What will Rubel Shelly do next? Only the Lord knows.

—3714 ½ Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

The Roots Of Our Present Lie Deep In The Past...

Many wonder how the churches of Christ—so strong, united and vibrant in the '40s and '50s—got to be so weak, divided and confused in the '70s, '80s and '90s. Something happened in the '60s—and since—that changed the whole course of our direction. **ONLY ONE SOURCE EXISTS** showing step by step how many were led from our *NON*-denominational plea of yesteryear to the *INTER*-denominational stance that many are taking today. If we *ever* are to get back on course—restoring the church that Jesus Christ built in the 1st Century—we must understand what happened to us—and correct it.

The **ONE SOURCE** of information that makes all this confusion crystal clear is the

BOUND VOLUMES of *Contending for the Faith*. Every eldership, every gospel preacher and every church library needs a complete set of these BOUND VOLUMES. They can be ordered either *as a complete set* (\$185.00 through June 30, 1996—or \$195.00 thereafter, postage included) or *singly*. [VOLUME XXVI is now back from the bindery and ready for delivery.]

Payment in advance should accompany each order. Please address yours to—

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

2956 Allshore

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BEWARE OF “PROMISE KEEPERS”

Dan Flounoy

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Having been acquainted with Dan Flounoy, author of this article, since the early '70s, I always have been impressed with his clear-headed thinking as well as his love for the truth of the gospel. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of some among us who are now falling headlong into the inter-denominational trap deceptively labeled "Promise Keepers."

Brother Flounoy has written an especially helpful tract, entitled, "Beware of 'Promise Keepers'," which he is permitting Contending for the Faith to reprint herewith for the edification of our readers. Please study it carefully. If you agree with it, please order a goodly supply of his tract directly from him and distribute where it will accomplish the most good.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

What is Promise Keepers?

Promise Keepers is an inter-denominational men's organization begun by **Bill McCartney**, former head football coach at the University of Colorado. It is reported that he, along with **Dave Wardell** organized this movement as a means of motivating men to be better husbands and fathers.¹ During 1995, 13 two-day rallies were held across the country attracting an average of 50,000 men, each paying \$55 to attend. One of the goals of *Promise Keepers* is to gather one million men in Washington, D.C. in 1996.

On the surface, *Promise Keepers* may look attractive. After all, who can deny that there is a need in our country for better husbands and fathers? However, there are other issues that the Christian must consider. Twenty-five years ago, the *Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship* began a nationwide effort to get businessmen to have a weekly "non-denominational" Bible study. Some of our brethren, along with the Baptists, Methodists and others, joined this effort. It was not long until the "Charismatic Movement" divided these groups. While a weekly businessmen's Bible study seemed to be a good idea at the time, it proved to be an instrument to further the Pentecostals' agenda.

We urge brethren to take a closer look at *Promise Keepers* and not be taken in by promotional hype. *Promise Keepers* may look good on the surface, but it is just another denominational scheme for making converts to its cause.

What is Wrong With *Promise Keepers*?

Promise Keepers teaches an un-biblical church organization. Along with the 13 large rallies, *Promise Keepers* conducts special "Clergy Conferences" to "train men in pastoral ministry." This is simply a perpetuation of the old denominational error of the "clergy-laity" system that is foreign to the New Testament. The Biblical pattern for the organization of the Lord's church includes a plurality of elders (pastors) over one local congregation (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-12; Philippians 1:1).

Through these Clergy Conferences, *Promise Keepers* seeks to promote its agenda in local churches. The stated mission of the clergy conference is:

"to help reignite clergy with hope and courage in their call so that they will lead their people into revival which we believe God is bringing to His Church. Promise Keepers believe that their clergy are the human agents whom God has established to lead the church. Promise Keepers believe they have been individually and personally selected by God for the task of shepherding and equipping His flock to accomplish the work that He prepared for us before the foundation of the world. 'As the clergy goes, so goes the Church.' It is Promise Keepers' greatest desire to bless and honor clergy, to build them up in hope and confidence; to encourage, equip and network so that they will lead their churches in revival and their communities in awakening."²

Notice the phrase "their clergy." *Promise Keepers* seeks to gain the loyalty of the so-called "clergy" through which they can control the agenda in thousands of denominational churches across the country. Make no mistake, they will be springing up within the churches of Christ as well! These "pastors" are to go from the Clergy Conference to set up a *Promise Keepers* network in their local congregations. This consists of a "key man" and an "ambassador" in each congregation. The "key man" (formerly called a "point man")

"is integral to Promise Keepers' relationship with the local church, working to create an environment of godly masculinity for men that strengthens their relationship to Jesus Christ and to one another. Serving as the church's agent to Promise Keepers, a Key Man must be appointed by his pastor. He may or may not be the men's ministry leader of the church."³

Therefore, the "key man" is an agent of *Promise Keepers* to promote their agenda within local churches.

"An AMBASSADOR represents Promise Keepers to the community and its churches. An acknowledged leader, able to represent Promise Keepers' mission with faithfulness and maturity, Ambassadors also must be recommended by their pastors and approved by the National Ambassador Office. These men, true cornerstones of Promise Keepers outreach, must be committed to Prom-

ise Keepers' purpose statement and to living the seven promises of a Promise Keeper.⁴

Furthermore, *Promise Keepers* conducts "Men's Ministry Leadership Seminars" to train men to set up *Promise Keepers* approved and directed "men's ministries" in local churches. Last year, over 45,000 men attended *Promise Keepers*' Men's Ministry Leadership Seminars throughout the nation.

***Promise Keepers* teaches the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.** In the *Promise Keepers* creed known as "Seven Promises of *Promise Keepers*", promise number one is: "A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to His Word, through the power of the Holy Spirit." This is nothing but the Calvinistic doctrine that one cannot obey the Word unless the Holy Spirit operates directly on the sinner's heart to move him to do so.

A *Promise Keepers* flyer states: "A sovereign move of God's Spirit is stirring the hearts of men who relentlessly pursue Jesus Christ in their commitment to become promise keepers." The book *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper* teaches the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Here is a sample:

"God still needs men who, like Howell Harris and Charles Finney, will give themselves to prayer and then go and do whatever the Holy Spirit tells them. Revival is the movement of the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary way that causes multitudes to be drawn to Christ. That's what we need today. America needs revival. The church needs revival. Families need revival. Men need revival."⁵

In Calvinistic thinking, "revival" is the Holy Spirit working "in an extraordinary way that causes multitudes to be drawn to Christ." This is one reason why churches of Christ have "Gospel Meetings" instead of "Revival Meetings." To the Calvinist, "revival" is synonymous with the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. They have the Holy Spirit "moving among the audience," etc. Hear it from *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (1648):

As God has appointed the elect to glory, so has He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called to faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power, through faith, to salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.⁶

Furthermore, "the Calvinist believes that God alone is the Cause of regeneration. Knowing that no man can or will establish any condition which can serve as a basis for his election..."⁷

Greg Laurie, a *Promise Keepers* speaker both at Denver (June 16-17, 1995) and at St. Petersburg (August 4-5, 1995), preaches the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, saying:

It's not hard to be a Christian—it's impossible, without

the power of the Holy Spirit. The only effective way to live the Christian life and be a witness for Jesus Christ is through and by the power of the Holy Spirit.⁸

This, of course, is what most denominations teach. Calvinism says that man is so depraved, so dead in sin, that he cannot respond to the commands of the gospel. The "elect" (Calvin's idea of predestination) are "revived" by the Holy Spirit working directly on the individual's heart.

Edwin Louis Cole, president of *Christian Men's Network* based in Dallas, Texas, is a *Promise Keepers* speaker who thinks he is inspired. He was one of the speakers in the first *Promise Keepers* conference held on July 31, 1993. Of that event he says:

My part in Promise Keepers that year was the Saturday morning meeting. The men were enthusiastic and excited, ready for the day. My heart pounded as they took their seats and I gave them the words I felt God had inspired me to say.

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit works today through the word in the conversion of sinners as well as leading the Christian. The people on Pentecost were pricked in their heart by the message preached (Acts 2:36-41). Thus, the Holy Spirit worked through the word preached by the apostles. Likewise, Cornelius was told to send for Peter "who shall tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved" (Acts 11:14 NKJV). The Holy Spirit worked through the preaching of the gospel by Peter to bring Cornelius to a saving knowledge of the truth. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit moving and leading people apart from the word is false. It is nothing more than subjectivism.

***Promise Keepers* teaches salvation by "faith alone."** Here is what *Promise Keepers* speaker Greg Laurie teaches:

Would you like to receive Jesus Christ into your heart and life right now? If so, you might pray a prayer like this: Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I am sorry for my sin. I thank you for dying on that cross for me. I turn from my sin and I turn to you by faith right now. Forgive me for all of it. Fill me with the power of your Holy Spirit. I want to be Your disciple. Help me to love You and hate sin from this time forward. Thank You for your offer of forgiveness. I gladly accept it now. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

If you just prayed that prayer and really meant it, Jesus Christ has now taken residence in your heart! Not only that, but He has forgiven you all your sin.¹⁰

Again, this is what most denominations teach. John Wesley-White, Associate Evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelist Association, spoke at the *Promise Keepers* rally at Minneapolis July 14. One eyewitness said:

[His] message was evangelistic, anticipating that many men who had never committed their lives to Christ would come with Christian friends and that many backsliders would need to renew their commitment. ... The whole thing seemed shallow and contrived. ... Volunteer

*counselors were down front to meet them and pray for them. Efforts were made to get names and addresses to make follow-up possible. They said it was one of the largest responses they had ever received at a Promise Keepers conference.*¹¹

It is certain that no *Promise Keepers* speaker will tell the audience what Peter told sinners to do on Pentecost (Acts 2:28). Those who come forward to be received by volunteer counselors will not be told that they must be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27).

Promise Keepers participate in vain worship. According to some who have attended *Promise Keepers* conferences,

*The mood is festive as large beach balls are punched with vigor, sending them on a never-ending course throughout the crowd. A styrofoam glider wafts its way from the upper regions, accompanied by oohs and aahs. A small group of men on one side of the stadium begins to chant: "We love Jesus, yes we do! We love Jesus; how 'bout you?" The shout grows louder as more voices join in. Soon the other side of the stadium picks up the challenge. No one wins; it's a tie as to which side shouts loudest.*¹²

The so-called worship is led by *Maranatha! Men's Praise Band* with special music by Larnell Harris, Scott Wesley Brown (who plays the guitar) and various musicians including Dennis Agajanian, *Phillips, Craig & Dean*, Dave Irish and Aaron Jeffrey. One who has attended *Promise Keepers* said,

*They used a piano and keyboard and guitars and sax and flute and drums and bongos and I'm not sure what else. And I sang and made melody to the Lord with all my heart and to the bottom of my lungs.*¹³

One of the speakers described a *Promise Keepers* meeting like this:

*The men in the outdoor stadium numbered 22,000. They cheered, clapped, shouted, and slapped each other on the back with wild enthusiasm. They laughed, cried, and even sang together like no sports, military, or political crowd I'd ever seen. This was not a riot, sporting event, or review of some country's fighting men. It was a gathering of Christians, and the occasion was a celebration of their manhood under the lordship of Jesus Christ.*¹⁴

We make no exaggeration when we call *Promise Keepers* a **denominational pep rally!** This certainly cannot be called worship that is **"in spirit and in truth"** (John 4:24). Where is the **"reverence and godly fear?"** (Hebrews 12:28). What about I Corinthians 14:40: **"Let all things be done decently and in order?"**

Clearly *Promise Keepers* do not worship according to the apostles' doctrine. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles to **"guide them into all the truth"** (John 16:13). The apostles did not instruct believers to use instrumental music in their worship; therefore, instrumental music in worship is not according to truth! Furthermore, the Christians of Jerusalem "continued steadfastly in the

apostles' teaching..." (Acts 2:42). The apostles did not teach the use of instrumental music; therefore, to use instrumental music in worship is to go beyond the teaching of the apostles (compare I Corinthians 4:6; II John 9-11).

***Promise Keepers* teaches a denominational ecumenicalism that is opposed to the "one body", which is the church (Ephesians 4:4; Matthew 16:18; I Corinthians 1:10; Colossians 1:18).** *Promise* number six states: **"A *Promise Keeper* is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity."** In the *Promise Keepers* brochure for the 1996 *Clergy Conference for Men* there is this statement of purpose:

*Promise Keepers believes this special Clergy Conference for Men...may serve as a catalyst for a supernatural move of God's Spirit across our land. This gathering will offer men in pastoral ministry a unique occasion to gather in a focused, corporate environment to pursue biblical unity in the body of Christ. This conference will also address issues specific to men. It is our fervent prayer at *Promise Keepers* that you will join your brothers for this powerful time of worship, fellowship and prayer. Together we will surrender to His will and seek His strategy for toppling the walls dividing the Church.*¹⁵

However, here is what Bill McCartney says in the book *Seven Promises of A Promise Keeper*:

*Now, I don't mean to suggest that all cultural differences and denominational distinctives are going to disappear. But what I know is that Almighty God wants to bring Christian men together regardless of their ethnic origin, denominational background, or style of worship. There's only one criterion for this kind of unity: to love Jesus and be born of the Spirit of God. Can we look one another in the eye—black, white, red, brown, yellow, Baptist, Presbyterian, Assemblies of God, Catholic, and so on—and get together on this common ground: 'We believe in salvation through Christ alone, and we have made Him the Lord of our lives'? Is that not the central, unifying reality of our existence? And if it is, can we not focus on that and call each other brother instead of always emphasizing our differences? Men, we have to get together on this!*¹⁶

This, of course, is nothing but the old Satanic oxymoron of "unity in diversity!" Translated into plain English this means that we must all agree not to take any doctrinal stand on anything. Christians who participate in *Promise Keepers* must accept, without question, the false doctrines of denominationalism including an un-biblical church organization, the "clergy-laity system" They must accept the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, salvation by faith only, once saved always saved, sprinkling instead of immersion, infant baptism, total depravity, quarterly communion, sacraments, holy water, miraculous gifts, etc. Who can believe that this is the unity for which Jesus prayed in John 17:20-23? We ask the age old question: **"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"** (Amos 3:3).

Biblical unity can only be achieved when denomination-

alists give up their un-biblical names, creeds, and false doctrines. Let *Promise Keepers* take the *Bible* as the only rule of faith and practice. Let them teach the *New Testament pattern* of salvation in Christ (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:3-7). Let them teach people to love Jesus and be born of "the water and the Spirit" (John 3:5; Romans 6:3-6; Acts 2:38; 10:47-48; 22:26). Let them give up their titles of "Pastor," "Reverend" and "Father" (Matthew 23:9). When *Promise Keepers* begins to practice true biblical unity, then *Promise Keepers* will cease to exist!

Christians who attend *Promise Keepers* must disregard plain Bible teaching regarding fellowship with those who teach and practice error. John, "the apostle of love," no doubt loved the Gnostics. Yet, he did not hesitate to speak out against their false doctrines and told Christians not to have fellowship with them (II John 9-11). Paul was pointed when he gave the Lord's command to Christians at Rome:

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. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent (Romans 16:17-18).

Finally, *Promise Keepers* leaders are using religion as a way of gain. Those in the Lord's church who are inclined toward *Promise Keepers* would do well to heed Peter's warning regarding false teachers. In his warning, note especially the way false teachers have a way of using religion for their personal profit: "And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you..." (II Peter 2:1-3).

Each man attending a *Promise Keepers* meeting is charged a \$55 registration fee. There were thirteen *Promise Keepers Conferences* held in 1995 with an average of 50,000 men attending each conference. This comes to a mere \$35,750,000! Additionally, the three-day "Clergy Conference" requires a \$95 registration fee. The fee for the Men's Ministry Leadership Seminar is \$35 per person. Add to this the sale of *Promise Keepers* caps, lapel pens, T-shirts, tapes, videos and books. Unmistakably, *Promise Keepers* is big business!

Conclusion

We do not deny the need for men to be better fathers and husbands. However, it is not necessary for Christians to fellowship denominational error to achieve some worthwhile goal. Abortion is a terrible social evil. Shall we promote the Pope and urge people to go to some stadium to hear him speak on this troublesome issue? The Pope has an international audience, but that does not justify our having fellowship with Romanism!

Promise Keepers is in reality an inter-denominational organization that promotes denominational doctrines in the name of helping men keep their commitments. It may look attractive on the surface, but in reality it is filled with false doctrine. We urge faithful brethren to follow Christ and remember his warning: "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15).

¹ Lora B. Postelwait, *Christian Chronicle*, August 1995, p. 15.

² Fan Into Flame, 1996, Internet update, August 28, 1995.

³ Promise Keepers Information Network, Internet update, July 13, 1995.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Wellington Boone, "Why Men Must Pray", *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*, (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus On The Family Publishing 1994), p. 26.

⁶ Duane Edward Spencer, *Tulip: The Five Points of Calvinism in the Light of Scripture* (Grand Rapids Baker Book House, 1980), p. 10.

⁷ Ibid., p. 68.

⁸ Greg Laurie, *New Believer's Growth Book* (Riverside, Calif.: Harvest Ministries, 1994), p. 34.

⁹ Edwin Louis Cole, "Your Word Is Your Bond", *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper* (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus On The Family Publishing 1994), p. 33.

¹⁰ Laurie, Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹ Potpourri... Firm Foundation, September 1995, p. 28.

¹² Promise Keepers: A Powerful Ecumenical Thrust That Promotes Romanism! (San Diego, Calif.: Mission To Catholics International), p. 1.

¹³ Firm Foundation, Ibid.

¹⁴ Cole, Ibid.

¹⁵ Fan Into Flame, *Promise Keepers* brochure, 1996 Clergy Conference for Men, p. 4.

¹⁶ Bill McCartney, "A Call To Unity", *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*, (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus On The Family Publishing, 1994), p. 161.


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Shall Brethren Continue To Follow Rubel To Their Own Destruction?

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

This is the first time, since Nashville's ill-begotten "Jubilee" was started some few years ago that **Rubel Shelly** and **Woodmont Hills** will have its sponsorship all to themselves. Madison and Antioch, ostensibly, are dropping out for reasons that are not entirely apparent.

In Exodus 23:2, God's people were taught, "**Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.**" It was wrong, of course—even while Madison and Antioch were part of the operation—for those sponsoring "Jubilee" to invite all those speakers of perverse things to appear on their programs. Now that Rubel and Woodmont Hills have the whole thing, will Madison, Antioch and others continue to follow these errorists to their own destruction? Perhaps we shall know more when it is all over again in July.

Rubel's Lead Is Away From the Restoration Plea Back Toward Inter-Denominationalism

It is no secret that Rubel and Woodmont Hills, where he preaches, are *openly in fellowship with the Christian Church and other protestant denominations* in Nashville. He was the featured speaker for a *post-Easter, inter-denominational service* at the **Woodmont Baptist Church** in Nashville. Participants included the **Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches**, the **Christian Church** and the **Woodmont Hills Church of Christ**, as well.

Some of our more gullible brethren surmise that *maybe* Rubel was there to teach them "**the way of the Lord more perfectly.**" He wasn't. Reliable reports (including tapes of the service itself) conclude otherwise. He was there to *undermine* and *ridicule* the very churches of Christ of whom he supposedly is a member, which he did in a most indecent, grossly abusive, offensive, scurrilous manner. He *participated* with those denominationalists in all their error—including the use of instrumental accompaniment in their worship!

How Much Farther Do They Have To Go Before Nashville Churches Withdraw?

While Rubel and Woodmont Hills continue to thumb their spiritual noses at the restoration plea, one wonders how much farther do they have to go before the churches of Christ—especially those in Nashville and middle Tennessee—not only *abandon* "Jubilee," but *withdraw fellowship entirely* from them and it.

As far as we know, the only Nashville congregations which have done so—at least publicly—are the **Trinity Lane** and the **Jackson Park Churches of Christ**.

When **Don Finto** led the old **Belmont Church of**

Christ into apostasy back in the late '60s or early '70s, Nashville churches did not announce withdrawal *publicly*—they just quit having anything to do with him and them—but they kept quiet about it.

When Don announced later on that God had called him to the *apostleship*, all we heard out of Nashville was a clucking sound, like "tsk! tsk!"—and little more.

Not to be outdone by Don, his fellow minister, **Jim Bevis**, claimed that *he, too*, had been called to be an apostle!

As late as January 10, 1996—this very year—special invitations were mailed to selected preachers throughout the Nashville area, which read, as follows:

January 10, 1996

Dear Minister,

This Tuesday, January 16 from 7:30 am -9:00 am, Nashville area pastors will gather for breakfast at the Fellowship Hall of Belmont Church on Music Square to meet one another and hear what God is doing in our area. Several Nashville pastors including Jerry Sutton, Rubel Shelly, and Don Finto have been praying and working together. They want to tell us how God has blessed as they've come together.

What this invitation did *not* say is that **Jerry Sutton** pastors a local *Baptist* church and that **Don Finto** is the same heretic who now thinks he is an *apostle*! And who has been "praying and working together" with these two who bring "another doctrine"? That's right, **Rubel Shelly**!

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Now Rubel, Max Lucado And Others Participate In "Promise Keepers"

Beginning on page 5 of this issue, **Dan Flournoy**, of Irving, Texas, has granted *Contending for the Faith* permission to reprint his expose' of "Promise Keepers" as

just one more *inter-denominational religious organization* contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

Yet, on page 3 of Woodmont Hills' weekly bulletin *Love Lines*, under date of February 21, 1996, Rubel Shelly recounts, in the following words, how he and others from Woodmont Hills "have attended Promise Keepers events" over the past couple of years:

Fan Into Flame

Several men from Woodmont Hills have attended Promise Keepers events over the past couple of years. At their encouragement and because of their generosity, the male ministry staff of the church was in Atlanta last week for the first-ever "Clergy Conference for Men." Just over 42,000 ministers from all denominational backgrounds were there.

What could so many men from such diverse traditions have in common? Above ethnicity, denomination, and geography, we discovered that we have a *passionate desire to know Christ* that transcends these differences. From the opening speech of the conference, the call was for everyone to commit himself to the purity of the gospel and to serve Christ in the truth.



The conference echoed what people from my own tradition call "restoration language." As a matter of fact, the longest sustained reaction to a presentation was to Max Lucado's call for men to love Christ more than sect or party in order to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." What a thrill to see the call for people to be "Christians only" affirmed by so many.

The theme of the conference was "Fan Into Flame." It was a clear and biblical call for participants to take seriously their sense of call from God and to pursue that call with integrity before the Word of God, in faithfulness to family, and with humility before one another.

As Terry Smith said, "God was in the event and the author of the event!" Indeed, he was. And the foundations of old racial and sectarian divisions were shaken a bit. There is a long way to go, but a start has been made.

Thank God for the vision of Bill McCartney and his coworkers at Promise Keepers. The Atlanta meeting could prove to be historic — if the call heard there is not forgotten.

— Rubel Shelly



All that, and *not one person* converted to the old Jerusalem gospel—*not one person* led to Christ. So Terry Smith said, "God was in the event and the author of the event!" Indeed, he was—NOT! Like the old song, "everybody talking 'bout heaven ain't a-goin' there," just because somebody *says* something that does not make it so! However, if Rubel's and his fellow "male ministry staff's" participation in the Atlanta inter-denominational meeting leads to his, their, Woodmont Hills', and "Jubilee's" being generally disfellowshipped, as they should be, then the Atlanta meeting could *indeed* "prove to be historic."

But That Is Not All!—In April, Rubel Joins "Apostle" Jim Bevis, Others In "Pastor's Conference"

Just when it seems that Rubel could not find a way to get any *farther* away from the truth, somehow he manages to do so. In my mail, in late February, I received yet another beautifully printed brochure announcing that he and "Apostle" Jim Bevis would be two of the featured speakers on yet another inter-denominational event styling itself the "Mid-South 1996 Conference on Spiritual Renewal" to be held Thursday, April 18th, through Saturday, April 20th, at the Florence Conference Center, in Florence, Alabama (see reproduction of part of said brochure at our centerfold, on pages 12 and 13).

Although denominations transparently are NO PART of the bride of Christ, this event has the temerity to vaunt the general theme of "Preparing The Bride," citing Revelation 19:7, "...and the bride has made herself ready."

Leading up to this general conference, an area-wide "Concert of Prayer" is announced for Wednesday evening, April 17th, at the **Highland Baptist Church**, of Florence. Then for three days, they advertise "A strategic gathering of pastors, church leaders, prayer warriors and Christian believers who want to be on the 'cutting edge' of God's church as she moves into the days ahead, toward the Twenty-first Century and the return of Jesus Christ."


[A few questions appear to be in order for those churches participating in Rubel's "Jubilee." Have you so far departed from the restoration plea that you now find joint-participation in religious services with denominationalists acceptable? *Rubel does*. Do you now believe that the churches of Christ are just another denomination and that such a gathering of denominational "pastors, prayer warriors" and such are on the "cutting edge" of God's church? *Rubel does*. Is it your understanding of God's word that the "bride" of Christ is *inter*-denominational and that those composing the denominations are *Christians*? *This, precisely, is Rubel's present doctrinal stance—and has been for the past 13 years!*]

Clear evidence of this wrong doctrinal stance, the brochure goes on to say (and read it carefully),

Noted Christian leaders are saying that the Decade of the 90's is the Decade of Preparation. Now at the half-way point of the last decade of the Twentieth Century, many are saying, "How do we prepare the church for what lies ahead? How do we ready a bride to meet her Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus?"

THIS CONFERENCE IS DESIGNED TO HELP IN ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS.

Very few would question that the church across the world is experiencing a fresh, renewing breath of the Holy Spirit. Some believe the days ahead contain at least one major end-time revival. Others feel that the church faces a future of trials, trouble and persecution. Still others are confident that the twenty-first century will be an "Age of Harvest" with many people coming to Christ.



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RUBEL SHELLY

Rubel Shelly is minister of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee. He is a leader in the renewal movement among Churches of Christ. During his sixteen years at Woodmont, he has also taught at David Lipscomb University and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

Shelly is the author of more than 20 books, including several which have been translated into Korean, Japanese, Portuguese, Italian, French and Russian. He is co-editor of *Wineskins* magazine.

Rubel has spoken in churches and conferences and on university campuses across America and in several foreign countries. He has done mission outreach in Kenya, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Russia.

Among his books are *The Second Incarnation - A Theology for the Twenty-First Century Church*, *In Step With the Lord*, *The Art of Being Married*, and *I Just Want to Be A Christian*.



JACK TAYLOR

Jack Taylor is founder and President of Dimension Ministries in Fort Worth, Texas. Jack and his wife Barbara reside in Indialantic, Florida. In 1980, Jack served as First Vice President of the Southern Baptist Convention. He was Moderator for the San Antonio Baptist Association in San Antonio, Texas from 1970-1972.

For over twenty-four years, Jack served as a pastor in Southern Baptist Churches in Texas. He was co-founder and co-pastor of the Anchor Church in Fort Worth, Texas. He is an international conference speaker having spoken in Mexico, India, Singapore, Taiwan, the Orient, Africa, and the Middle East. He was a major speaker for the International Congress on Revival in Interlocken, Switzerland and the International Prayer Assembly for World Evangelism in Seoul, Korea.

Jack Taylor has written many books. Among these are *The Key to Triumphant Living*, *Much More, Victory Over the Devil*, *After the Spirit Comes*, *The Hallelujah Factor* and *The Word of God with Power*.



MIKE BICKLE

Mike Bickle is the Senior Pastor of Metro Vineyard Fellowship and Director of Grace Training Center, a full-time Bible School in Kansas City, Missouri, and author of two books, *Passion for Jesus* and *Growing in the Prophetic*.

Mike's special teaching emphasis is in the area of developing passion for Jesus through a more intimate knowledge of God's personality. His favorite book of the Bible for this diverse theme is the Song of Solomon. He also teaches on devotional life, intercessory prayer and revival.

Mike Bickle has traveled widely as a conference speaker, often with John Wimber and Paul Cain. He has a deep conviction of a coming revival resulting in a victorious, end-time church. He and his wife, Diane, live in Kansas City, Missouri, with their teenage sons, Luke and Paul.

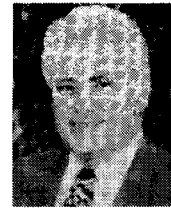


WELLINGTON BOONE

Wellington Boone is a pastor, ministry leader and Promise Keepers National Conference speaker. He is the founder and overseer of numerous national and international ministries centering on prayer, reconciliation and unity across all racial boundaries and among all nations. He is seeking God for a spiritual awakening in society initiated by revival, reconciliation and unity within the church.

Wellington is Bishop and Founder of the Fellowship of International Churches, New Generation Campus Ministries, Manna Christian Fellowship, Women of Valor, Athletes for Jesus and Network of Christian Women. He is a National Board Member of March for Jesus, an Executive Board Member of the Coalition on Revival and a regular conference speaker for Promise Keepers.

Wellington and his wife Kathryn live in Atlanta, Georgia with their three children, Jason, Nicole and Justin.



DAN SNEED

Dan Sneed is Coordinator of the Europe Desk for Foursquare Missions International and is pastor of The Shepherd's House, a Foursquare Church in Thousand Oaks, California.

Dan has travelled extensively in the United States and abroad as a Bible teacher and conference speaker. Upon graduating from Life Bible College in 1966, he began his ministry in a small church in Los Angeles. Over the years, Dan and his wife, Beverly, have served in many capacities: as pastors and youth pastors, as Director of Los Angeles Teen Challenge and Director of Jesus West Coast. Dan serves as a member of the non-resident faculty at University of the Nations in Kona, Hawaii, and teaches regularly in Youth With A Mission schools.

Dan has a strong anointing as a Bible teacher, pastor of pastors and equipper of disciples. He often ministers in the prophetic with gifts of wisdom and knowledge.



JIM BEVIS

Jim Bevis and his wife Anne, serve as Ambassadors-at-Large with Mercy Ships, a ministry of Youth With A Mission. As a minister, Jim has served churches in Texas, Georgia, Indiana and Nashville, Tennessee, where he served as Executive Pastor of Belmont Church, a renewal church of 3,000.

In 1991, Jim served as the Prayer Chairman for the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit held in New Orleans in 1987 and Indianapolis in 1991. Jim was part of the intercession team for Lausanne II Conference in Manila in 1989. He is a member of the North American Renewal Services Committee and also serves as Executive Director for Conference on Spiritual Renewal.

Jim and Anne have planned and participated in over fifty-five renewal conferences across the United States and in several foreign countries including the Dominican Republic, Germany, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Ghana and Sierra Leone, West Africa and Lithuania and Latvia in the Baltic states.

Most would agree that to meet the challenges ahead of us, *we cannot stay where we are*. "How is the church to stay on the cutting edge?" How will she meet the demands of renewal and revival, the increased possibilities of pressure and persecution, the all-out attacks on the Christian and the family, and the call to raise up disciples and world Christians taking the Gospel to the rest of the world? How will she accomplish all of this and, at the same time, draw the people of God into a more intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ, making final preparation for His return?

Mike Bickle, Wellington Boone, Rubel Shelly, Dan Sneed, Jack Taylor and Jim Bevis have been asked to address these and other important issues facing the church and her future. Each of these men is an international Christian statesman

ministering to the world-wide body of Christ. They come with a rich background of ministry experience, exposure to the body of Christ across the world, and a deep and intimate walk with God and His Son. Those planning the conference believe that these men are "God's appointed men for this conference, coming with a fresh word from the Father."

And just who are these "international Christian statesman" with whom Rubel Shelly and "Apostle" Jim Bevis clearly are in fellowship? The brochure identifies Jack Taylor as having served as "First Vice President of the Southern Baptist Convention." Before that he was "Moderator for the San Antonio Baptist Association." For over 24 years, he served as a "pastor" in Southern Baptist Churches in Texas. Mike Bickle is "the Senior Pastor of

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

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The Conference on Spiritual Renewal is an evangelical, transdenominational, non-secretarian movement seeking to facilitate renewal and revival in the Body of Christ. CSR seeks to share life-giving, church-changing principles of spiritual renewal from the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. CSR is a ministry of Mercy Ships, a division of Youth With A Mission.

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Noted Christian leaders are saying that the Decade of the 90's is the Decade of Preparation. Now at the half-way point of the last decade of the Twentieth Century, many are asking, "How do we prepare the church for what lies ahead? How do we make ready a pure bride to meet her Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus?" THIS CONFERENCE IS DESIGNED TO HELP IN ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS.

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Most would agree that to meet the challenges ahead of us, **we cannot stay where we are.** "How is the church to stay on the cutting edge?" How will she meet the demands of renewal and revival, the increased possibilities of pressure and persecution, the all-out attacks on the Christian and the family, and the call to raise up disciples and world Christians taking the Gospel to the rest of the world? How will she accomplish all of this and, at the same time, draw the people of God into a more intimate love relationship with Jesus Christ, making final preparation for His return?

Mike Bickle, Wellington Boone, Rubel Shelly, Dan Sneed, Jack Taylor and Jim Bevis have been asked to address these and other important issues facing the church and her future. Each of these men is an international Christian statesman ministering to the world-wide body of Christ. They come with a rich background of ministry, experience, exposure to the body of Christ across the world, and a deep and intimate walk with God and His Son. Those planning the conference believe that these men are "God's appointed men for this conference, coming with a fresh word from the Father."

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Metro Vineyard Fellowship and Director of Grace Training Center" (whatever that is). Wellington Boone is "a pastor, ministry leader and Promise Keepers National Conference speaker." He also is "Bishop and Founder of the Fellowship of International Churches, New Generation Campus Ministries, Manna Christian Fellowship, Women of Valor, Athletes for Jesus and Network of Christian Women. He is a National Board Member of March for Jesus, and Executive Board Member of the Coalition on Revival and a regular conference speaker for Promise Keepers." Dan Sneed is "Coordinator of the Europe Desk for Foursquare Missions International and is pastor of The Shepherd's House, a Foursquare Church in Thousand Oaks, California.

The brochure goes on to say that "Anyone needing a 'fresh touch from the Lord' should be a part of this conference."

Brethren, there is just no way that genuine Christians can partake with Rubel Shelly and Woodmont Hills in their Nashville "Jubilee" without fellowshipping 1) their post-Easter celebrations with the Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians and the Christian Church, 2) his praying and working together with Baptist Pastor Jerry Sutton and "Apostle" Don Finto, 3) his and Woodmont Hills' male staff members participation with the inter-denominational "Promise Keepers," and 4) his participation with "Apostle" Jim Bevis and those denominational "pastors" involved in the above-described, inter-denominational "Mid-South

1996 Conference on Spiritual Renewal." There is no way to fellowship him and them in all this confusion without completely abandoning the restoration plea ourselves. While we are at it, let us all recall that "God is not the author of confusion..." (I Corinthians 14:33).

Since Rubel and Woodmont Hills have continued heading in the direction they now are going since abandoning

the restoration plea in 1983, there is no way to excuse them on the basis of their not knowing what they do. They know. It now is abundantly clear that they are gone and are determined never to come back! Rather than continue to follow such contrary-to-sound-doctrine leadership any longer, we plead with you, our brethren, "come out from among them, and be ye separate" (II Corinthians 6:17).

Daniel's 70 Weeks and the A.D. 70 Theory

Glenn A. Jobe

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Perusing one of his Schaumburg (Illinois) church bulletins for June 21, 1993, an outline that brother Glenn A. Jobe wrote for the Area-wide Study and Fellowship, of West Side Elgin, Illinois, relative to the A.D. 70 theory caught my attention. As I appraised his approach, it seemed something that readers of Contending for the Faith could study with profit. See if you agree.—The Editor]

INTRODUCTION: I have been assigned the topic of Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks as it relates to Max King's doctrine of "Realized Eschatology."

1. In other presentations this year we have seen that, according to King's theory, the climax of all Bible prophecy and history occurred in A.D. 70.
 - a. Instead of the Pentecost of Acts 2 being the hub of the Bible, King places all emphasis upon A.D. 70 for, according to King, A.D. 70 was the time of: (1) Jesus' second and final return, (2) the end of the old covenant and beginning of the new, (3) the final judgment, and (4) the end of the world.
 - b. But there is another important event that took place then, according to King; and that is that Christ established his kingdom in A.D. 70.
2. One of the great Old Testament prophecies that points to the TIME of the kingdom's establishment is Daniel 9:24-27. This passage will be the focus of our study...

A. IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

1. Before we look into the text of Daniel 9:24-27, let us look at the immediate context, especially as found back in chapter 2.

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- a. I believe we all remember the circumstances surrounding Daniel's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream in which he saw a great image. Because of time limitations, I will not relate the dream and its meaning. But we do know that the four kingdoms that Nebuchadnezzar saw were (1) his own (Babylonian), (2) followed by the Medo-Persian Empire, (3) followed by the Macedonian Empire under Alexander the Great, and then (4) the Roman Empire.
- b. Daniel announced that during this fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire) the God of heaven would "set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people..." (Daniel 2:44).
- c. I would remind us that, contrary to Premillennial expectations, Hebrews 12:28-29 clearly announces that we have received such a kingdom:

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“Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire.”

- d. Thus, about 580 years before Christ’s coming, God promised that during the fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire under which Christ lived and died) he would establish his everlasting kingdom.
2. Years before this prophecy God promised King David through Nathan the prophet, **“When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever”** (II Samuel 7:12-13). Concerning the kingdom several views are expressed:
- Premillennialists affirm that the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled, but when Christ returns he will then establish his eternal kingdom.
 - Max King denies that the fulfillment of the kingdom promise occurred until A.D. 70—or about 40 years after the first Pentecost following the Lord’s resurrection.
 - But the New Testament identifies the time of the kingdom’s fulfillment to be on the first Pentecost following the Lord’s resurrection from the dead (Acts chapter 2)...
3. There is much similarity between the way Premillennialists and Max King and his disciples interpret prophecy. In both cases, games are played with the numbers that the prophets have given us concerning the establishment of the kingdom as found in Daniel 9:24-27.
- Premillennialists have placed Daniel’s prophecy on a holding pattern following the fulfillment of the middle of the 69th week.
 - Max King finds it necessary to add 40 years to the prophecy in order for it to come out the way he wants it to come out.
4. Yes, God promised David that he would set his Christ upon David’s throne. One reading from Daniel chapter 2 gives the timetable provided by God. That kingdom was to be established during Christ’s first coming, in the first century. Bible scholars agree on this point. But some also say that God found it necessary to alter his plan.
- But would God ever alter his plan that he made to David? What does the Bible say? David wrote in Psalm 89:34-36: **“My covenant will I not break. Nor ALTER the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness: I WILL NOT LIE unto David: His seed shall endure for ever. And his throne as the sun before me.”**
 - Please observe: not only wouldn’t he break his covenant with David, God promised that he would not so much as alter it!

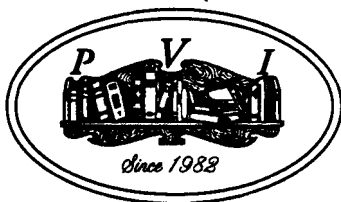
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B. IT'S ALL A MATTER OF TIME!

1. Now I want you to think seriously about this. This is key to the Max King doctrine. Now listen: If the Old Testament prophecies predicted the coming of the kingdom at a certain time and God decided to change the time and postponed what the prophets said was to come to pass, wouldn't that destroy the prophecies themselves and render them worthless? The kingdom the prophets saw was to be established during the first coming of the Christ. But some say it was not established.
2. Let's not forget that the prophets searched for the TIME of their salvation which is inseparable with Christ's suffering and his kingdom.
 - a. Consider the words of the apostle Peter in I Peter 1:9-12: "receiving the end of your faith [even] the salvation of [your] souls. Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who PROPHESIED of the grace that [should come] unto you: searching what [time] or what manner of TIME the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the suffering of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into."
 - b. Observe that the time of the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies HAS BEEN revealed and announced unto us through them that preached the gospel. This same truth is uttered by Paul in Ephesians 3:3-5.
 - c. King has a 40-year gap between the time that Gabriel announced that the kingdom would be established and the time that Max King says it was fulfilled. But closely note how important the EXACT number of years is in the minds of other Old Testament prophets.

C. DANIEL 9:24-27 ANALYZED

1. We must be reminded of the circumstances in which Daniel viewed the vision given to him by the angel Gabriel.
 - a. It was because of Israel's sinfulness that she is found in Babylonian captivity. Except for his years as a youth, Daniel spent his entire life in this captivity which lasted 70 years.
 - b. The prophet Jeremiah has foretold this captivity years before. Listen as I read from Jeremiah 25:7-12: "Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith Jehovah; that ye may provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt. Therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith Jehovah, and [I will send] unto Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will

bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the lamp. And the whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon SEVENTY YEARS. And it shall come to pass, WHEN seventy years ARE ACCOMPLISHED, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith Jehovah, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it desolate for ever" (cf., Zechariah 1:12; 7:5).

- c. We read: "For thus saith Jehovah, After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jeremiah 29:10).
 - d. Even Daniel connected his own captivity in Babylon with Jeremiah's prophecy: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books THE NUMBER OF THE YEARS whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah the prophet, for the ACCOMPLISHING of the desolations of Jerusalem, EVEN SEVENTY YEARS" (Daniel 9:1-2).
 - e. But II Chronicles 36:20-21 tells us why the captivity was for 70 years. Judah was in captivity one year for every sabbatical year she failed to observe: "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: TO FULFILL the word of Jehovah BY THE MOUTH OF JEREMIAH, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: [for] as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, TO FULFILL THREESCORE AND TEN YEARS."
 - f. Thus, Judah was to be in captivity until the land would enjoy its sabbaths. [You can read about the Mosaic sabbatical year and the year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25.]
2. Apparently Judah had violated the sabbath law for a total of 490 years; i.e., 70 years of captivity times 7. So, for 490 years Judah had ignored God's Sabbath Law. Consequently one-seventh of those years, that is, the 70 sabbatical years that belonged to God, God would reclaim in 70 years of Babylonian captivity. Instead of punishing Judah for 490 years, God allowed Judah to remain in captivity for the 70 sabbatical years she ignored.

- a. As this captivity is about to end, Daniel prays in behalf of the people and their transgression (Daniel 9:1-19). Time will not permit a reading.
- b. It is within the context of these verses that we read of Daniel's prayer and request for his people. Let's read Gabriel's answer to that prayer revealed in Daniel 9:24-27: "Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgressions, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks [*i.e.*, at the end of 69 weeks the Messiah would begin his ministry]: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times. And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations [shall come] one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall [wrath] be poured out upon the desolate."
3. Let us now outline Gabriel's answer here in Daniel 9:24-27.
- a. The Messiah's earthly advent and its purpose (verse 24): "Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon the holy city, to finish transgressions, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." Accordingly, the anointing of the most holy may occur when vision and prophecy are sealed, but the sealing up of vision and prophecy cannot be AFTER the anointing of the most holy.
- b. The coming of the Messiah is also the coming of the Savior who will save the people from their sins. An angel told Joseph, "And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- c. The beginning point of the prophetic 70 weeks is given in the first part of verse 25: "Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks" (Daniel 9:25a).
- d. Next is the initial phase—the rebuilding of Jerusalem following Babylonian Captivity: "and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times" (Daniel 9:25b).
- e. The Messiah's death is next predicted in verse 26a: "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing" (Daniel 9:26).
- f. Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed because of the Jews' rejection of the Messiah as predicted in the second part of verse 26: "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined."
- g. The first part of verse 27 speaks of the Messiah's covenant replacing the old covenant: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week."
- h. And finally, the end of the entire Jewish system is predicted: "and IN THE MIDST OF THE WEEK he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations [shall come] one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall [wrath] be poured out upon the desolate."
2. Again, this prophecy can be outlined into seven major

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parts: (1) The Messiah's earthly advent and its purpose (v. 24); (2) The Beginning point of the prophetic 70 weeks (v. 25); (3) Also in verse 25 we see the initial phase, the rebuilding of Jerusalem; (4) The Messiah is cut off (his death) after 62 weeks (v. 26); (5) Jerusalem and its temple is destroyed because of the Jews' rejection of the Messiah (v. 26); (6) The Messiah's covenant replaces the old covenant (v. 27); and (7) The Jewish system comes to an end (v. 27).

3. Let's review what shall take place in the middle of the 70th week:
 - a. The Anointed One will be cut off.
 - b. Destruction and desolation of the city and sanctuary will be DETERMINED. When? TO BE DETERMINED = TO BE ANNOUNCED!
 - c. Messiah will establish a firm covenant.
 - d. Sacrifices and oblation cease.
 - e. The end will be with a flood and with war—that, too, will be determined. When? TO BE ANNOUNCED! By whom? Apparently the Anointed One who would be cut off.

D. DANIEL'S 70-WEEKS PROPHECY FULFILLED.

1. First of all, Daniel states the purpose of the Messiah's advent was to **"finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy."** That is, the Messiah would come to resolve the sin problem.
 - a. When do we hear from Gabriel again? Gabriel does not appear again in the Old Testament. The next time we hear of him is in Luke 1:11-38. Part of his message to Mary, the mother of our Lord, was: **"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of HIS KINGDOM there shall be no end."** Have you wondered why Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and Mary? It is time for the fulfillment of Gabriel's prophecy to Daniel. We know that we have this TIME element right!
 - b. Included in Daniel's 70 weeks is the finishing **"of transgression, and to make an end of sins."** The Lord stated, **"even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"** (Matthew 20:28). When he instituted the Lord's Supper, the Lord announced, **"for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins"** (Matthew 26:28). Paul wrote concerning the purpose of the Lord's first coming: **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"** (I Corinthians 15:3). Thus the prophets prophesied the Christ

would deal with the sin problem at his first coming.

2. In the next place, the beginning point of the 70 weeks is marked in verse 25. **"Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks."** Thus we begin with the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

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For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

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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) 758-7406.

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- a. The work of Ezra the scribe included three major areas.
 - 1) Restore the law following the return from captivity.
 - 2) Rebuild the "house of God," the temple.
 - 3) Repair the ruins of the wall in Judea and Jerusalem.
 - b. The responsibility to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was given to Ezra as seen in Ezra 9:9—"For we are bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the ruins thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem." It is generally agreed among Bible scholars that Ezra's return is dated 457 B.C.
 - c. Forty-nine years later (*i.e.*, 7 X 7 weeks in prophetic computation) Jerusalem would be rebuilt in "troubled times." These "troubles" were experienced by Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel as enemies of God's people influenced Artaxerxes to cease work until a further decree should be issued (Ezra 4:7-16; 4:23; Nehemiah 1:3).
3. Thirdly, Gabriel told Daniel, **And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing**" (Daniel 9:26).
- a. Threescore and two weeks (or 62 weeks) translates into 434 years in prophetic language (*i.e.*, 62 weeks X 7).
 - b. This marks the exact beginning time of Jesus' personal ministry. If we add 49 years (the 7 weeks for rebuilding the city) to 434 years (the 62 weeks which marks the coming of God's anointed, the Christ, we have 483 years.
 - c. Adding 483 years to the year 457 B.C. (Ezra's return from Babylon) we have the year 26 A.D., the exact time of Jesus' baptism and beginning of his ministry!
 - d. Keeping in mind that our current calendar is approximately four years off, Jesus was actually born about 4 B.C.; and he began his earthly ministry 26 A.D. instead of 30 A.D.
4. In the fourth place, Daniel was told that "...after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing" (Daniel 9:25); *i.e.*, after the 69 weeks (7 plus 62 weeks) God's Messiah would be cut off in the midst of the 70th week of Gabriel's prophecy.
- a. One-half of 7 (which is week 70 in the prophecy) is 3 1/2 years—this is the exact period of Jesus' ministry!
 - b. We know that after 3 1/2 years of public ministry the Messiah was "cut off," being nailed to a Roman cross. Compare this language with that of Isaiah 53:8—"By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who [among them] considered that he was CUT OFF out of the land of the living FOR THE

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TRANSGRESSION OF MY PEOPLE to whom the strike [was due]?"

5. The Anointed One would confirm a new covenant with his people: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week" (Daniel 9:27). Although some today would deny that Christ has confirmed a new covenant, New Testament writers affirm that he did (Hebrews 8:6-13).
6. Sixthly, in the midst of the 70th week the law of Moses with its sacrifices and oblations was to be terminated: "and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (Daniel 9:27). [Note: not 40 years later, but at the time when the Messiah is "cut off."]
 - a. Paul wrote that the law was taken out of the way when Christ died (middle of the 70th week): "having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14)
 - b. The "middle wall of partition," the Old Law which separated Jew from Gentile, was abolished by the death of Christ (Ephesians 2:13-17).
 - c. Consequently, Christ fulfilled the first covenant (Matthew 5:17), and hence, took it away that he might establish the second. In Hebrews 10:9-10 we read: "then hath he said, Lo, I am come to do thy will. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." All this BEFORE A.D. 70!
7. Finally we read of the destruction of Jerusalem. Gabriel didn't say that the destruction would occur in the midst of the 70th week, rather, during the 70th week its destruction would be "determined;" "...and upon the wing of abominations [shall come] one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and THAT DETERMINED, shall [wrath] be poured out upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:27b).
 - a. Again, Gabriel did not tell Daniel WHEN the city and the temple would be destroyed. He said that would be "determined." In other words, the Messiah himself would determine the time in the middle of the last week of Daniel's 70 weeks.
 - b. In Matthew 23:37-38 the Lord lamented over Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,

that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

- c. In the next chapter Jesus announced the destruction of the temple and the city: "And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:1-2).
 - d. This really got the apostles' attention. Verse 3 continues, "And as he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, WHEN shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"
 - e. Do you notice the WHEN in their question? "Tell us, when shall these things be?" They didn't know. How could they? Though Daniel prophesied of the destruction, the Messiah must reveal the WHEN! Though the disciples probably did not comprehend Jesus' words or whether they were asking the right questions (thinking, no doubt, that the Lord spoke of one great earth-ending climactic event), they obviously did not know the TIME when would come "the full end" and "[wrath] be poured out upon the desolate" (Daniel 9:27c). That is something that would "be determined" and the Lord is about to answer that question.
8. Throughout the Bible God gives the wicked warning of imminent judgment and destruction, but rarely does God supply the WHEN. That will be revealed at a later time by perhaps a later prophet.
 - a. God told the antediluvians through Noah that he would destroy the world by water (Genesis 6:17).

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THE QUESTION

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God tells WHY: Because of the people's wickedness (Genesis 6:5-7). God tells HOW: By water. But he doesn't say WHEN. Apparently the flood wouldn't occur for another 120 years (Genesis 6:3). The New Testament is clear that the people didn't know WHEN the flood would come: "And as [were] the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they KNEW NOT UNTIL the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man" (Matthew 24:37-39).

b. We know that at the Lord's second coming HOW the world will be destroyed: By fire (II Peter 3:10). We know WHO will do it: Christ (II Thessalonians 1:6-9). We know that he will come "as a thief" (II Peter 3:9); i.e., UNANNOUNCED! We know other events that will take place at that time (the sounding of the trumpet, the company of angels, resurrection of the dead, et. al.), but we do not know WHEN: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

c. The same chapter (Matthew 24) states that Jerusalem would be destroyed as was prophesied, but now the Lord says it will be within "this generation": "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished" (Matthew 24:34)

9. Jesus therefore made direct reference to Daniel's prophecy in verse 15 when he said, "WHEN therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand)" (Matthew 24:15).

a. The Messiah was to determine the time WHEN the city and sanctuary would be destroyed. He was to make that determination during the middle of the last week of Daniel's 70 weeks.

b. When will it be, Lord? Jesus answers: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon THIS generation" (Matthew 23:36).

c. Thus, as Daniel prophesied, the Messiah would make the determination of the TIME. He did so in his Olivet discourse.

CONCLUSION: One wonders why the prophet was so careful to predict the cutting off of the prophet in the midst of a week (3 1/2 years) and then be 40 years off! We perceive that Daniel's prophecy was not fulfilled in A.D. 70 but when Daniel said it would be—in the midst of the 70th week.

The Songs We Sing

One Sunday a minister stood up before the congregation, silently glared at each individual present, and then, in

a voice that sounded like the crack of doom, exclaimed, "If I had my way, I would eliminate singing altogether because it is making fibbers out of all of you!"

"Take the last song for example—you lustily sang, 'I want to be a worker for the Lord,' and do you know what? Not one of you husky men visited a single person in the hospital last week, and only five of you ladies showed up for ladies Bible class on Thursday.

"Then you sang, 'I Surrender All,' but when the contribution was taken, some of you didn't surrender even a portion of the Lord's money for the Lord's work.

"And how many times have you sung, 'I'll go where you want me to go,' but not one of you went as far as sister Brown's to give her a little comfort in an hour of need.

"But there is one song you sang and evidently meant, 'I Shall Not Be Moved.'"

"My favorite song is 'I Stand Amazed,' for I am amazed that God puts up with our singing."

—Ridgedale Reminder

"SING WITH THE UNDERSTANDING"

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (I Corinthians 14:15)

God wants us to sing and thus from time to time we need to be encouraged to sing, but we must not forget to emphasize the importance of a proper understanding of what we are singing.

Many of our songs use words that no longer are used by us today, thus making it very difficult to understand the full meaning of the song.

Singing is more than just using words. We are to convey a message; but how can we convey a message when neither the singer nor the hearer can understand the meaning of the song?

We will consider some words that are used in our singing that usually are not understood. The following segment came from a bulletin article I recently received:

1. **Bulwark**—fortification. 2. **Ebon Pinion**—black wing. 3. **Aloes**—a burial spice. John 19:39. 4. **Sheaves**—a bundle of harvested grain. 5. **Bark**—boat. 6. **Surges**—waves of the sea. 7. **Billows**—waves of the sea. 8. **Prodigal**—wasteful person. 9. **Hallow**—to make holy. 10. **Strand**—the sea shore. 11. **Panoply**—complete armor. 12. **Cleft**—a split. 13. **Ether**—heavenly. 14. **Assail**—assault. 15. **Balm**—a soothing and fragrant ointment. 16. **Sovereign**—a monarch. 17. **Bowers**—flowers. 18. **Solace***—consolation. 19. **Repose**—rest. 20. **Portals**—a door or gate.

* This word often is mispronounced. the "o" is short as in top, not long as in hope.

—Church Bulletin
Rutherford Church of Christ
Rutherford, Tennessee 38369

Houston College of the Bible Lectures



"Isaiah, Vol. 2"
June 16 - 19, 1996
David P. Brown, Director



Sunday, June 16

Chapters

- 9:30 A.M. 40, "Israel's Comfort, Her Incomparable God" David P. Brown
 10:30 A.M. 41, "The Predictive Element of Prophecy: Evidence of God's Deity" Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
 4:00 P.M. 42:1-17, "God's Ideal Servant and a Song of Praise to God" Mark Miller
 5:00 P.M. 42:18-25, "The Punishment of Israel, God's Blind and Deaf Servant" Eddie Whitten
 6:00 P.M. 43:1-13, "God's Promise and His Challenge to Israel and the Nations" Jackie Stearsman

Monday, June 17

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 43:14-28, God Will Redeem Israel and Israel's Apathy Barry Hatcher
 10:00 A.M. 44:1-20, How to Build a God and the Folly Thereof Bob Berard
 11:00 A.M. 44:21-45:25, Cyrus, Israel's Deliverer Al Brown
 1:30 P.M. 46-47, Babylon's Overthrow Charles Collette
 2:30 P.M. 48, Further Assurance of Deliverance Lester Kamp
 **2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class — Are You a Worthy Woman? (Prov. 31) Melany Hatcher
 3:30 P.M. Two Millenniums of Church Dogma Development J. E. Choate
 7:00 P.M. 49-50, The Servant's Mission and His Depiction as a Suffering Prophet David Baker
 8:00 P.M. 51:1-53:12, Zion Encouraged and the Vicarious Suffering of God's Servant Tom L. Bright

Tuesday, June 18

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 54, The Future Glory of Zion Michael Light
 10:00 A.M. 55, Hear the Invitation: Mercy is for All Michael Hatcher
 11:00 A.M. 56, The Rejected Consoled and Blind Watchmen Rebuked Don Walker
 1:30 A.M. 57, The Wickedness of Isaiah's Day Rebuked Noah Hackworth
 2:30 P.M. Perspectives on the Development of Liberalism in the Church of Christ, Pt. 1 .. Wayne Coats
 **2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class — Mother's Day In Dorothy Mosher
 3:30 P.M. A Major Shift in the Doctrinal Positions of the Churches of Christ J. E. Choate
5:00 P.M. Houston College of the Bible Honors J. E. Choate at the HCB Banquet
 7:00 P.M. 58-59, Cry Out, Spare Not and Sin Separates Men from God Lindell Mitchell
 8:00 P.M. 60-62, The Splendors of Zion and the New Name Tommy Hicks

Wednesday, June 19

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 63-64, God's Vengeance, Mercy, and Israel's Fervent Prayer for Help Andy McClish
 10:00 A.M. 65, God's Response to Israel's Prayer Ron Cosby
 11:00 A.M. 66, Future Judgements and the Glory of Zion in the Coming Dispensation Keith Mosher
 1:30 P.M. Isaiah the Man Shan Jackson
 2:30 P.M. Perspectives on the Development of Liberalism in the Church of Christ, Pt. 2 .. Wayne Coats
 3:30 P.M. Shifting Theological Paradigms in Churches of Christ J. E. Choate
 7:00 P.M. What Does the Phrase 'New Heavens and New Earth' of Isa. 65:17 Mean? Dub McClish
 8:00 P.M. What Is 'The Everlasting Covenant' of Isa. 24:5? Mac Deaver

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Notes & Quotes...

J. E. Choate, Nashville, Tennessee: "I am sending an article for your consideration to print in **Contending for the Faith**. In the June issue of your paper for 1976, you re-printed my **Gospel Advocate** article, which was titled, 'Liberals and Conservatives: Who Are They?' It reads as if it had been written today. The thesis of the article is prophetic in the sense that it identifies and describes our liberal brethren who are carrying on total war to seize the conservative churches of Christ. A major source of their liberal influence comes from schools and papers identified with churches of Christ.

"Brother Goodpasture complimented the fact that the article was printed in **Contending for the Faith**, and that it also meant that more people would read it. He told me at the time that you were rendering a great service to the cause of Christ, that you set forth the facts in your own style of journalism.

"Throughout the years, our liberal brethren have tried to use you as their 'whipping boy' and to dismiss any cause you promoted. That's not working any more. A growing host of our brethren are awakened to the grim realization that our liberal brethren have adopted the 'brain washing' tactics of the Bostonian heretics [and] are working day and night through their 'change agents' to hoodwink their conservative...and too often, trusting, brethren. They give no quarter and will receive none.

"I am enclosing the Fowler and Shelly essays that you may see for yourself my purpose in the article. I also am enclosing the **Tennesseean**...essay of Shelly in which he brought under spiteful attack the conservative churches that he said were dying and would perish from the earth. One of the most ludicrous spectacles of contemporary worship is carried on by the Woodmont Hills church of Christ meeting in the First Christian Church in Nashville.

"It is reassuring that another generation of competent and faithful brethren will continue with **Contending for the Faith**. Never has the need for it [been] so urgent."

[NOTE: "All those years that you devoted to teaching at Lipscomb College/ University were important years." I replied to brother Choate, under date of March 9, 1995. "I have no doubt that the things you PERSONALLY taught there were the truth, even if some of your contemporaries were teaching otherwise. However, in my view, the writings you have been doing these past few years, whether books or through our periodicals, far outweigh all those decades of teaching at Lipscomb.

"Thank you in particular for the article you enclosed with your letter of March 6th. I deeply appreciated it and plan to feature it in an issue of **Contending for the Faith**, Lord; willing, within the next couple of months...

"Yes, I recall the 1976 article you mentioned. In fact, I looked it up again this morning. You are right. It is just as applicable today as it was when you wrote it almost two decades ago!...As for what brother Goodpasture told you, he and I were great friends. When I saw items in the **Advocate** in those days that I thought needed wider attention, I would ask his permission to reprint, which he always graciously granted. Such was the case with your article, as well.

"It was not generally known; however, brother Goodpasture ordered my little books, **AXE ON THE ROOT**, Volumes I, II and III, in large quantities and personally distributed them where he felt they might accomplish the most good. When I would ask HIM to write on

the SAME SUBJECTS, he would say that I was on the right track, saying what was NEEDED to be said. My protests to him (that it would carry more weight if HE said what was needed) got nowhere. But he did distribute scores—possibly hundreds—of sets of **AXE ON THE ROOT**; and I was ever grateful—just as I am to you for all you said in your letter and article. God bless you always, (Signed) Ira Y. Rice., Jr.]

W. O. Blakeney, of Stinnet, Texas, enclosed \$30.00 toward our "special mailings," saying, "I hope a little helps." Later he sent another \$15.00, saying, "I appreciate your work for the Lord's church. Your **Contending for the Faith** is great."

Sam J. Mormino, of Kemp, Texas, enclosed an article from the **Dallas Morning News**, saying, "We are all concerned here at Highway 85 Church of Christ in Seven Points, Texas. Letters have been written. Prayers have been said. Keep up the good work."

[NOTE: "Thank you for the article you sent from the **Dallas Morning News** regarding 'Sounds of Change' in the churches of Christ. I was not able to work it in earlier; however, I have it laid out to include in an issue soon." IYR Jr.]

Gary Blasingame, of Katy, Texas, sent a case of 16 copies of Goebel Music's **Behold The Pattern** as a contribution to our work.

Peggy Burden, of Obion, Tennessee, enclosed \$50.00, saying, "I appreciate the wonderful work you are doing. Use this as needed...Wish I could do more."

Asghar Ali, Lahore, Pakistan: "I started full-time preaching in 1972 without any American brother working with me. During all these years we met little success but many heart-aches and much discouragement.

"Some of our brethren like brother Hogan, brother Parker French and brother Rice had been a lot of encouragement to us, without which we could have said goodbye to full-time preaching long ago.

"We are thankful to you for your continued support for us as well as for the school..."

TRUTH FOR THE WORLD AND SEED SOWING MERGE

Truth for the World and Seed Sowing have announced a merger of the two media mission works. Truth for the World's overseing congregation, the Olive Branch Church of Christ in Olive Branch, Mississippi, will continue to oversee the dramatically expanded effort, which will retain the name Truth for the World. Seed Sowing has been overseen by the East Ridge church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Paul Kidwell, Sr., long-time speaker and founder of Seed Sowing, will share the speaking duties on the English radio and television programs with Jim Dearman, the current speaker on the Truth for the World English broadcasts.

Truth for the World is currently aired on 30 television stations, including a powerful facility in Russia. The radio programs are aired over 51 stations, and the English broadcast now covers the globe in shortwave. Broadcasts are also produced in French and Chinese Mandarin. Truth for the World includes a massive literature work and extensive campaign follow-up, making it a total approach to world evangelism.

Other full-time staff members include Ed Crookshank, coordinator of campaigns and printing, John Grubb, coordi-

nator of Chinese Mandarin, Rod Rutherford, coordinator of the literature work, and Jim Tittle, coordinator of radio and television production. Two other staff members, Roy J. Hearn and Dave Amos, answer Bible questions from viewers, listeners and readers. Truth for the World also employs four secretaries, including one in Russia.

The Seed Sowing television program is seen in over 1800 cities in all 50 states, Southern Canada and Central America. In addition to cable and commercial broadcasts, it is seen on two satellite networks with the signal available to more than 6 million dish owners. The radio programs are aired currently on nine stations.

The merger of the Seed Sowing and Truth for the World ministries will have a major impact upon media evangelism among the churches of Christ. This unique "total approach" through broadcasts, literature and campaigns will now be more effective in taking precious souls throughout the world "from hearing to heaven."

—Jim Dearman
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Central Arizona Church of Christ, Post Office Box 12421, Casa Grande, Arizona 85222: "Because of the liberalism of the Casa Grande and Coolidge congregations here in Central Arizona, we decided that we must depart and worship according to the dictates of the Bible, in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24).

"We purchased a parcel of land (1 1/4 acres) for the purpose of some day building a church building. We purchased land with minimal down and are presently making payments. However, we have now decided to sell the land because it has become an undesirable location. We expect to recover 100%(+) of our investment.

"We are seeing some dissatisfaction in other members of congregations here in Central Arizona, as people are beginning to wake up to the liberalism that is growing like cancer.

"We are willing to help with travel expenses for an elder who would want to oversee this effort."

Bill Lockwood, who formerly preached at Marlow, Oklahoma, now preaches to the Eastern Hills Church of Christ at Marshall, Texas. His new mailing address is 25 Cherrywood Circle, Marshall, Texas 75670-7609.

Fred Davis, formerly of Eaglewood, Ohio, now lives at 29511 Bock Street, Garden City, Michigan 48135-2304.

RECOGNIZING REALITY

The Southern Hills church, 5150 East 101st Street, has publicized their disassociation from churches of Christ in this city and elsewhere. While it grieves us, it was not unexpected.

Some years ago an elder of the Southside congregation talked with me regarding our usage of the property which they owned on 51st Street. He wanted to see these facilities used by a congregation that would be true in its preaching and worship to the New Testament order. A group of brethren did take it over and, along with some other preachers in the city, I did some fill-in preaching for them until they acquired a resident preacher.

With the passing of time, it became evident that some leading persons in that congregation did not wish to be confined

to the limitations which we believe are necessary in the restoration of New Testament faith and practice. Preachers and teachers, both within their membership and those brought in, only kindled their determination to be different from their sister churches of Christ. The question of baptism for Christian fellowship, the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, the function of ladies in the leadership of the public worship services, and other matters were decided, placing them at variance with their sister congregations. They are, to all practical purposes, what is generally regarded as a Community Church.

The announcement of their separation from us is now a recognition of reality. Since they are determined to be interdenominational in their fellowship, it is best that they make this publicly known. Henceforth, members of the church who want no part of denominationalism will not be mis-led into attending there when they are seeking a place to worship and serve according to the teaching of the New Testament.

—Hershel Dyer

10th & Rockford Church of Christ
Tulsa, Oklahoma
[Via Bixby, Oklahoma Weekly Bulletin]

"Make the main thing the main thing—and the main thing is preaching the word of God."—Perry B. Cotham, South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, at Beeville, Texas.

WHICH ONE IS CONFUSED?

A preacher said to a farmer, "Do you belong to the Christian family?"

"No," said he, "They live two farms down."

"I mean, are you ready for the judgment day?"

"When is it?"

"It could be tomorrow, or even today?"

"Well, when you know for sure when it is, let me know. My wife will probably want to go both days."

—The McCloud Messenger

COME OVER INTO MACEDONIA AND HELP US (Acts 16:9-10)

I am approaching 75 years of age, and my wife of 50 years (due to putting up with me all this time) is a little past her prime, also.

We have seen in the past 30 or so years the church in Washington state, which was never as staunch as the Bible belt, drift step by step into attitudes and actions that certainly are not pleasing to God.

This is a great place to live, with excellent climate and many financial opportunities.

I believe the church would grow in this location if there could be found two or three more families who would consider moving here and starting a sound congregation. Young couples who are sound in the faith could build a great life for themselves both financially and spiritually. People retired from their jobs, but not from the work of the Lord, could be a great help in this effort, also.

I pledge the sincere help of my wife and me in working with you in every way that we can. Our home is always open to anyone who is interested in surveying this work, just visiting, or looking for a place to live and work.

Please feel free to contact me at any time, day or night. Questions invited. (Signed) Ronald T. Keever, 702 South Volland, Kennewick, Washington 99336 or telephone (509) 783-2504.

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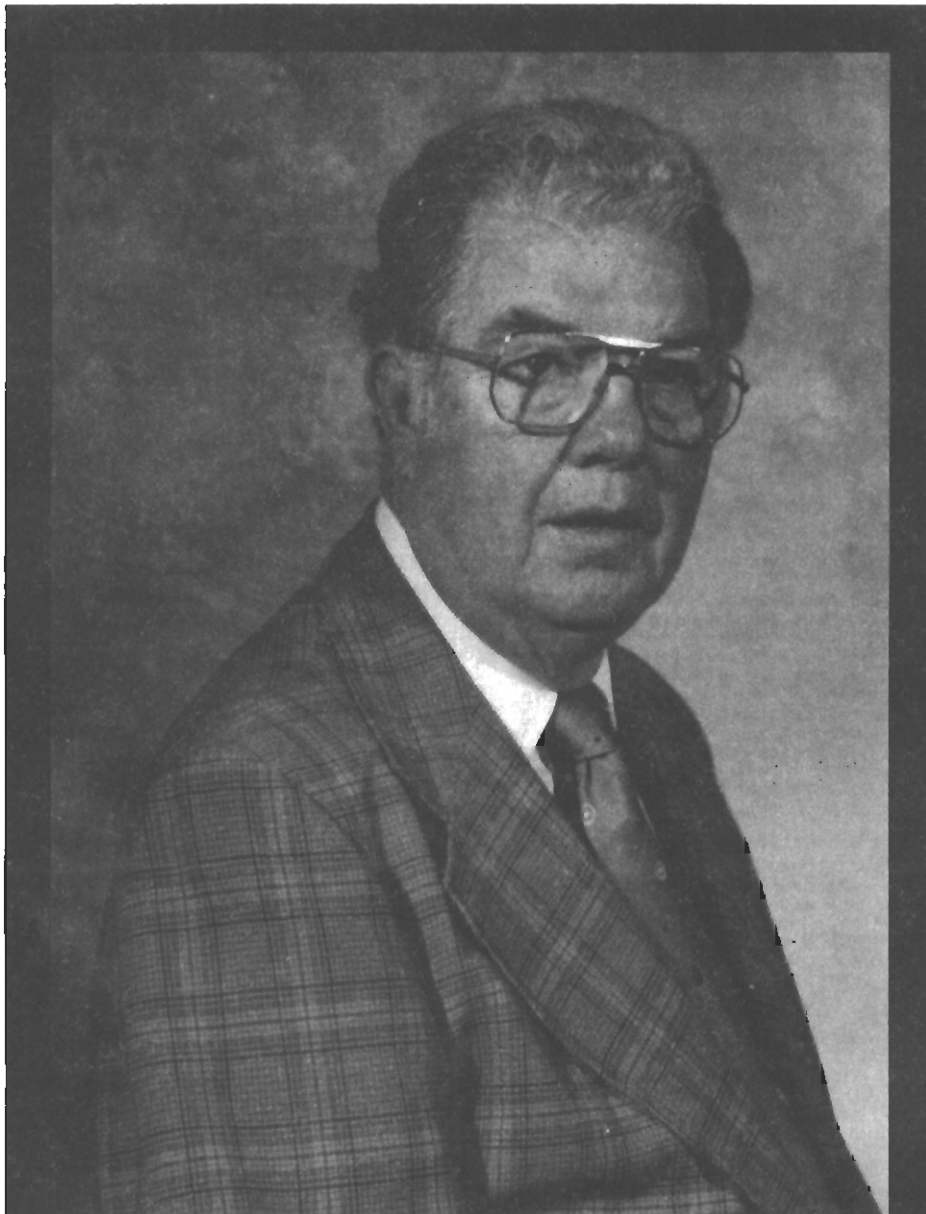
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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS



WILBUR COSS, JR.
[1919-1995]

Contending FOR THE Faith

Volume XXVII, No. 5

May/1996

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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...

EDITOR LAMENTS PASSING OF LONGTIME FRIEND AND GOSPEL PREACHER— WILBUR COSS, JR.

The first time I recall meeting Wilbur Coss, Jr., he and I crossed trails in the offices of A. M. Burton, high on the 28th floor of the L & C Building, in Nashville, Tennessee. He was a gospel preacher seeking help to preach in the Greater Chicago area, where eventually he established some 30 congregations of our Lord's church. I was returning for my second long-term missionary journey to the Far East; and I, too, needed brother Burton's help. We both got it.

A bond of friendship sprang up immediately between the two of us that was to last until his death on Saturday, September 16, 1995. In fact, he and I had a long-standing agreement that whichever one of us survived the other should have a part in the funeral of the one who died first.

SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR RUSSIA

Although his proper name was **Wilbur**, everybody called him **Bill**. When his second wife **Wilma Coss** telephoned to me that he had just died, I was in the final stages of leaving for another missionary effort in Murmansk, Russia, 1,000 miles north of Moscow, above the Arctic Circle.

It was a terrible decision to have to make. The only way that I could stay for Bill's funeral, I should have to cancel my part of the Russian effort. After Wilma and I discussed it briefly, she and I concluded that Bill himself would want me to go on to Murmansk however much we really had planned for me to preach his funeral. It fell to **Fred House**, minister to the Shades Mountain congregation, in Birmingham, to preach it in my stead.

MAN PROPOSES; GOD DISPOSES

A similar decision had to be made by brother Coss himself back in the '70s. At my invitation, he had come to Taiwan, where Vada and I were laboring for the Master at the time. I still can see him standing on one of the overpasses crossing the principal street in downtown Taipei. He could not get over the teeming traffic zip-zip-zipping every which way below—each car containing another lost soul to be sought for Christ.

He also could not get the hang of Taiwan currency. One day he had been out shopping for something for his first wife **Mae**. When he got back to the house, I

asked him how much he paid for it. "Two green ones and three red ones," he replied. He had not a clue how much it had cost!

When he returned from that visit to Taiwan, he and I had agreed that he would go get Mae, close out their home in Michigan, then both of them would return together for long-term work with Vada and me in Taiwan. It was not to be. No sooner did he get back to the U.S. than he had a severe heart attack and almost died. His health was never good enough after that for overseas work.

I PREACHED MAE'S FUNERAL

As things turned out, when Bill's first wife died, I was Stateside for a time—so at least I got to preach *her* funeral. She was a sister to the Queen of Country Music, **Kitty Wells**, who attended Mae's last rites. In fact, when that funeral was over, we all went over to Kitty's and Johnny Wright's house to visit.

Some years later, Bill married **Wilma Fassino**. Two finer Christian women than Mae and Wilma could never be found. From that time onward, until his passing, I often was in their home—and both of them continued supporting Vada's and my missionary work as long as he lived. She still does!

MISSIONARIES AT HEART

Probably the principal reason the Cosses were so interested was that, at heart, they were missionaries *themselves*. When the winters in Michigan finally became too much for Bill's waning health, they moved to Florida to establish a new congregation at the very end of Highway I-75.

The **Herman Carters**, as I recall, helped them make the move—and continued to support them long after they arrived in Florida. The **John Spiveys**, who had retired from the Pan-American Airways, in Miami, joined with the Cosses in establishing the new congregation.

When the time came to construct the building for this congregation, I was happy to help them raise the money. They built it as economically as possible, doing most of the work themselves.

MADISON SPONSORED THEM EARLIER

Although the Madison congregation had sponsored much of Bill's earlier work, by the time he and Mae moved to Florida, such no longer was the case. How it grieved his heart to know that his former sponsoring church was drifting into doctrinal liberalism!

In his declining years, he and Wilma moved, first to Pensacola, Florida, where for several years they were members of the Bellview church that continues to sponsor Vada's and my missionary work even now. Though no longer able to do full time local preaching, Bill, in his inimitable way, would fill in from time to

time—especially during his son-in-law **John Priola's** (and later **Bobby Liddell's**) ministry there.

FINAL MOVE TO MAYLENE, ALABAMA

As his health continued to deteriorate, it was brother Coss's judgment that he and Wilma should move to Maylene, Alabama, to be closer to some of their children. Moving their trailer home to Maylene, that is where they lived until his passing.

Bill Coss preached the gospel for more than 35 years. He could fracture the English language in such an attractive way that nobody ever seemed to mind but were drawn to Christ by his preaching.

FRED HOUSE PREACHES FUNERAL

Although the obituary notice that appeared in the paper said that I officiated at his funeral, in fact, I was thousands of miles away, in Russia, instead; and brother House took my place. It galled me to have to miss brother Coss's funeral; but there was no way that I could be both places at once.

Funeral services were September 18, 1995, at the Rockco Chapel, of Montevallo, Alabama, near the Cosses' home. Graveside services were held the following day at the Spring Hill Cemetery, of Nashville, Tennessee.

Survivors include his wife **Wilma E. Coss**, of Maylene, Alabama; daughter, **Pat Reynolds**, of McMinnville, Tennessee; sons, **Jerry Coss**, of Harpersville, Alabama, and **Randall Coss**, of Melvern, Pennsylvania; a sister **Mary Biasco**, of Cleveland, Ohio; a brother, **Al Coss**, of Nashville, Tennessee; nine grandchildren and one great grandchild.

WILMA'S LOVING CARE

Of all the examples of tender, loving care exemplified by a wife, there was no way that Wilma's taking care of Bill Coss in those last years at Maylene could have been surpassed. Even though his faculties were failing, she never gave up as long as she had the strength to look after him. Even when he finally had to be placed in a nursing home, she continued to do all she could.

When possible, I always tried to stop by Maylene to see Bill and Wilma in those later years. In her letter to me, she acknowledged my bringing the **Alexander Nesterkin** family, from Russia, by to see them.

"It was great getting to see the family from Russia," she wrote. "It must be a good feeling to know of all your works in getting the truth to the world. I pray much good can come from each endeavor you have made. May God bless you both always..."

And God bless you, too, Wilma. Even though Bill no longer is here in person, let us never give up until Jesus says it is enough and calls us home!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

"THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM" (Hebrews 12:2)

Danny Bennett

The apostle Paul, in Hebrews 12:2, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, presents a remarkable insight into the "joy" set before Christ on the cross. Through the use of one word "joy" (*chara*) Paul reveals why Christ endured the cross. We have presented before us the grand theme of the Bible: God's plan of redemption sealed through the unselfish love of Jesus for the church, the church of Christ, and for all mankind.

Unfortunately, however, this verse with the abundance of information contained therein is often misinterpreted and "joy" improperly defined. Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." This verse is like unto "...a merchant seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45, 46).

Though space does not permit in this article, one will find it beneficial to research the following words in the original Greek: set before, endured, despising, and shame. The entire premise of this article rests upon the exegesis of the word "joy" in the phrase "the joy set before him." To assist in this endeavor, the following will be considered:

THE "JOY" WAS NOT THE OLD LAW: It was God's plan from the beginning that the old law was to be abolished. This fact was prophesied in the old testament having been fulfilled in the death of Christ on the cross (*cf.*, Matthew 5:17; Isaiah 24:5; Zechariah 11:10-13). Paul, referring to Christ, says in Ephesians 2:14-16, he "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances." (*cf.*, Romans 6:14; Colossians 2:14-16; Hebrews 10:9).

THE "JOY" WAS NOT AN EARTHLY KINGDOM: Although many preach that Christ will return and establish an earthly kingdom, this is contrary to the inspired word of God. Jesus states in John 18:36, that "My kingdom is not of this world" (*cf.*, John 1:5, 11; 14:1-4; Acts 1:6; II Corinthians 5:16). Paul says in I Corinthians 15:20-26, that the kingdom (the church) would be returned to the Father at the second coming, "...Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God..."

THE "JOY" WAS NOT THE TEMPORAL THINGS OF THIS WORLD: Jesus, being omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient had all things which included things in heaven and things on earth (*cf.*, Matthew 9:4; 18:20; 28:18; John 1:1-4, 14, 48; 4:16-19, 28, 29; 5:26, 27; 10:30; 21:17; Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:3).

THE "JOY" WAS NOT THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM: Jesus declares in John 16:15, "all things that the Father hath are mine..." Paul, in Philippians 2:6, expounds "Who being in the form of God, thought it not

robbery to be equal with God:" (*cf.*, John 1:1-4, 14; 3:13; 10:30; 13:3; Hebrews 1:1-3).

With the preceding negatives as a guide, the exegesis of "joy," in Hebrews 12:2, is simplified. Therefore, we now turn our attention to the positive, which affirms our original premise. A preponderance of scriptural evidence points to the fact that the "joy set before him" refers to the church, the church of Christ, based on the following:

THE WORLD IN SIN. Paul says, in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (*cf.*, John 1:29; 15:24; Romans 4:25; I John 1:10; 2:2).

JESUS CAME TO SAVE THE LOST. Jesus explains, in Matthew 18:11, "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." (*cf.*, John 3:16, 17; Galatians 1:4; I Timothy 1:15; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 7:25).

CHRIST DIED FOR THE CHURCH. In Acts 20:28, Paul, speaking to the Ephesian elders, says that Christ died for the church "...which he hath purchased with his own blood." (*cf.* Matthew 26:26-28; Acts 26:23; Romans 8:32; I Corinthians 15:3, 4; Ephesians 5:25; I Peter 3:18).

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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 knowledge of the existence of God, creation, Jesus Christ, salvation, heaven and hell. It gives us 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 pollutions 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 eventually delivers an increasingly rebellious people into the hands of its enemies (Nehemiah 9:26-27).

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FACTS

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 a *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 with 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 stomped under foot the Word of God. She wanted what *she* wanted and she was going to have it! She had eternal life in her hands and threw it away.

"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).

IN DENOMINATIONALISM

All the sin problems in denominationalism may be laid 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 found in the Word of God). The people in Jesus' 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 claim to have *rightly divided* the Bible, but how many know the difference between

- The Old and New Testaments?
- 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). All of us are at the crossroads. What will your decision be? Will we respect the Word of God today? Will we believe and obey the gospel of Christ today so as to position ourselves 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]

The Roots Of Our Present Lie Deep In The Past..

Many wonder how the churches of Christ—so strong, united and vibrant in the '40s and '50s—got to be so weak, divided and confused in the '70s, '80s and '90s. Something happened in the '60s—and since—that changed the whole course of our direction. **ONLY ONE SOURCE EXISTS** showing step by step how many were led from our *NON*-denominational plea of yesterday to the *INTER*-denominational stance that many are taking today. If we *ever* are to get back on course—restoring the church that Jesus Christ built in the 1st Century—we must understand what happened to us—and correct it.

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SEVEN 'MUSTS' MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE

Jesse Whitlock

Many times we find the word "must" in God's word. Many more times that word is implied in certain references. Vine defines this Greek word, *dei*, as "an impersonal verb, signifying 'it is necessary' or 'one must,' 'one ought,' ..." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 775.

Let us note the thrust of this little word in seven powerful passages of Holy Writ:

I. JOHN 3:14. **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST the Son of man be lifted up."** If the serpent had not been lifted up in the wilderness, the people would have had no cure for the deadly snakebites. Likewise, if God had not allowed his only begotten Son to be lifted up on the cross, we should be without a cure for the deadly problem that confronts all mankind, *i.e.*, SIN. Note John 3:15, **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."**

II. ACTS 4:12. **"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we MUST be saved."** Every person who is saved must be saved by obedience to the authority of Christ our Lord. Christ is **"...the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"** (Hebrews 5:9a).

III. HEBREWS 11:6. **"But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God MUST believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."** Trust is a MUST! We cannot be pleasing to God without belief. Recall the words of a hymn we sing on occasion: "Trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey." Don't forget the definition of the word "must," *i.e.*, "it is necessary"... "one must"... "one ought."

IV. ACTS 16:30. **"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what MUST I do to be saved?"** There is no greater question that any man can ask. Remember the imperative force and thrust of that little word, MUST. Watch this: (vs. 31) **"...they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."**, (vs. 32) **"...they spake unto him the word of the Lord..."**, (vs. 33) **"...and was baptized, he and all his..."**, (vs. 34) **"...and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."** Please note that this is not a case of belief or faith only. They had to hear the word of the Lord and obey the Lord's word. So MUST man today!

V. JOHN 3:7. **"Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye MUST be born again."** This is the Lord's instruction to Nicodemus. In the context of John 3 we note that one cannot enter into the kingdom of God unless that one is born again. Christ stated, in John 3:5, **"...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** The new birth, being born anew, *i.e.*, new testament baptism.

This "MUST" is just as imperative today as it was when first commanded.

VI. JOHN 4:24. **"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him MUST worship him in spirit and in truth."** We must worship God with the right attitude and with the right authority [dare we say, pattern?]-yea, verily! Our worship then MUST conform to the powerful and precious truth of God!

VII. II CORINTHIANS 5:10. **"For we MUST all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."** All mankind will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and ALL of us will be judged. Quicker than you can say, **"O. J. Simpson,"** the whole world will be judged by God. Your destiny and mine will be based upon our obedience or disobedience to God's will. (Hebrews 9:27; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Matthew 7:21-23; Romans 14:12)

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[NOTE: This article first appeared in the church bulletin at Marlow, Oklahoma.—*The Editor*]

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Jeremiah: A Preacher's Man of Old

John T. Lewis

The words of Jeremiah came during the reigns of three kings of Judah (Jeremiah 1:1-3). Only one of these, Josiah, was a man dedicated to the precepts of God. With idolatry rampant throughout the entire nation and sin in every bed, Jeremiah had an uphill battle to fight (3:25).

Preachers of our time face a similar situation. Sin corrupts the camp more than ever and denominational garbage is illegally dumped upon our young people week in and week out. The true preacher of God's word loses countless hours of sleep contemplating the war in which he fights and how he may best overcome the spiritual shell shock he endures every time he confronts the ungodly child of God.

Thankfully, we have a man of God recorded in the pages of Jeremiah to help us preachers in situations such as this. Looking at life through his eyes helps us to understand our trials and tribulations as nothing new. All preachers of God's word have struggled with the same problems. Notice these encouraging facts concerning the life of Jeremiah:

HE WAS A MAN OF DEEP CONVICTION

Jeremiah truly believed what he preached. Clearly this conviction is seen in that he actually loved God's people even more than they loved themselves. They had no concern that they had forsaken the fountain of living waters (2:13). Their relationship with God was dried up beyond the point of severe spiritual drought. They could not care less about their relationship with God.

But Jeremiah did! While they were out playing the harlot and committing abomination, Jeremiah was weeping. He said, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears..." (9:1). Does it not take deep conviction to shed tears for the child of God caught up in the slavery of sin?

Preachers soon learn that they actually care more about brethren than many of them care about themselves. You may earnestly plead with your brother or sister to depart from the iniquity, but nine times out of ten they will laugh you to scorn. But deep conviction means you care, even when they have no care.

HE WAS A MAN OF DISCOURAGEMENT (AT TIMES)

Great servants of God are often portrayed as men who could not be shaken. However, when one has as much love as Jeremiah, discouragement will happen from time to time. God told Jeremiah to find a righteous man in all of Judah (5:1) but it could not be done. On one occasion Jeremiah said, "...no one takes it to heart" (12:11b). In other words, no one wanted to hear what the prophet had to say! No one was listening; no one cared. Does that sound familiar, preacher? How many brethren say in essence, "We will not walk therein" (6:16) or "We will not hearken" to the words that you preach? (6:17). No wonder Jeremiah became discouraged!

Perhaps his worst discouragement came when he faced Pashur the high priest. Pashur put Jeremiah in stocks to keep his mouth shut (20:1-2). After being released, God's prophet poured out his heart before God. He said, "everyone mocketh me" (20:7) and "I shouted, Violence and spoil" (20:8). His sermons were the type known today as "hell, fire and brimstone." The people probably thought Jeremiah was too negative, issue oriented, and stuck in the old ways. Like Jeremiah, when we preachers are faced with ungodly brethren of this caliber, we can become discouraged.

HE WAS A MAN OF DEDICATION

His deep dedication is clearly portrayed in Jeremiah 20:9:

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name." Jeremiah was about to throw in the towel. He was ready to raise the white flag and give up on God. Yet the verse continues: "But his word was in mine heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

His discouragement got him down for a time, but this was a great learning experience for him. He used it to become more and more dedicated to the mission he had been given (1:10). The word of God within him gave him the determination to go on!

This is why it is vitally important for preachers to continually digest the oracles of God. Many preachers turn to liberalism because they have failed to center their ministry upon this one vital element. Preachers must constantly give themselves to reading, exhortation, and doctrine (1 Timothy 4:13). This will give us the dedication to press on.

HE WAS A DOWN-TO-EARTH PREACHER

Far too many words are being echoed forth from our pulpits today that could not be considered the word of God. Like those of old, many brethren protest, "prophesy [preach] not in the name of the Lord" (Jeremiah 11:21). People would rather hear ten jokes, 15 stories, and 20 personal experiences than the soul-saving word of God.

Preaching must be "devotional" (Max Lucado) rather than doctrinal (Apostle Paul, Titus 2:1). And what's worse, every time the brethren say, "Jump," the preacher says, "How high?!" (II Timothy 4:3-4). But that's not what Jeremiah did. These people know exactly what was being said.

When Jehoiakim cut out the word of God with his pen knife, Jeremiah didn't tell him ten jokes and 20 stories before finally making his point so as not to offend him. No, he told this ungodly ruler that his dead body would be cast into the heat of the day (Jeremiah 36:30). And, believe me, Jehoiakim knew exactly what Jeremiah was saying.

Preacher, that's what we need today. Preaching has to be clear, to the point, and without compromise. It needs to be made plain and without ambiguity (Habakkuk 2:2). Most importantly, it must be the word of God.

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Sermon Outline

Causes Of Error

(Matthew 22:29)

Ronald W. Osborn

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There are a lot of good, faithful gospel preachers and teachers around teaching the truth to the best of their ability. But there also are some, both in and out of the church, who teach things contrary to the word of God.
- B. This was predicted to happen. **“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves.”** (NKJV)
- C. This is happening today. People come in among us from outside, but also arise among us from inside speaking false things. No one will ever get up in front of you and claim to be a false teacher. It would be easy if this were the case. They come to us in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are wolves.
- D. What causes false teaching? There are many things, but perhaps Jesus answered it best in his response to the Sadducees in Matthew 22. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. Yet, they asked Jesus a question concerning the resurrection. From Matthew 22:29, notice his reply: **“You are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.”** (NKJV)

I. NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES

- A. The first thing that causes error then is not knowing the scriptures. **“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”** (Hosea 4:6)
- B. This always has been a problem for God’s people.
 1. We are commanded to study to be approved by God and also to handle the truth correctly (II Timothy 2:15).
 2. The negative of this is that if we refuse to study we shall not be pleasing to God and will handle the word incorrectly.
 3. The Bible gives us all we need for life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). Paul told Timo-

- thy: **“And that from childhood you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”** (II Timothy 3:15, NKJV)
4. Again, the negative of this is, if we do not know the scriptures, we will not be wise unto salvation.
 - a. They are God-breathed and make the man of God complete (II Timothy 3:16-17).
 - b. They are how we answer the devil when temptation comes our way. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10)

- C. We have several examples mentioned in the Bible of those who erred because they did not know the word.
 1. Sadducees in our text. They did understand that marriage is for the fleshly part of us, not the spiritual.
 2. Pharisees asked him about divorce (Matthew 19:1-12). They went back only to Moses’ teaching, not to the beginning of God’s will.
 3. Modern teachers concerning Revelation and Armageddon.

II. NOT KNOWING THE POWER OF GOD

- A. A second reason for error that Jesus mentions in our text is not knowing the power of God. There are again so many examples in the Bible of those who made the same mistake. We will mention a few.
 1. Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:16f).
 2. The seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13f). The so-called faith healers today need a lesson such as this.
 - a. People say we are limiting the power of God when we deny miracles today. However, they are the ones doing this.
 - b. When we recognize the power of God, we understand that he sometimes limits himself and doesn’t always do everything that he is able to do. He no longer creates, even though he could. **“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”** (Isaiah 55:8-9, NKJV).

- B. Job realized the power of God, after God spoke to him toward the latter part of the book. "He stretches out the north over empty space; he hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the water in his thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it. He covers the face of his throne, and spreads his clouds over it. He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his rebuke" (Job 26:7-11, NKJV).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Error then and now is caused by two things: not knowing 1) the scriptures or 2) the power of God. "And to the man he said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding'." (Job 28:28, NKJV).
- B. After Jesus answered them, he silenced them once and for all, "and no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question him any more" (Matthew 22:46, NKJV)
- C. Truth will still silence the critics today. But it must be presented wisely, and understandably, and lived by those presenting it. This is the most effective way to combat error.

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• **Heaven's Imperatives or Man's Innovations: Shall We Restructure the Church of Christ?** 1995 Memphis School of Preaching Lectures (837 pp.). Retail—\$17.95; *our price—\$16.00.*

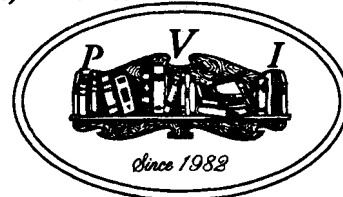
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INDEX

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

VOLUME XV/1984

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

TOPICAL INDEX

Acting Ministry

Jim Pickens, in Overland Park/Kansas City's church bulletin, rejoices over their "multiple ministries," including their so-called "acting ministry," entitled "His Seekers," under the leadership of John Verlin (January/1984, Page 4)

Apologetics Press

Announcing the New "Apologetics Press Complex" (October/1984, Pages 9-10)

Augusta Road/Greenville, South Carolina

"Carolina Preachers Prove That Ray Road/Greenville Is 'Crossroads' Heresy! Crossroaders' *Modus Operandi* Sometimes Makes Them Hard to Identify; But Faithful Brethren Establish Beyond Question That Augusta Road Was Justified in Withdrawing Fellowship from Faction Causing Division" (February/1984, Pages 1, 3-16)

Bay Springs, Mississippi

"How Much Would You Give Up For Your Faith? Faithful Brethren Need to Rally to Support of Those Sacrificing For the Truth Both at Laurel As Well As at Bay Springs, Mississippi" (April/1984, Pages 8-10)

Belief in God

Dan Jenkins tells why "I Believe in God." (January/1984, Page 10)

Big City Churches

"Are Our Big City Churches Still Standing for the Truth? Or Are Most of Them Leading the Restoration Movement Back Into Error?" (January/1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

Bigham, Harold

"Looking For a Preacher? Harold Bigham Graduates from Bellview This July" (April/1984, Page 15)

Boles Tract

"Getwell Church Reprints H. Leo Boles Cogent Tract Re: 'The Way of Unity Between 'Christian Church' and 'Churches of Christ'" (September/1984, Page 16)

Bound Volumes

"Annual Bound Volumes of Contending for the Faith Remain Brotherhood's Best

Source of Reliable Information Re: 'Crossroads Philosophy' Heresy" (August/1984, Pages 10-12)

Bullard, Chris

Successor to Douglas F. Parsons continues contrary practices as minister to Overland Park/Kansas City, Missouri. (January/1984, Page 3)

"Campus Evangelism"

"Underground Movement Has Surfaced! 'Campus Evangelism' Was Underground Front"—by Foy L. Smith (June/1984, Pages 1, 5-6)

Christian Chronicle

"Do Baird, Norton Understand Consequences of New Direction They Are Taking Christian Chronicle?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (September/1984, Pages 7-12)

Christian Church

Chris Bullard, minister to the Overland Park/Kansas City, Missouri church, invited their members to attend the Johnson County Christian Church's "Walk Through The Bible" seminar (January/1984, Page 4)

Clayton, John

Heretic John Clayton is used by Overland Park/Kansas City to teach re: Evolution (January/1984, Page 3)

Collinsville (Oklahoma) Elders

"Jury Declares Elders Guilty!"—by Bill Hamrick, Editor, *Christian Worker* (April/1984, Pages 10-11)

Brotherhood Generally Sympathetic with Collinsville Elders Re: Trial (May/1984, Pages 4-6)

"Verdict 'Lord's Will'—Woman gets \$390,000 in church dispute"—by Nolan Clay, *Tulsa Tribune* writer (May/1984, Pages 5-6)

"Attorney grills church elder—Another offender wasn't confronted, lawyer suggests"—by Nolan Clay, *Tribune* writer (reproduced from *Tulsa Tribune*) (May/1984, Page 7)

Letter from Collinsville elders to Handley Church of Christ (May/1984, Pages 6-7)

Collinsville Elders, Lawyer Appear Before Special Forum March 24 at Tulsa Workshop (May/1984, Pages 7-10)

Communications Ministry

Jim Pickens rejoices in Overland Park/Kansas City's church bulletin re: a "communications ministry" led by John and Janet Mills. (January/1984, Page 4)

Compromise

"Mixing Truth and Error to Draw a Crowd"—by Quentin Dunn (October/1984, Page 4)

"Restoration Summit—Unity or Compromise?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (November/1984, Pages 1, 3-9, 11-16)

Crossroads Heresy

"Carolina Preachers Prove that Ray Road/Greenville Is 'Crossroads' Heresy" (February/1985, Pages 1, 3-16)

"How Do You Tell a 'Crossroader'?"—Editorial by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (February/1984, Page 2)

"Soul-Winning Ministries (A Special Report on Crossroads-Trained Ministers)" (February/1984, Page 5)

Revealing Quotations Photo-Reproduced from Chuck Lucas' "Minister's Memo..." in *At the Crossroads*, Official Bulletin of Crossroads/Gainesville, Florida (February/1984, Page 16)

"Virgil Leach, Wife, Others at Lancaster, California, Renounce 'Crossroads', Return" (May/1984, Pages 1, 3)

"CROSSROADISM—Classic Example of 'Tares Among the Wheat'" (August/1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

Garnett Road and Tulsa Workshop Continue Playing 'Footsy' With Crossroads and Christian Church (May/1984, Pages 3-4)
Tulsa Workshop and Crossroads: Siamese Twins—by W. R. Craig (May/1984, Pages 3-4)

"Annual Bound Volumes of Contending for the Faith Remain Brotherhood's Best Source of Reliable Information Re: 'Crossroads Philosophy' Heresy" (August/1984, Pages 10-11)

Mid McKnight's evaluation of the 'Crossroads' situation (August/1984, Page 13)

"Do Baird, Norton Understand Consequences of New Direction They Are Taking Christian Chronicle? If Editorial Policy Does Not Turn Back Around, Their Paper Easily Can Become No. 1 Journalistic Arm of 'Crossroadism.' This May Not be Their Motive; However, If Not, Time For Change is Now, Not Later"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (September/1984, Pages 7-12)

"Discipling" Ministry

Article on "Making Disciples" taken from the Crossroads Bulletin, Gainesville, Florida (February/1984, Pages 6-7)

"The Semi-Crossroads SuperChurch"—by Terry M. Hightower (August/1984, Pages 4-5)

"Lemmons Article Misses Point: What Doth It Profit If Boston Church Grows When It's in Error?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (August/1984, Pages 8-9)

"Lemmons: a church grows in Boston"—by Reuel Lemmons (reprinted from the *Christian Chronicle*) (August/1984, Page 9)

Editorials

- "Let's Quit Making Excuses And Do All We Can to Help"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr., (January/1984, Page 2)
- "How Do You Tell a 'Crossroader'?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (February/1984, Page 2)
- "Is Rubel Shelly Double Minded?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (March/1984, Page 2)
- "A Tale of Three Cities"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (April/1984, Page 2)
- "Are We Just A Bunch of Old Curmudgeons?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (May/1984, Page 2)
- "Rices Return to Asia While Doctrinal Battles Continue"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (Page 2)
- "Is God's Truth Negotiable?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (July/1984, Page 2)
- "Which Is Correct?—'An Enemy Hath Done This' or 'They Must Be Doing Something Right'?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (August/1984, Page 2)
- "The Pervie Nichols Memorial Scholarship Fund for Preachers"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (September/1984, Page 2)
- "Have You Up-Dated Your Will Lately? Or Do You Even Have A Will? It Could Help A Lot!"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (October/1984, Page 2)
- "Can Humpty-Dumpty Be Put Back Together Again?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (November/1984, Page 2)
- "The Joplin Unity Meeting"—Editorial by Guy N. Woods, reprinted by permission of the *Gospel Advocate* (November/1984, Pages 8-10)

Elkins, Garland

Comment during Highers-Shelly confrontation at Freed-Hardeman "Open Forum" (March/1984, Page 10)

Ensign

An Open Letter to the Editor of *Ensign*—by Dan Rogers, III (August/1984, Pages 5-6)

Evangelistic Support

"Churches' Support of Evangelism at Corinth"—by Wayne Price (June/1984, Pages 7-8)

Fair Speeches

Victor M. Eskew shows why Roy F. Osborne's "Fair Speeches Are Deceiving." (January/1984, Page 11)

"Smooth And Fair Speech"—by Alan E. Highers (March/1984, Pages 1, 3-5)

False Teachers

"How to Recognize False Teachers"—by Mark K. Lewis (June/1984, Pages 12-13)

"Beware of Washed-Out Bridges Or Marking False Teachers"—by Garland M. Robinson (October/1984, Pages 4-5)

Fellowship

"The Discontinuation of Fellowship"—by Greg Pickett (September/1984, Page 3)

Final Column

Ray Pippin Writes Final Column at Olathe, Kansas (July/1984, Pages 10-11)

"Focus on the Family"

Overland Park/Kansas City Church uses, advocates Nazarene Dr. James Dobson film series. (January/1984, Page 3)

Goad, Steven Clark

Goad denies that salvation is limited to the churches of Christ. (January/1983, Page 8-9)

Garnett Road/Tulsa, Oklahoma

Garnett Road and Tulsa Workshop Continue Playing 'Footsy' With Crossroads and Christian Church (May/1984, Pages 3-4)

Guinn, Marian

Brotherhood Generally Sympathetic with Collinsville Elders Re: Trial (May/1984, Pages 4-6)

"Verdict 'Lord's will'—Woman gets \$390,000 in church dispute"—by Nolan Clay, *Tribune* Writer (reproduced from *Tulsa Tribune*) (May/1984, Pages 5-6)

"Church fight figure may sell movie rights"—by Bill Donaldson, *Tribune* Entertainment Writer (Reprinted from *Tulsa Tribune*) (May/1984, Pages 8-9)

Harris, John

Comment during Highers-Shelly confrontation during "Open Forum" at Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship (March/1984, Page 10)

Heart Surgery

Max Miller undergoes open-heart surgery following heart attack earlier (June/1984, Page 15)

Highers, Alan E.

Word-for-Word Transcription of the Highers-Shelly Confrontation During the "Open Forum" of the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship Thursday Afternoon, February 9, 1984, at Henderson, Tennessee (March/1984, Pages 5-12)

Hoax

"Hoax Is Practiced on W. D. Caudill as Well as on Your Editor" (January/1984, Page 16)

Holy

"The Holy and the Profane"—by Mark K. Lewis (April/1984, Page 7)

Holy Spirit Baptism

"Holy Spirit Baptism in the Church Today"—by Pat McGee (April/1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

"Baptized in One Spirit"—by Bruce Terry (April/1984, Pages 4-7)

Homosexuality

"Homosexuality: The Bible Viewpoint"—by Joseph A. Slater (October/1984, Page 7)

Ignorance

"Willingly Ignorant"—by Walter W. Pigg, Jr. (August/1984, Pages 6-7)

Joplin, Missouri

"The Joplin Unity Meeting"—by Guy N. Woods (Editorial reprinted by permission of the *Gospel Advocate*) (November/1984, Pages 8-10)

King James Version Sect

Ray Hawk stigmatizes those warning against doctrinal error fostered by some modern-speech versions. (January/1984, Page 5)

James W. Boyd replies to Hawk's remarks (January/1984, Pages 5-6)

Landscape Ministry

Those of Overland Park/Kansas City, Missouri's members interested in flowers, shrubs or landscape work are urged to help Jerry Lawson's "Landscape Ministry." (January/1984, Page 4)

Laurel, Mississippi

"How Much Would You Give Up for Your Faith? Faithful Brethren Need to Rally to Support of Those Sacrificing For the Truth Both at Laurel As Well As at Bay Springs, Mississippi" (April/1984, Pages 8-10)

Law in the Heart

Article by Robert Stapleton on "What of the Law Written in Their Hearts?" (January/1984, Page 10)

Leach, Virgil

Virgil Leach, Wife, Others at Lancaster, California Renounce 'Crossroads,' Return (May/1984, Pages 1, 3)

Lectureships

"The 1983 Garfield Heights Lectureship"—by Ben F. Vick, Jr. (September/1984, Page 7)

Lucas, Chuck

Revealing Quotations Photo-Reproduced from Chuck Lucas' "Minister's Memo..." in *At The Crossroads*, Official Bulletins of Crossroads/Gainesville, Florida (February/1984, Page 16)

McGee, Pat

"Mansfield (Texas) to Oversee Pat McGee in Indonesian Work" (January/1984, Page 16)

Miracles

"Do Miracles Exist?"—by Roderick L. Ross (June/1984, Pages 13-14)

Missionaries

"For the Love of Missionaries"—by William S. Cline (June/1984, Pages 3-4)

Model Church

Here was a conservative church—yet dynamic and aggressive. An article by Noble Patterson (January/1984, Pages 7-8)

Modern Versions

"Jimmy Vest Clears Record Re: His Attitude Toward Modern Versions" (January/1984, Page 6)

Negotiable

"Is God's Truth Negotiable?"—An editorial by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (July/1984, Page 2)
"God's Truth Is Not Negotiable"—by Allen Robertson (July/1984, Page 3)

Orthodoxy

"Keepers of Orthodoxy"—by Louis Everette Rushmore (June/1984, Pages 9-11)

Overland Park Church, Kansas City, Missouri

"Overland Park Church, in Kansas City, Is Prime Example of Direction Not to Follow, If Objective Is to Restore Plain, Simple New Testament Christianity..." (January/1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

Parsons, Douglas F.

When Parsons preached for the Overland Park/Kansas City Church, he/they used/advocated Nazarene Dr. James Dobson film series "Focus on the Family." (January/1984, Page 3)

Pentecostal Instruction

Overland Park/Kansas City encourages members to purchase Josh McDowell's book on The Resurrection Factor to help them prepare for their so-called "Life Style Evangelism Class." McDowell is Pentecostal. (January/1984, Page 4)

Perfidy Incorporated

Anonymous letter to the Editor by I. R. Sik (April/1984, Page 12)

Perverted Bible

"Now a Perverted Bible for Children"—by W. R. Craig (June/1984, Page 14)
"The Continuous Perversion of the Bible" (October/1984, Page 12)

Photo Ministry

Jim Pickens rejoices over Overland Park/Kansas City, Missouri's "photo ministry," led by Mike and Gloria Hawkins (January/1984, Page 4)

Preaching

"Have Some Brethren Ceased to Preach Christ?"—by Bill Jackson (October/1984, Pages 1, 3)
"Preaching Christ"—by Gary L. Grizzell (October/1984, Page 3)
"Preach What?"—by John W. (Jack) Tittle (October/1984, Page 5)
"Why Some Sermons Fail"—by Foster L. Ramsey (October/1984, Page 6)

Profane

"The Holy and the Profane" (April/1984, Page 7)

Ray Road/Greenville, South Carolina

"Carolina Preachers Prove That Ray Road/Greenville Is 'Crossroads' Heresy" (February/1984, Pages 1, 3-16)

Relevance

"The Bible Is Relevant"—by Tim Ayers (September/1984, Page 6)

Renshaw Passes

"Doris W. Thigpen Renshaw Passes"—by Roy J. Hearn (June/1984, Page 15)

Restoration Plea

"A Plea For the Church"—by Dan Goddard (April/1984, Page 11)
"Restoration in Action"—by Robert A. Nienstadt (September/1984, Pages 4-5)

Restoration Summit

"Restoration Summit—Unity or Compromise?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (November/1984, Pages 1, 3-9, 11-16)

Reverence

"Reverence in the Assemblies"—Franklin Camp (October/1984, Page 6)

Rushmores, Louis

Louis and Bonnie Rushmore seek sponsorship, support to go as missionaries to Far East. (January/1984, Page 8)

Shelly, Rubel

"Smooth and Fair Speech"—by Alan E. Highers (March/1984, Pages 1, 3-5)
"Is Rubel Shelly Double Minded?"—Editorial by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (March/1984, Page 2)
Word-for-Word Transcription of the Highers-Shelly Confrontation During the "Open Forum" of the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship Thursday Afternoon, February 9, 1984, at Henderson, Tennessee (March/1984, Pages 5-12)
"What They Are Saying About Baptism"—by Rubel Shelly (March/1984, Pages 12-13)
"An Open Letter to Rubel Shelly"—by Tommy J. Hicks (March/1984, Pages 14-15)
"Brother Shelly's Repentance"—by L. W. Mayo (March/1984, Pages 15-16)

"Is Brother Shelly Still Doctrinally Sound?"—by Dan Rogers, III (June/1984, Page 11)

Singing Ministry

Overland Park/Kansas City's church bulletin has Jim Dickson rejoicing over their multiple "ministries," including the "singing ministry" of Don and Gail Todd (January/1984, Pages 3-4)

Special Articles

"Back to the Basics"—by Eugene Fornea (January/1984, Page 12)
"We're Going to Build a Baptistry"—by Larry Fluit (January/1984, Page 12)
"Religious Harlotry"—by D. Ray Pippin (April/1984, Page 14)
"What Is The Preacher Thinking?"—by Philip Davis (May/1984, Pages 11-12)
"Obey God—And Do It For the Right Reasons"—by Mark K. Lewis (May/1984, Page 12)
"We Are No Sect"—by Benjamin Franklin (July/1996, Page 6)
"One—Or Three Hundred"—by Johnny Ramsey (July/1996, Pages 6-7)
"We Have Made a Mistake"—by Max R. Miller (July/1996, Pages 7-8)
"Let the Church Be the Church"—by George W. DeHoff (Page 8)
"Christianity"—by Basil D. Shilling (July/1984, Page 11)
"Honest—But Mistaken!"—by Anthony E. Emmons, Jr. (July/1984, Page 11)
"The Radical Right & the Liberal Left"—by Hershel Dyer (July/1984, Page 12)
"They Have Their 'Good' Points"—by Bobby Crowell (August/1984, Pages 7-8)
"Echoes From the Past"—by Bill Coss (September/1984, Pages 1, 3)
"Opinions, Opinions, Opinions"—by Victor M. Eskew (September/1984, Page 5)
"Don't Blame the Widows"—Ray Fullerton, Jr. (September/1984, Page 5)
"More Mixing of Truth and Error"—by Quentin Dunn (September/1984, Page 14)
"God's Habitation"—by Dan Jenkins (October/1984, Page 8)

Troublemakers

"Art Thou He That Troubleth Israel?"—by Roderick L. Ross (October/1984, Page 8)

Tulsa Workshop

Tulsa Workshop and Crossroads: Siamese Twins—by W. R. Craig (May/1984, Pages 3-4)
Collinsville Elders, Lawyer Appear Before Special Forum March 24 at Tulsa Workshop (May/1984, Pages 7-10)

Undenominational Christianity

"What Is An Undenominational Christian?"—by W. Eugene Springer (July/1984, Pages 8-10)

Underground Movement

"The Underground Movement Has Surfaced!"—by Foy L. Smith (June/1984, Pages 1, 5-6)

Unity

"UNITY—How Badly Do We Really Want It?"—by Tommy J. Hicks (July/1984, Pages 1, 4-5)

"The New Unity Movement"—by Harrell Davidson (July/1996, Page 5)

"Restoration Summit—Unity or Compromise?"—by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (November/1984, Pages 1, 3-9, 11-16)

"The Joplin Unity Meeting"—An editorial by Guy N. Woods (reprinted by permission of the *Gospel Advocate*) (November/1984, Pages 8-10)

Varner-Jarrett Debate

A written debate on Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage between W. Terry Varner and Paul E. Jarrett (April/1984, Page 16)

Vest, Jimmy

"Jimmy Vest Clears Record Re: His Attitude Toward Modern Versions" (January/1984, Page 6)

Watching for Souls

"Elders—Guarding the Flock from Error—Or Guarding the Flock from Knowing that Error Exists?"—an article by W. N. (Bill) Jackson (January/1984, Page 11)

Wills

"Have you Up-Dated Your Will Lately? Or Do You Even Have A Will? It Could Help a Lot"—An editorial by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. (October/1984, Page 2)

Readers' Regular Contributions, Wills to Our *Contending for the Faith Fund* Could Make Real Difference in Defending Truth for Generations (October/1984, Page 16)

Wrong Attitudes

In article entitled, "For Thou That Judgest Doest the Same Things," Jon Gary Williams charges Steven Clark Goad with the same wrong attitudes he sees in others. (January/1984, Page 9)

Zickefoose, Ben

Overland Park/Kansas City, Missouri features Abilene Christian University's gymnastic and acrobatic "ministry" for their Junior and Senior High teens. (January/1984, Page 4)

AUTHOR INDEX

Ayers, Tim

"The Bible Is Relevant" (September/1984, Page 6)

Boyd, James W.

"A Reply To Hawk's Remarks" (January/1984, Pages 5-6)

Camp, Franklin

"Reverence in the Assemblies" (October/1984, Page 6)

Clay, Nolan

"Verdict 'Lord's will'"—Photo-reproduction of *Tulsa Tribune* report re: Marian Guinn's law suit against Collinsville, Oklahoma, elders (May/1984, Pages 5-6)

"Attorney grills church elder"—Photo-reproduction of another article on same subject from *Tulsa Tribune* (May/1984, Page 7)

Cline, William S.

"For the Love of Missionaries" (June/1984, Pages 3-4)

Coss, Bill

"Echoes From the Past" (September/1984, Pages 1, 3)

Craig, W. R.

"Tulsa Workshop and Crossroads: Siamese Twins" (May/1984, Pages 3-4)

"Now A Perverted Bible for Children" (June/1984, Page 14)

Crowell, Bobby

"They Have Their 'Good' Points" (August/1984, Pages 7-8)

Davidson, Harrell

"The New Unity Movement" (July/1984, Page 5)

Davis, Fred

"Garfield Heights Third Annual Lectureship" (September/1984, Page 16)

Davis, Philip

"What Is The Preacher Thinking?" (May/1984, Pages 11-12)

DeHoff, George W.

"Let the Church Be the Church" (July/1984, Page 8)

Donaldson, Bill

"Church fight figure may sell movie rights"—Reprinted from *Tulsa Tribune* (May/1984, Pages 8-9)

Dunn, Quentin

"More Mixing of Truth and Error" (September/1984, Page 14)

"Mixing Truth and Error to Draw a Crowd" (October/1984, Page 4)

Dyer, Hershel

"The Radical Right and the Liberal Left" (July/1984, Page 12)

Emmons, Anthony E., Jr.

"Honest—But Mistaken!" (July/1984, Page 11)

Eskew, Victor M.

"Fair Speeches Are Deceiving" (January/1984, Page 11)

"Opinions, Opinions, Opinions" (September/1984, Page 5)

Fluitt, Larry

"We're Going to Build a Baptistry" (January/1984, Page 12)

Fornea, Eugene

"Back to the Basics" (January/1984, Page 12)

Franklin, Benjamin

"We Are No Sect" (July/1984, Page 6)

Fullerton, Ray, Jr.

"Don't Blame the Widows" (September/1984, Page 5)

Goddard, Dan

"A plea for the Church" (April/1984, Page 11)

Grizzell, Gary L.

"Preaching Christ" (October/1984, Page 3)

Hamrick, Bill

"Jury Declares Elders Guilty!" (April/1984, Pages 10-11)

Hawk, Ray

"The King James Version Sect" (October/1984, Page 5)

Hearn, Roy J.

"Doris W. Thigpen Renshaw Passes" (June/1984, Page 15)

Hicks, Tommy J.

"An Open Letter to Rubel Shelly" (March/1984, Pages 14-15)

Bulletin item re: Marian Guinn's law suit against Collinsville, Oklahoma, elders (May/1984, Pages 4-6)

"UNITY—How Badly Do We Really Want It?" (July/1984, Pages 1, 4-5)

Highers, Alan E.

"Smooth And Fair Speech" (March/1984, Pages 1, 3-5)

Hightower, Terry M.

"The Semi-Crossroads SuperChurch" (August/1984, Pages 4-5)

Jackson, W. N. (Bill)

"Elders—Guarding the Flock from Error—Or Guarding the Flock from Knowing That Error Exists?" (January/1984, Page 11)

"Have Some Brethren Ceased to Preach Christ?" (October/1984, Pages 1, 3)

Jackson, Wayne

"Announcing the New 'Apologetics Press Complex'" (October/1984, Pages 9-10)

Jenkins, Dan

"I Believe in God" (January/1984, Page 10)
 "God's Habitation" (October/1984, Page 8)

Kretzer, Charles B.

Bulletin item re: Marian Guinn lawsuit
 against Collinsville, Oklahoma, elders
 (May/1984, Page 4)

Lemmons, Reuel

"Lemmons: a church grows in Boston" (August/1984, Page 9)

Lewis, Mark K.

"The Holy And The Profane" (April/1984,
 Page 7)
 "Obey God—And Do It for the Right Reasons"
 (May/1984, Page 12)
 "How to Recognize False Teachers"
 (June/1984, Pages 12-13)

Mayo, L. W.

"Brother Shelly's Repentance" (March/
 1984, Pages 15-16)

McGee, Pat

"Holy Spirit Baptism In the Church Today?"
 (April/1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

McKnight, Mid

Item evaluating Crossroads/Gainesville,
 Florida (August/1984, Page 13)

McMillon, Joy L.

Reprint from *Christian Chronicle* re:
 Church Growth Survey (September/1984,
 Pages 8-10)

Miller, Max R.

"We Have Made a Mistake" (July/1984,
 Pages 7-8)

Morgan, Frank

Bulletin item re: Marian Guinn's law suit
 against Collinsville, Oklahoma, elders
 (May/1984, Page 4)

Nienstadt, Robert A.

"Restoration in Action" (September/1984,
 Pages 4-5)

Parr, A. L.

"I Don't Want to Hear It" (May/1984, Page
 16)

Patterson, Noble

"A Model Church" (January/1984, Pages
 7-8)

Pickett, Greg

"The Discontinuation of Fellowship" (Sep-
 tember/1984, Page 3)

Pigg, Walter W., Jr.

"Willingly Ignorant" (August/1984, Pages
 6-7)

Pippin, D. Ray

"Elders, Preacher Recommended" (Janu-
 ary/1984, Page 8)
 "Religious Harlotry" (April/1984, Page 14)
 Ray Pippin Writes Final Column at Olathe,
 Kansas (July/1984, Pages 10-11)

Price, Wayne

"Churches' Support of Evangelism at
 Corinth" (June/1984, Pages 7-8)

Ramsey, Foster L.

"Why Some Sermons Fail" (October/1984,
 Page 6)

Ramsey, Johnny

"One—Or Three Hundred" (July/1984,
 Pages 6-7)

Rice, Ira Y., Jr.

"Are Our 'Big' City Churches Still Standing
 For The Truth? Or Are Most Of Them
 Leading The Restoration Movement
 Back Into Error?" (January/1984, Pages
 1, 3-4)

"Let's Quit Making Excuses And Do All We
 Can To Help"—An Editorial (Janu-
 ary/1984, Page 2)

"Hoax Is Practiced on W. D. Caudill As Well
 As on Your Editor" (January/1984, Page
 16)

"Carolina Preachers Prove That Ray
 Road/Greenville Is 'Crossroads' Her-
 esy!" (February/1984, Pages 1, 3-16)

"How Do You Tell A 'Crossroader'?"—An
 Editorial (February/1984, Page 2)

"Is Rubel Shelly Double Minded?"—An
 Editorial (March/1984, Page 2)

"A Tale of Three Cities"—An Editorial
 (April/1984, Page 2)

"How Much Would You Give Up for Your
 Faith?" (April/1984, Pages 8-10)

"Virgil Leach, Wife, Others at Lancaster,
 California, Renounce 'Crossroads,' Re-
 turn" (May/1984, Pages 1, 3)

"Are We Just a Bunch of Old Curmudg-
 eons?"—An Editorial (May/1984, Page
 2)

"Rices Return to Asia While Doctrinal Bat-
 tles Continue"—An Editorial (June/
 1983, Page 2)

"Is God's Truth Negotiable?"—An Edito-
 rial (July/1984, Page 2)

"CROSSROADISM—Classic Example of
 'Tares Among the Wheat'" (August/
 1984, Pages 1, 3-4)

"Which is Correct?—'An Enemy Hath
 Done This' Or—'They Must Be Doing
 Something Right'?"—An Editorial (Au-
 gust/1984, Page 2)

"Lemmons Article Misses Point: What Doth
 It Profit If Boston Church Grows When
 It's in Error?" (August/1984, Pages 8-9)

"Annual Bound Volumes of Contending for
 the Faith Remain Brotherhood's Best
 Source of Reliable Information Re:
 'Crossroads Philosophy' Heresy" (Au-
 gust/1984, Pages 10-12)

"The Pervie Nichols Memorial Scholarship
 Fund for Preachers"—An Editorial (Sep-
 tember/1984, Page 2)

"Do Baird, Norton Understand Conse-
 quences of New Direction They Are Tak-
 ing *Christian Chronicle*?" (September/
 1984, Pages 7-12)

"Have You Up-Dated Your WILL Lately?
 Or Do You Even Have a Will? It Could
 Help a Lot"—An Editorial (Octo-
 ber/1984, Page 2)

"Readers' Regular Contributions, Wills to
 Our *Contending for the Faith Fund*
 Could Make Real Difference in Defend-
 ing Truth for Generations" (October/
 1984, Page 16)

"'RESTORATION SUMMIT'—Unity Or
 Compromise?" (November/1984, Pages
 1, 3-16) "Can Humpty-Dumpty Be Put
 Back Together Again?"—An Editorial
 (November/1984, Page 2)

Robinson, Garland M.

"Beware of Washed-Out Bridges Or Mark-
 ing False Teachers" (October/1984,
 Pages 4-5)

Robertson, Allen

"God's Truth Is Not Negotiable" (July/
 1984, Page 3)

Rogers, Dan, III

"Is Brother Shelly Still Doctrinally Sound?"
 (June/1984, Page 11)

"An Open Letter to the Editor of *Ensign*"
 (August/1984, Pages 5-6)

Ross, Roderick L.

"Do Miracles Exist?" (June/1984, Pages 13-
 14)

"Art Thou He That Troubleth Israel?" (Oc-
 tober/1984, Page 8)

Rushmore, Louis Everette

"Keepers of Orthodoxy" (June/1984, Pages
 9-11)

Shelly, Rubel

"What Are They Saying About Baptism?"
 (March/1984, Pages 12-13)

Shilling, Basil D.

"Christianity" (July/1984, Page 11)

Sik, I. R.

"Perfidy Incorporated" (April/1984, Page
 12)

Slater, Joseph A.

"Homosexuality: The Biblical Viewpoint"
 (October/1984, Page 7)

Smith, Foy L.

"The Underground Movement Has Sur-
 faced" (June/1984, Pages 1, 5-6)

Springer, W. Eugene

"What Is an Udenominational Christian?"
 (July/1984, Pages 9-10)

Stapleton, Robert

"What Of the Law Written in Their Hearts?"
(January/1984, Page 10)

Terry, Bruce

"Baptized in One Spirit" (April/1984, Pages
4-7)

Thompson, Bert

"Announcing the New 'Apologetics Press
Complex'" (October/1984, Pages 9-10)

Tittle, John W. (Jack)

"Preach What?" (October/1984, Page 5)

Vest, Jimmy

"Jimmy Vest Clears Record Re: His Attitude
Toward Modern Versions" (January/
1984, Page 6)

Vick, Ben F., Jr.

"The 1983 Garfield Heights Lectureship"
(September/1984, Page 7)

Williams, Jon Gary

"For Thou That Judgest Doest the Same
Things" (January/1984, Page 9)

Woods, Guy N.

"The Joplin Unity Meeting"—An Editorial
Reprinted by Permission of the *Gospel
Advocate* (November/1984, Pages 8-10)



RENEWAL OR RUIN?

David W. Hester

The left wing of the Lord's church has apparently targeted the Florence, Alabama area for takeover. As has been reported in these pages, **Joe VanDyke** and the **Magnolia Church of Christ** have been vocal and active in practicing open fellowship with the denominations. In addition, several noted left-wing preachers have come to this region. Although VanDyke and Magnolia have been relatively quiet for several months, of recent date some things have developed that should concern brethren.

In November of last year, Magnolia had **Denny Boultinghouse** to come and deliver a lesson on a Sunday afternoon. Around the same time, VanDyke delivered a series of radio sermons on a local station in which he stated the only criterion for the final judgment will be what the Lord listed in **Matthew 25:31-46**. Of course, this overlooks what Jesus said in **Matthew 7:21-23** and a host of other scriptures concerning the importance of doctrine and judgment. But, VanDyke believes we should simply overlook doctrinal differences and unite based solely on Jesus himself!

WHAT "RENEWAL" LEADER?

Recently in the Florence *Times Daily*, there appeared in the Religion section an advertisement for "**The Mid-South Conference on Spiritual Renewal**." Normally, this would be an event not deserving of special notice—not because of the title, but because of those scheduled to speak. Among those listed are **Wellington Boone**, national **Promise Keepers** speaker and **Mike Bickle**, senior "pastor" of **Metro Vineyard** in Kansas City. However, two names familiar to brethren stand out.

Rubel Shelly is listed last as "**renewal leader among Churches of Christ**." Renewal leader? The more appropriate title would be, "Ruin Leader." Considering the amount of false doctrine he has espoused and the number of churches divided by following his lead, "ruin" is a more accurate description. I know personally of at least four congregations, all large in number, that have been divided in north Alabama over the last six years as a direct result of the teaching of Shelly and the influence of the so-called "**Jubilee**." I have in my possession letters from two elderships which directly name Shelly and the Jubilee as prime

factors in splits which occurred. For one who spends much of his time talking about unity, brother Shelly's fruit betrays him.

"BEVIS" OR "BUTTERHEAD"?

The other notable name is one which has not surfaced for some time. At the end of the ad, **Jim Bevis** is listed as the contact person for the Conference. Many brethren will remember that he was involved in the "Tongues" movement of the mid-to-late 1960s. He is a native of Florence, and has moved back to the area with his wife. When he came back, he delivered a series of messages on a local radio station to explain his "journey" from the Church of Christ to where he now is—a "renewal" leader of ALL churches. He still claims to be associated with us, but is hyper-critical of brethren who opposed him. He even said he "feared for his life" at Freed-Hardeman during Open Forum one year!

One notices that there is a registration fee for individuals and couples. Also, there will be a "Concert Of Prayer" beforehand at a local Baptist church. Can there be any doubt what the new left-change agents want? Men like Shelly, VanDyke, Bevis, and others have one objective—transforming the church of our Lord into what **Lynn Anderson** still calls a "big, sick denomination."

MANY STILL STAND FOR TRUTH

Well, there are many brethren in the Florence area who are refusing to "bow the knee to Baal" and are standing for the truth in love. As time progresses and the Lord delays his coming, more and more congregations are being made aware of the apostasy taking place; furthermore, they are doing something about it!

As one faithful preacher in this area said, "Why don't these brethren quit dividing churches and get about the business of preaching the truth and saving the lost?" Indeed, if they loved the Lord and his church like they should, we would never have these problems. But, as long as this old world stands, Satan will continue to attempt to destroy the church. Let us all resolve to stand for the right and against the wrong.

—Route 4, Box 138
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Houston College of the Bible Lectures



"Isaiah, Vol. 2"

June 16 - 19, 1996

David P. Brown, Director



Sunday, June 16

Chapters

- 9:30 A.M. 40, "Israel's Comfort, Her Incomparable God" David P. Brown
- 10:30 A.M. 41, "The Predictive Element of Prophecy: Evidence of God's Deity" Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
- 4:00 P.M. 42:1-17, "God's Ideal Servant and a Song of Praise to God" Mark Miller
- 5:00 P.M. 42:18-25, "The Punishment of Israel, God's Blind and Deaf Servant" Eddie Whitten
- 6:00 P.M. 43:1-13, "God's Promise and His Challenge to Israel and the Nations" Jackie Stearsman

Monday, June 17

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 43:14-28, God Will Redeem Israel and Israel's Apathy Barry Hatcher
- 10:00 A.M. 44:1-20, How to Build a God and the Folly Thereof Bob Berard
- 11:00 A.M. 44:21-45:25, Cyrus, Israel's Deliverer Al Brown
- 1:30 P.M. 46-47, Babylon's Overthrow Charles Collette
- 2:30 P.M. 48, Further Assurance of Deliverance Lester Kamp
- **2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class — Are You a Worthy Woman? (Prov. 31) Melany Hatcher
- 3:30 P.M. Two Millenniums of Church Dogma Development J. E. Choate
- 7:00 P.M. 49-50, The Servant's Mission and His Depiction as a Suffering Prophet David Baker
- 8:00 P.M. 51:1-53:12, Zion Encouraged and the Vicarious Suffering of God's Servant Tom L. Bright

Tuesday, June 18

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 54, The Future Glory of Zion Michael Light
- 10:00 A.M. 55, Hear the Invitation: Mercy is for All Michael Hatcher
- 11:00 A.M. 56, The Rejected Consoled and Blind Watchmen Rebuked Don Walker
- 1:30 A.M. 57, The Wickedness of Isaiah's Day Rebuked Noah Hackworth
- 2:30 P.M. Perspectives on the Development of Liberalism in the Church of Christ, Pt. 1 .. Wayne Coats
- **2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class — Mother's Day In Dorothy Mosher
- 3:30 P.M. A Major Shift in the Doctrinal Positions of the Churches of Christ J. E. Choate
- 5:00 P.M. Houston College of the Bible Honors J. E. Choate at the HCB Banquet**
- 7:00 P.M. 58-59, Cry Out, Spare Not and Sin Separates Men from God Lindell Mitchell
- 8:00 P.M. 60-62, The Splendors of Zion and the New Name Tommy Hicks

Wednesday, June 19

Chapters

- 9:00 A.M. 63-64, God's Vengeance, Mercy, and Israel's Fervent Prayer for Help Andy McClish
- 10:00 A.M. 65, God's Response to Israel's Prayer Ron Cosby
- 11:00 A.M. 66, Future Judgments and the Glory of Zion in the Coming Dispensation Keith Mosher
- 1:30 P.M. Isaiah the Man Shan Jackson
- 2:30 P.M. Perspectives on the Development of Liberalism in the Church of Christ, Pt. 2 .. Wayne Coats
- 3:30 P.M. Shifting Theological Paradigms in Churches of Christ J. E. Choate
- 7:00 P.M. What Does the Phrase 'New Heavens and New Earth' of Isa. 65:17 Mean? Dub McClish
- 8:00 P.M. What Is 'The Everlasting Covenant' of Isa. 24:5? Mac Deaver

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"I Have Not Troubled Israel: But Thou . . ."

Dan Goddard

"It came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

That courageous prophet (in whose spirit and strength came John the Baptist) balked against all those who would label him as the trouble maker in Israel, for he was God's courageous advocate, trying to convince troubled Israel to come back to God and have peace. Had Israel not been led in the erroneous direction by their corrupt king possibly Elijah could have persuaded many more to hear the petition made by righteousness and the truth. Nevertheless, Elijah had to do battle, not only with Ahab, but also Jezebel and all the false prophets of Baal. In the end God was exonerated, when the Assyrians swept down on Israel and carried her away, enslaved.

Must we learn from tragic, painful experience (as did Israel) rather than from God's word? Must we discover the hard way that the actual troublemakers of Israel are those who lead in the wrong direction; who promote error and prejudice the church toward unrighteousness, and not those who cry out against evil practices and false doctrines?

Heart-felt pleas are made for the body of Christ while, frequently, those from whose lips these pleas are made do and say things contradictory to peace and right. No one questions that the body of Christ is being divided and rent asunder—but by whom? Is the peace disrupted by a vigorous stand for righteousness, or by those who are corrupt and compromising in spirit and practice? When a man, or group of men, set themselves in the wrong direction and lead others into error, is it ungodly to oppose him? If it is, then every admonition against error found in the Bible should be ripped out and disregarded. Why warn against and exhort others to oppose false doctrine and false ways if by such opposition one is transgressing the spirit and tenor of Scripture which so admonishes?

COMPROMISING WITH ERROR AND SIN

Understandably, peace will not come from overlooking error and ignoring sin. Some in the church have endeavored to do that for the last three decades and have failed. The practice not only has failed, but has contributed to the dilemma we now face because false teachers were encouraged rather than marked. Paul's advice is needed more than ever: **"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).

Because those who have fellowshiped and upheld teachers of error have been commended rather than reprimanded; because compromisers have been allowed to take

the lead in determining works and policies of churches; and because faithful men have held their peace, the body of Christ, the church, is broken asunder and now must agonize over the embarrassment and display of widespread, public confrontation in different ways among ourselves. What could at one time have been handled very quietly, swiftly and scripturally, now must be drawn out painfully, agonizingly, and with tears of sorrow. Brethren will spend much precious time with internal contention or else watch spiri-



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tual Israel be carried captive into denominationalism.

When Pentecostalism, instrumental music in worship, Calvinism, fellowshiping of non-Christians in worship and work (in the same manner that the fellowship of brethren is observed), and countless other doctrinal errors too many to enumerate are not only justified, but publicly taught and practiced (and those who do thus are upheld by others), it is time to take a stand. Yes, it is *past* time!

IS TRUTH RADICAL AND EXTREME?

Truth is generally considered by those who do not love it, as being radical and extreme. Those who take a clear, explicit, and uncompromising stand for the truth are typically categorized as bigots, extremists and radicals (among other things) and charged with being "troublers of Israel." Be that as it may, we must either take our stand or else be swept away imprisoned by error.

I am indebted to *Contending For The Faith* for its stand in doctrine and practice. I believe its Editor has stood for the truth of the gospel from the beginning of his preaching days.

With the word of God he is determined to abide and remain faithful. He, along with other faithful brethren, will stand where the prophets of old and the apostles of our Lord stood. Even though every earthly friend may depart, let us

Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherley, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

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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.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

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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) 758-7406.

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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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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.

stand and let us be able to say with Paul, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (II Corinthians 4:8-9).

I beseech all brethren to scrutinize the issues that trouble us and the doctrines men declare with the Word of God, and then take a stand for truth—for the sake of truth. Do not allow the personalities involved to determine your stand. Stand with God in truth and oppose all wrong.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."

Regarding issues, a comment from the late N. B. Hardeman is often cited. While president of the old Freed-Hardeman College brother Hardeman said, "We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie.'"

**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

Preaching God Demands

Twenty-first Annual Bellview Lectures

June 8-12, 1996

Saturday, June 8

7:00 PM God Demands Logical Preaching **Bob Berard**
 8:00 PM Preaching On The Worship Of The Church **Stanley Ryan**

Sunday, June 9

9:00 AM We Must Be Willing To Be Hated By The World And The Brethren **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**
 10:00 AM Preaching On The Plan Of Salvation **Michael Hatcher**
Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Micaiah As A Preacher **Clifford Newell**
 3:00 PM Preaching On The Christian Life **Shan Jackson**
 4:00 PM Preaching On Heaven And Hell **Mel Futrell**
Dinner Break
 7:00 PM Preaching On The Church Of Christ **Ronnie Hayes**
 8:00 PM Preaching That Turned The World Upside Down **Garry Barnes**

Monday, June 10

9:00 AM Amos As A Preacher **Eddie Whitten**
 10:00 AM 1, 2 Timothy, Titus **Wayne Coats**
 11:00 AM Peter As A Preacher **Harold Bigham**
Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Jesus The Master Preacher **Paul Sain**
 3:00 PM The Work Of A Preacher **David Brown**
 3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion **Curtis Cates**
Dinner Break
 7:00 PM The Preaching Of Today **Garland Elkins**
 8:00 PM Woe To Me If I Preach Not The Gospel **Harrell Davidson**

Tuesday, June 11

9:00 AM John The Baptist As A Preacher **Tommy Hicks**
 10:00 AM 1, 2 Timothy, Titus **Wayne Coats**
 11:00 AM Philip As A Preacher **Bobby Liddell**
Lunch Break
 2:00 PM The Changeless Message **Marvin Weir**
 3:00 PM Exposition Of 2 Timothy 4:1-5 **Gary Colley**
 3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion **Garland Elkins**
Dinner Break
 7:00 PM The Honor Of Preaching **Winfred Clark**
 8:00 PM The Preacher's Message **Noah Hackworth**

Wednesday, June 12

9:00 AM Paul As A Preacher **Lindell Mitchell**
 10:00 AM 1, 2 Timothy, Titus **Wayne Coats**
 11:00 AM Stephen As A Preacher **Buster Dobbs**
Lunch Break
 2:00 PM Preaching On The Work Of The Church **Tim Smith**
 3:00 PM Exposition Of Jeremiah 1:4-10 **Dub McClish**
 3:45 PM Open Forum Discussion **David Brown**
Dinner Break
 7:00 PM Preaching The Old Paths **Curtis Cates**
 8:00 PM Preaching On The Grace Of God **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). A motel is available nearby and is providing *special rate* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Hospitality Inn (4910 Mobile Highway; Pensacola, FL 32506) offers the following price (tax not included) \$40.00—1 to 4 people per room. Their phone number is 904/453-3333. 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*. For those who have RVs, a limited number of hook-ups are available on the grounds of the building. Contact the office to reserve a space.

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 technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the sound room.

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.

TRANSPOR TATION

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.

EXHIBITS

Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of the *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.

BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*Preaching God Demands*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain twenty-eight chapters and approximately 375 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

REPENTING OF HISTORICAL SINS

Bill Lockwood

A *Los Angeles Times* reporter, **John Dart**, wrote recently in the *Arizona Republic* (6-20-95) that "A wave of confession and repentance for past sins, some of them the racist evils of decades or centuries ago, is sweeping Christianity worldwide."

Those penitent of "historical transgressions" include the Pope, who apologizes for mistakes that Catholic inquisitionists made in regard to Galileo in the 17th century for saying that the earth revolved around the sun and to Africans and Latin Americans for "Catholic complicity" in historical slave trade.

German "Christians" are repenting of atrocities during the Nazi era.

European "Christians" from various countries are staging ceremonies along the routes taken by medieval crusaders in which formal penitence will be offered to Muslims for the killing of their ancestors during the Crusades.

Japanese "Christians" are apologizing for Pearl Harbor and American "Christians" are to be praying for forgiveness "on windswept prairies where white men massacred Indians."

Finally, the largest Protestant body in America, the Southern Baptists, is ready to "apologize formally to blacks for endorsing slavery" during the last century.

HOW REPENTANCE IS DONE

Several thoughts perhaps are in order in this day of heightened guilt. One, for a society that is supposedly built upon biblical principles, we are fast losing sight of basic Bible teaching. Repentance is an individual action that is done before God for personal wrongdoing. "**Repent therefore, of this thy wickedness, that perhaps the thought of thy heart be forgiven thee**" (Acts 8:22). "**The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son**" (Ezekiel 18:20). I do not deny that Christians do wrong, nor that Christians need to repent of sins—but I have not committed the wrongs aforementioned, nor has any person now living committed the faults of ancient history.

Two, the very mentality that we have created in today's America betrays the mindset that is seemingly behind this entire "national repentance" fad. If you will note, it is always the so-called "Christian community" that is under the shame of guilt. This stigma never attaches to any other religion, nor to any racial minority as a group of people. For example, do you for a moment suppose that we are about to hear

of wholesale "repentance" from the *Jewish* community because they killed Christ and persecuted the apostles? To suggest it publicly is to invite rage poured out upon our heads. Is there going to be an Indian group or tribe who formally offers apologies to white Americans for atrocities committed on their side of the Indian wars? Note that Dart refers to the Indian wars as "white men massacred Indians."

This itself is an historical blunder in the first degree, evidently designed to remove the need for apologies from the Indians to the whites. In the frontispiece to S. L. A. Marshall's excellent balanced treatment of this period, entitled *Crimsoned Prairie*, the judicious comment is made, "While today's vogue is to lament the wars against the Plains Indians, and all wars, as monstrous crimes, Marshall reminds us that this is a vogue: Not all Indians were virtuous and trustworthy; not all white men were greedy and scrupulous." To conclude anything else regarding a period of historical warfare is to ignore the very basic knowledge of humanity. Too, I wonder if we will ever hear of repentance from *African* tribes who, for revenue's sake, sold their own people to slave-traders?

"CHRISTIAN" IN WHAT SENSE?

Three, just here is a good place to tender a strong protest against the use of the word "Christian" in the sense used foregoing. Atheists relish blasting the "Christian" world with "crimes" we supposedly have committed. Those of which they speak are the mistakes of the *Popes of Rome* and decisions of *Protestants*.

But these are not "Christian" in biblical parlance. As a matter of fact, I oppose Catholicism and the Southern Baptist doctrines of faith as much as I do the notion that I ought to apologize for what people generations ago *claiming* to be Christians did.

(Incidentally, I wonder if organizations of *atheists* in America will apologize for the "Holocaust" of Hitler since he was moved by atheistic doctrines of socialism/communism more than any other force. No, because the purpose of all of this "group guilt" is to create such a submissive climate among conservative groups which

enables the intellectually elite policy makers of the world to control the minds and hearts of the populace.)

Four, denominational structures are sinful because they are unauthorized by God's word (Colossians 3:17). That the Southern Baptist Convention needs to retract its endorsement of historical slavery in the South is demonstrative proof why God did not wish for such institutions as a sect to exist. The entire Baptist community is "tainted" with the decisions of her headship.

But, since Baptist doctrine says it is impossible for persons to fall from grace, I wonder why they bother "repenting" of such sins in the first place? What's more, since the Catholic Pope claims infallibility, I wonder why the Roman hierarchy waits a couple of hundred years before reversing policy that was so obviously wrong? Why did God wait these centuries when mankind discovered by the natural sciences that Galileo was correct to "reveal" to the Roman Church that he was right all along? Obviously, it is because the Roman Church never has received a revelation from God outside of God's word.

RESENTMENT NOT FORGIVENESS

Five, it seems to me that the more society focuses upon wrongs of the past, the more intensified become the relations between the offending groups. If repentance for historical sins is "erasing bitter memories," how is it that the more "repenting" in which America engages merely heightens bitterness? If some of my ancestors were mistreated slaves, the only purpose served by my continually chewing on that memory is to intensify resentment—not forgiveness.

Six, does it not seem peculiar, to say the least, that *current* atrocities are overlooked in the race to cover a multitude of *history's* mistakes? What about demanding that the Soviet Union get out of Chechnya? Why are Americans behind Bill Clinton rushing into "more favored nation" status with China, which holds its people in slave bondage? Human nature is such that when there are evident preferences for the publicity of one crime to the ignoring of another, there is another cause at stake than the mere retribution of wrong.

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Notes & Quotes...

Ronald W. Osborn, Wetumka, Oklahoma: "I was pleased to see an article I had written in the January 1996 issue of *Contending for the Faith*. I hope that some will learn from it and not attend the Tulsa Workshop this year.

"It is sickening to see all the errors in church today. I recently attended a funeral where a so-called 'gospel preacher' delivered the lesson. The service was held in the First Baptist Church building. It was complete with a woman soloist, two choirs, and a piano. The preacher quoted much more poetry than scripture and preached the deceased into heaven, even though she was not a member of the church. Following his so-called sermon, he proceeded to lead the community choir in singing the old song *Amazing Grace*, with piano accompaniment. This one hour service damaged the church and will take years to heal. The denomination-ists in this area have jumped after this and are asking church members why we believe the instrument is wrong when this brother believes it is OK...

"We have a small congregation of less than 30 [at Hanna, Oklahoma], but we are preaching and teaching the truth and doing what we can in this area. We are interested in helping with your special mailings..."

Dub McClish, Denton, Texas: "Undoubtedly, the last six months of 1995 were the busiest and most eventful we have experienced. (It is almost amusing when people ask in all seriousness how we are liking our 'retirement'!)..."

"Our 14th Annual Denton Lectures on the theme, 'Studies in Matthew,' was excellent indeed. We had outstanding crowds (we had 35 different RV units, the most ever, including folk who brought their rigs from as far away as Arizona, Kansas, and even California). Our speakers/writers did a great job in this new study of Matthew..."

"Only one week after ADL (November 25), I departed for an almost three-week preaching and survey trip to Southeast Asia, along with eight others. The first leg of the trip was to Hong Kong and Red China. Through the influence of a Communist official who obeyed the gospel a few months ago, brother Ira Rice and I were able to address a group of about 25 citizens of Fado, China. There are exciting possibilities for follow-up work here, especially since the son of the brother from Fado is a promising student at Four Seas Bible College in Singapore!

"The next site of activity was in Singapore where the 11th Annual Asian Bible Lectures were conducted. This was my fifth preaching trip to this remarkable city. (Lavonne was able to go the first two trips.)

"From Singapore, I (with David Brown, Noah Hackworth, and Tom Hicks) had planned to spend several days in Thailand, helping Dorsey and Ola Traw any

way possible in their great work of over 34 years in that nation. Delta Airlines, through whom our entire trip had been scheduled, sorely disappointed us by somehow allowing us to be canceled from all of our remaining flights, beginning from Singapore. (Actually, some of us had been canceled even from Hong Kong to Singapore.) David and Noah elected to skip Thailand and return home from Singapore; but Tom and I went on to Thailand on a later flight.

"It was inspiring and encouraging to meet brethren, some of whom lived in the most primitive and humble circumstances imaginable, but who are joyous, faithful saints.

"The Traws have done (and are doing) a remarkable work which will live for generations to come. There are many great prospects for this work besides the great strides already made.

"[A sad note concerning this trip is that of the dozen congregations in Singapore, only two have escaped the poison of liberalism, imported from the U.S. Likewise, through the influence of people from Sunset (Lubbock, Texas), ACU and the A & M Church of Christ (College Station, Texas) some of the churches in Thailand have been stolen...]"

Danny Bennett, Madison, Alabama: "It is hoped that my article, 'Who Are My Brethren?,' will stir the brotherhood to consider this very important question, in view of the legion of false doctrine being taught by those whom we consider our brethren...The editorial note is well taken..."

"Rubel Shelly will be in Huntsville, Alabama, March 16,17. This will be at the Twickenham Church of Christ. The preacher there is Eddie Levick (from Gateway, Pensacola, Florida)."

One of the most beautiful academic catalogs you will ever see was published in February by the Southwest School of Bible Studies and Graduate School of Bible, 8900 Manchaca Road, Austin, Texas 78748-5399. If you have not already seen it, why not write brother Joseph D. Meador, Director, and ask for a copy?

Ernest E. (Ed) Armstrong, Pecos, Texas: "Our youth minister Mat Williamson returned from Promise Keepers Friday. He spoke Sunday evening on the blessings of Promise Keepers and what wonderful work the Lord did. The assembly all participated in a special communion service Thursday morning and the Lord really blessed them. This is astounding, to think some churches have drifted so far."

Wayne Coats, Mount Juliet, Tennessee: "We do not need weak preaching which results in weak faith."

"When 'theologians' get into dialogue, it's like mouth-to-mouth regurgitation."—Jerry Moffitt, South Texas Summer Lectureship, July 29, 1995, Beeville, Texas.

AMONG THE SCHOLARS

Published by the author in 1994, a book by David W. Hester, entitled, "Among The Scholars," is enjoying considerable vogue among brethren who concern themselves with what "the scholars" among us are saying.

I have put it in my little black bag to read while jet-lagging overseas, Lord willing, in May and June. If you want to get a copy before my review comes out, please send \$8.45 (postage included) to David W. Hester, Route 4, Box 138, Tuscumbia, Alabama 35674. It looks like something we all should read. IYRJR.

I WALKED BY HIS SIDE

While you are at it, you may want to order sister Claudene Connally's new book, entitled, "I Walked By His Side," which is a first-hand account of her and Andrew's missionary adventures in the African bush.

She is selling it for only \$7.00, postage included (too cheap for a 288 page book!). Address her % Connally Publications, 204 Shadywood Lane, Seagoville, Texas 75159. I am taking this one with me overseas, too, this time out. IYRJR.

Asgar Ali, Lahore, Pakistan: "Since the death of the young girl in Green Town, the people in the area did not respond favorably to our call for church services. It would have been a waste of time had we continued conducting church services in that area. Both of us do not believe in wasting time. Therefore, we stopped conducting worship services in Green Town and started church services in our own residence..."

"Besides church services, we are having Bible study at our place, the main purpose of which is to build up our own girls in the faith...Pray for us to have more Bible studies in other areas."

Curtis A. Cates, Director, Memphis School of Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee: "Never in the history of modern civilization has sound gospel preaching been more urgently needed in this country—and throughout the world—than right now...Memphis School of Preaching is making a difference."

Jimmie B. Hill, who preaches to the Lantana church of Christ, Post Office Box 2686, Crossville, Tennessee 38557 will be going to Zambia, Lord willing, in July, with a group from Truth for the World and Tennessee Bible College. Those desiring to help on his travel fund, please make checks payable to the Lantana church of Christ, clearly marked "Hill/Africa Travel Fund," and mail them directly to the above address.

Mr. & Mrs. Mozell Roggenstein, Snyder, Texas: "We are 100% behind you in your work. Keep it up."

Hubert Graham, Rogersville, Alabama: "I now am reading brother Earl West's "Search for the Ancient Order" and can contrast the efforts of the restoration of

the New Testament Church and I am sad for growing numbers who are being led astray.

"Thank you for your efforts to protect the purity of the church our Lord purchased with his own blood."

Marie Grice, Irving, Texas: "I enjoy it [Contending for the Faith] very much."

Gary A. Johns, Algonac, Michigan: "Please provide me with information on how to subscribe to your publication. Some of my brothers in Christ have heartily recommended [Contending For The Faith] as a source of undiluted truth for fighting the good fight...Thank you for stalwartness and search for what is right."

[NOTE: Much appreciation to brother Johns for his note and inquiry. To subscribe, please enclose \$10.00 for one year (or \$27.00 for three years) addressed to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383. IYR Jr.]

If you make a mistake, it's not the end of the world. Correct it and go on.

Richard Haase, from the Cloverport church of Christ, of Medon, Tennessee, enclosed \$50.00 together with several renewals, saying, "We so appreciate your stand for the truth... We're few in number here at Cloverport church of Christ, but we're set for the defense of the gospel of Christ."

"Since 1986 we're blessed with students from the Memphis School of Preaching to help us continue the good work of remaining in true unity with all true and faithful ones in Christ."

[NOTE: "I note what you said about being few in number at Cloverport; however, that you are set for the defense of the gospel," I replied, in part. "I am sure that the Lord is pleased when folks defend his gospel, be their number many or few."

"Thanks, especially, for what you said of being blessed with students from Memphis School of Preaching, here in Memphis, Tennessee. I work closely with brother Curtis Cates and the school encouraging these students to remain always true to the Book, no matter what." IYR Jr.]

Even if some of us are rooted in our past, we do not have to be stuck there.

LONGTIME ELDER PASSES

Bill Burleson

I wish to report the passing of brother **Chester Boyd Sellers**, an elder of the Columbus Avenue church of Christ for some 42 years. He was well known throughout the Central Texas area as a strong defender of the truth.

He had a good influence on the lives of my wife and me as from July 1948 until 1950. He was our Bible class teacher. We left Columbus Avenue in

1950 as I entered military service... After 39 years, we returned in July, 1993. The two and one-half years worshipping with him was very rewarding. During those 39 years we were in contact with him from time to time.

[NOTE: Brother Burleson enclosed further information regarding brother Sellers, who was retired from the Power-Am

Petroleum Company and was 91 at his death.

Services were at the Wilkerson-Hatch Funeral Home Chapel, with Columbus Avenue's regular minister Joe Keyes and Dick Daughtery, a former Columbus Avenue minister, officiating. Bob Sellers, a nephew from Houston, also assisted. Burial was at Waco Memorial Park. IYR Jr.]

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8:00 PM..... The Mind of Christ Bill Lockwood, Marshall, TX

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

10:00 AM..... Will the Holy Spirit “Nudge” Me?..... Stephen Wiggins, Burkburnett, TX
11:00 AM..... “If Any Will Come After Me” Bill Lockwood
12:00 - 2:00 PM..... LUNCH BREAK
2:00 PM..... Progress or Digression?..... Stephen Wiggins
3:00 PM..... Fruit of the Spirit (2)..... Robin Haley
4:00 PM..... Questions and Answers..... Brown, Groves, Haley
5:00 - 7:00 PM..... DINNER BREAK
7:00 PM..... Following His Steps Burt Groves, Dallas, TX
7:45 PM..... Christian Virtues (1)..... David Brown, Spring, TX

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

9:30 AM..... Christian Virtues (2)..... David Brown
10:30 AM..... Just A Closer Walk With Jesus Burt Groves
12:00 PM..... CONGREGATIONAL MEAL

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Gary & Maggie Colley, Southwest Church of Christ, Austin, Texas: “We’ve just returned from a meeting in the [Lower Rio Grande] Valley. Took the school and hopefully much good was done.

“Rubel Shelly and Max Lucado’s teaching had saturated the whole Valley. By the time we left, the Liberals had given Gary a new name—Ira Rice, Jr. What a compliment!”

[NOTE: “Yes, I am sure that the Shelly-Lucado brand of liberalism had indeed saturated the Valley before you and the students arrived,” I replied, in part. “Unopposed, they can infiltrate a whole area of churches, such as that, within an incredibly short time.

“During the more than four years that

I personally preached in the Valley, it was a constant fight, even then, to keep the liberals from taking over. However, then, we at least had quite a number of faithful gospel preachers to help carry on the ‘good fight of faith.’ One by one they either moved away, or died; so I am sure the liberals had been having a field day prior to your arrival.

“That they still remember my name is something to say the least, for I have been gone from the Valley 54 years this coming April. That Gary considers it a compliment to be called by my name is a compliment—to me!” IYR Jr.]

“The greatest tragedy is to die unprepared.”—Steve Ellis, morning service,

January 7, 1996, Knight Arnold church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

Mrs. Judy Renahan, Tifton, Georgia, asked if a woman can scripturally teach a young man of nine years of age who had been baptized.

[NOTE: Baptism in no way changes his status of being just a boy, not a man. I Timothy 2:12 forbids a woman to teach over a man. Until a boy becomes a man, it does not apply. IYR Jr.]

Richard Massey held a ten-day gospel meeting in November for the deaf at Makati Central church of Christ, Manila, Philippines.

Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR, ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THE CURRENT STATUS OF CHRISTIAN JUBILEE, INC.

J. E. Choate

It seemed that the future of *Christian Jubilee, Inc.*, was much in doubt during the 1995 July meetings. Between 1991 and 1995, the general public had learned through media headlines that the area churches of Christ were sharply divided over support of "Nashville/Christian Jubilee."

Rumors were rife that Jubilee could possibly fold in 1995. The Madison and Antioch churches would no longer co-sponsor Jubilee with the Woodmont Hills church. The *Gospel Advocate* and the *21st Century Christian* for the first time did not set up their displays on the convention floor.

Olan Hicks provided us with revealing insights into Jubilee '96 through his publication—*News & Notes*. He raised the question: "Jubilee: Will they be able to kill it?" His article was captioned with the words "JUBILEE: A BATTLEGROUND FOR WHAT?" [My statement and question is—"Who would want to kill any good work which hues true to the word of God?"]

HICKS BLAMES 'TRADITIONAL' ELEMENT

It is not known how brother Hicks came up with the total attendance which he reported as 4000 less than the previous year. He gave several reasons why he thought that Jubilee had fallen on such hard times. He laid full blame at the feet of the "traditional" element for the misfortunes of Jubilee.

Olan Hicks correctly pointed up the fact that the lectures were for the most part good. That, too, was my general observation. It is puzzling to many who attend why there is such opposition to this Jubilee celebration. Brother Hicks most aptly pointed out that the opposition centered

in the personal criticism of the speakers and the "shakers and makers" of Jubilee, and especially Rubel Shelly.

He reported that the opposition throughout the year hammered away at the individual speakers marking them as apostates and the program as heresy. They put ado in the Nashville newspapers saying as much. He told of a man wearing a T-shirt during Jubilee with the lettering "Rubel Shelly & Joe Beam false teachers." Why would conservative brethren make such spectacles of themselves without sufficient cause?

Brother Hicks stated that "Rubel Shelly, a primary target of the conservatives, was omitted from the program." He wrote that attendance was down about 30%. He also accurately reported that the Madison and Antioch churches were dropping their sponsorship of Jubilee.

AN UPDATE ON CHRISTIAN JUBILEE, INC., 1996

I received a phone call from Linda Adams, a *Christian Chronicle* staff writer, last summer (1995) requesting my evaluation of Christian Jubilee, Inc. (Linda Adams is a Nashville native, and a daughter of the Scobey family, a highly honored church of Christ family in Nashville. My home was built by her father.)

She stated that Phillip Morrison suggested I be contacted as an outspoken critic of Jubilee. Linda wanted a brief positional statement of my evaluation of Jubilee. I could not do this since I have written extensively on the subject. But I did comply by sending the articles overnight by Federal Express.

[I would say at this point that I had no hand in the Madison and Antioch churches dropping Rubel Shelly from Jubilee '95 nor could I have influenced the *Gospel*

(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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June/1996

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor
David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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Editorial...

“JUST A BUNCH OF COUNTRY CHURCHES”? LOCALLY AUTONOMOUS CHURCHES OF CHRIST? —OR BOTH?

Those who cannot see that Rubel Shelly, Steve Flatt, et al. are leading churches of Christ back into interdenominationalism could not see through a step-ladder.

When 33 locally-autonomous churches of Christ in Middle and Eastern Tennessee placed a full-page advertisement in the April 12, 1996 edition of the *Herald-Citizen*, of Cookeville, Tennessee [photo-reduced to fit our centerfold in this issue] marking the Sycamore church of Christ leaders for inviting Steve Flatt and G. P. Holt to preach in gospel meetings for them in 1996, what was Madison's reaction?

“Just a bunch of country churches!” one principal leader at Madison exclaimed. “I hope Ira Rice doesn't get hold of this!”

“JUST A BUNCH OF COUNTRY CHURCHES”?

What did this misguided brother mean, “JUST A BUNCH OF COUNTRY CHURCHES”? Has Madison followed Steve Flatt and Rubel Shelly so long that they no longer understand the *autonomous* nature of the churches of Christ?

Do they hold “country churches” in such contempt that Madison thinks it is *something*—but “country churches” are nothing?

The apostle Paul expresses our view precisely, in Galatians 2:6, when he says, “...of those who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person)...”

Not only did that ad represent the 33 congregations who signed-it, but 41 *additional* congregations in the area and 100s of individuals who are opposed to these events as well!

Madison must understand that they can fool ALL of the brethren SOME of the time, and SOME brethren ALL of the time, but they cannot fool ALL of the brethren ALL of the time. Great and growing numbers—brotherhood-wide—already have lost confidence in following Madison's lead any longer.

BIG “I”—LITTLE “YOU”

Madison's tendency to vaunt itself and denigrate others did not happen overnight. Some still living recall their competing with Broadway/Lubbock years ago as to which would be “the largest church of Christ

in the brotherhood.”

I was preaching west of the Mississippi River at the time. It was a matter of some discussion among fellow preachers in other states as to what difference it made. Our attitude in general was: “so what!”

In a brotherhood of locally-autonomous churches, one church is *just as much esteemed* by God as another. As far as God is concerned, *faithfulness, not size*, is what counts.

WHAT IF IRA RICE GETS HOLD OF THIS!

The irony apparently escapes that brother that if “country churches” count for so little, it should make no difference if **Ira Rice** gets hold of that ad or not! At least, he thought it might.

If Madison were not so set on “pleasing men,” it would make no difference at all. In Galatians 1:10, Paul declared that **“if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”**

As we have watched these huge, big-city, Jubilee-oriented churches compromise and waver in their commitment to undenominational Christianity, we long have felt that for churches of Christ to survive, as such, in the closing years of the 20th century, we must look to the country churches as well as to the medium-size, smaller-city churches to take their stand and contend for the faith.

One thing is for sure: When Rubel Shelly and Woodmont Hills pull off another “Jubilee” next month, you will not find those despised “country churches” taking part. They will be watching closely to see if Steve Flatt and Madison does or not. Madison cannot have it both ways.

When you have read and studied the ad reproduced at our centerfold, perhaps you will know what we mean.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

CURRENT STATUS

(Continued from Page 1)

Advocate and the *21st Century Christian* to keep their exhibits off the floor. I have had nothing to do with the decision of a hundred area churches to shun Jubilee.]

I say to my liberal brethren, if they are looking for a “scapegoat” to blame for the woes of Jubilee, pass me by, and look to your own households. If my articles—read by the 1000s monthly—alter and distort the facts, why am I not challenged in this respect with documented evidence?

I hold in hand Linda Adams’ article which was published in September 1995 in the *Christian Chronicle*, titled, “Christian Jubilee Alive and Well. Plans Are Underway For Next Year, Sponsors Say.” The content of the article is fair and objective. The former editor of the *Christian Chronicle* calculated to leave the impression that he reported all church news impartially.

The program of Jubilee ’96 is now accessible through Internet. Linda Adams reported that the **Woodmont Hills church of Christ** is now the *sole* sponsor of Jubilee. Phillip Morrison reported that there is no anti-Jubilee sentiment in the Madison and Antioch churches. This is also my assessment. Linda reported that **Steve Flatt** said that “Jubilee was a resounding success.”

FIVE YEARS OF REVEALING MEDIA COVERAGE OF JUBILEE (1991-1995)

Before launching into the informative data bearing on Jubilee ’96, we need to look back at Jubilee history. Only 15 churches (out of a total of 115 Nashville area churches) are reported by Rubel Shelly to be supporters of Jubilee.

The slander of the conservative churches in 1991 during the Jubilee season by **Gayle Napier**, family therapist for the Harpeth Hills church, directed against the fathers, mothers, and their children is false, evil, and unconscionable. Napier was reported by the news media as saying that “power-addicted preachers of such churches encourage incest and pornography in the home.”

A selection of other headlines paints an even darker picture. The *Nashville Banner* and *Tennessean* carried such headlines as “Jubilee Celebration Makes Churches of Christ a Divided Church”; “Churches of Christ May Foster Incest”; “Not Everybody Jumps for Jubilee”—and much more.

And there were the personal charges leveled against Jubilee and its supporters by **John Gary Williams** of the Laverne, Tennessee, church, and **Willard Collins**, retired DLU president. Brother Williams wrote Rubel Shelly a letter telling why the church there would not support Jubilee, saying, “Assisting a program which contains arrogant men who promote false views is the last thing the Lord wants me to do.”

And the statement of Willard Collins which he made in 1994 to churches in South Atlanta should be convincing: “I had to make a choice of this of June, July. Oh we have a situation in Nashville that is hurting us, hurting us in regard to preaching the Word. We’re polarized in Nashville about many things. We have Jubilee, one of them polarized around Nashville.”

A PREVIEW OF CHRISTIAN JUBILEE 1996

I have in hand the Woodmont Hills church bulletins announcing the forthcoming Jubilee ’96 with the names of the 15 patronizing churches listed. The impression intended is that this year will witness the largest outpouring of church support in seven years of Jubilee history.

This is an interesting declaration in light of the fact that not a one of these churches could sponsor any kind of an undertaking with the general support of the area churches of Christ. This kind of unity and support among area churches had become legendary since the Hardeman Tabernacle Meetings in 1922. This cooperative spirit and unity was broken after Rubel Shelly came to Nashville.

Just to cite a few cases, the most offensive inclusion in 1996 roster of churches supporting Jubilee is the apostate

Hendersonville Community Church which is a "split off" group led by **Ken Dye** after he was dismissed by the Hendersonville church. The Community Church is presently "pastored" by **Doug Varnado**, a DLU Bible teacher. He succeeded in splitting the South Harpeth church, but failed in a "takeover" attempt a while back.

The **Harpeth Hills church** will play a major role in upcoming Jubilee '96 because of the high profiled presence of leading liberals in churches of Christ. This church will vie for center stage with the Woodmont Hills church in ways that will prove to be most surprising. Wait for this intriguing story!

The **Western Hills church** is singled out because the elders recently employed its present preacher **Scotty Harris**, a Shelly apprentice, who failed in his bid to split and take over the Concord Road church of Christ. And the **Otter Creek church** must not be overlooked. This church has been "coming off the wall" since the day of its founding. Its doctrinal aberrations range from *premillennialism* to "*Fintoism*."

Who is the wise man who can decipher the **Una church of Christ**. This was the church which brought Don Finto to Nashville—and later dismissed him. The church now fully supports Rubel Shelly and Jubilee despite the fact that **Dr. Shelly, Dr. Finto, and Jim Bevis** now form a triumvirate to promote a new wave of "charismatic mania" similar to the **Pat Boone** phenomenon several years ago.

And the fullness of time has come to call the hand of "teflon" **Carl McKelvey**, the preacher-elder of the **Vultee church of Christ**. For too long he has been a blind leader of the blind. He has managed to escape his share of blame for the rampant liberalism running loose in the area

churches.

We are prepared to say and document that **Dr. McKelvey** who is the Senior Vice President of Lipscomb University and head of the David Lipscomb High School, and **Dr. Richard Jones** who is the Vice President of the DLHS, and **Robert King** who is the DLHS choral director endorse and have allowed the playing of instruments of music in the school chapel and other devotions.

This same choral director **Robert King** is the Vultee song leader. He says he once believed instrumental accompaniment was wrong, but now he knows better. Perhaps he should be paid the homage of the "better-mouse-trap-inventor" that a beaten path be made to his door to learn what **David Lipscomb** himself never knew. Church historians in another time will give a paragraph and a footnote to this brash young man for his sagacious comment.

A POSTSCRIPT

In the meantime, we shall await the first sabbatical Christian Jubilee anniversary. What we now know in part, we shall know in full after July 4, 1996. **And after that time, what came out of Jubilee '96 will be adequately addressed.**

N. B. Hardeman was advised years ago by a well known gospel preacher and board member of David Lipscomb College to tend to his own business and run Freed-Hardeman College, and they would do likewise at David Lipscomb College. Hardeman responded that whatever threatened the churches of Christ became his business; and to use a Hardeman expression, "these too are my sentiments."

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

"SOFT" AND "HARD" PREACHERS WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

N. B. Hardeman

"Then came his disciples, and said, Master, knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" Now stop and analyze the conditions. The Jews of Christ's day were divided into three denominations: Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. Of the three, the Pharisees were far more prominent. They were the elite, the bon tons, the upper tens of their day, and for Christ to speak against them was to them abuse and ridiculous as well as preposterous. After they had spoken these things, the disciples came and said, "**Lord, you gave offense to the Pharisees. You have offended the leading sect of the day. And they are up in arms against you.**" Now, notice Christ's answer: "**Every plant which my Heavenly**

Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." That's the answer Christ gave when the disciples told him the Pharisees were offended at the doctrine he had thus spoken. Brethren, I have often wondered what on earth I might say that would not be offensive to someone. If I preach there is a God, the atheist is offended. If I preach Christ as the Son of God, the Unitarian is offended. If I preach he was born of a virgin, all modernists are offended. If I preach against apostasy, our Baptist friends are offended. If I preach that immersion is God-ordained, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Congregationalists are offended. If I preach against the popular sins of the day, the socialites and the clubs are offended. If I preach about giving, all

the old, stingy tightwads in the church are offended. Brethren, what on God's earth can I preach without offending? You just name it, and I will oblige myself that somebody will be offended at the thing thus said.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOFT PREACHER

1. He preaches the truth but has it mixed with error to such an extent it is impossible to tell where he stands. 2. He preaches the truth in an apologetic manner. He is ever fearful of offending some dear friend and thus he carries no conviction. Like chief rulers, he loves the praise of men more than the praise of God. He has never learned what Paul said, "**If I seek to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.**" 3. He

preaches the truth in a general way so that he gets exactly nowhere. He is a preacher with a multiplicity of words; he is not intentionally unsound, but never gets to the point. He can "pace all day in the shade of a tree."

The man who is considered hard preaches truth unmixed with error, in a firm and positive manner. He cares not for the person of any man. Having con-

victions, he contends earnestly for the right and exposes error regardless of friendly ties.

He gets to the point and the audience knows what he said and where he stands. A preacher is known not only for what he stands by, but also by what he stands against.

I have often said that I would be ashamed of myself if I could not make

clear my attitude toward any matter affecting the peace and happiness of the church on a postcard. I pray that our attitude toward all affairs may ever be such as will cause his smiles to be upon us.

—Reprinted from
The Cullendale Harvester
2707 Mount Holly Road
Camden, Arkansas 71701

AN APOSTATE ACU? THE EVIDENCE ABOUNDS AND ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

BUT, HERE'S STILL ANOTHER ACU DEPARTURE FOR THE RECORD

Bob Berard

Faithful brethren have repeatedly and righteously exposed **Abilene Christian University (ACU)** for involvement in numerous anti-scriptural practices over the past several years (Ephesians 5:11; Romans 16:17). There is now a thoroughly documented case proving that ACU has persistently and grossly undermined the precious cause of truth.¹

The primary thrust of this article is to document just one more instance of ACU's defiant departure from sound doctrine and scriptural practice, but, before that task is begun, it is worth the space required to urge the reader's review of and proper response to the voluminous evidence of ACU's past wrong doings; that evidence provides ample basis for the long overdue conclusion that enough is enough with fellowshiping this apostate institution of heretical learning. Christ's church and gospel have been misrepresented ENOUGH, our congregations divided ENOUGH, our young people have been misled ENOUGH, our dollars misused ENOUGH, our pleas to repent have been ignored ENOUGH! If Paul, in Romans 16:17, implied that there would be in some instances ENOUGH information by which brethren could **and should** identify some persons as guilty of causing "**divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine,**" then surely ENOUGH incriminating information has been cataloged against ACU's leadership. If not, where in recent times is a more thoroughly documented and compelling case identifying so many church members under one roof more inimical to sound doctrine?

The recent wrongful deed probed in this article involves **President Money's** and **Vice President McCaleb's** 1995 endorsement of the popular sectarian teacher and writer **James Dobson**. The harm of this endorsement was magnified by ACU's further broadcasting of the matter in its 1996 winter issue of *ACU Today*. It is, of course, nothing new for ACU to commend false teachers to impressionable students and to other men and brethren.² For example, our false brother **Max Lucado** was honored as the 1991 ACU Young Alumnus of the Year. Lucado, for the uninformed,

is our apostate brother and popular author who preaches in denominational pulpits and swaps pulpits with denominational preachers. Max fellowships denominations to the MAX! This sort of sinful fellowship that ACU has with Max and its crediting where genuine credit is **not** due recurs in with the overtly denominational class of false teachers, that is, Nazarene Church member, James Dobson.

The Christian Chronicle's December, 1995 front page pictures ACU Vice President McCaleb with denominationalist James Dobson. Such publicity indicates that that error-pampering paper shares ACU's *high regard* for association with the big names of denominational religion and its *disregard* for the distinctiveness of Christ's one church.

Brethren, there is here no attempt to claim that Dobson does not teach some truth or even much truth, or that there is no appropriate way in which denominationalists' work might rightly be used. Rather, the intention is to note that all denominationalists advocate some fatal error, particularly, error which causes sinful division (I Corinthians 1:10; John 17:20-21). On that count alone denominationalists should never be fellowshiped or commended in a setting which indicates approval of their denominational beliefs, practices, or teaching. For example, consider Paul's words, "**... have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather prove them**" (Ephesians 5:11). Consider also the words of John, "**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds**" (II John 9-11).

These passages plainly require a disposition toward denominational teachers which is set to rebuke and correct such men instead of approving and endorsing them. Nevertheless, ACU President Royce Money praised James



Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions

Q. Many people believe that children are basically good and that they only learn to do wrong from their parents and culture. Do you agree?

A. If they mean that all children are worthy and deserving of our love and respect, I certainly do agree. But if they believe that children are by nature unselfish, giving, and sinless before God, I must disagree.

Jeremiah wrote: "The heart

is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9, KJV). Jeremiah's inspired insight into human nature is validated by the sordid history of mankind. The path of civilization has been disrupted by murder, war, rape, and plunder from the time of Adam forward.

This record of evil makes it difficult to hold to the Pollyannish view that children are pure and holy at birth. Greed, lust, and selfishness have characterized us all. Is this nature also evident in children? King David thought so, for he confessed, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." (Ps. 51:5, NIV).

What meaningful difference, then, is made by the distinction between the two views of children? Practically everything! Parents who believe all toddlers are

infused with goodness and sunshine are urged to get out of the way and let this pleasant nature unfold.

On the other hand, parents who recognize the inevitable internal war between good and evil will do their best to influence the child's choices—to shape his will and provide a solid spiritual foundation. They acknowledge the dangers of adult defiance as expressed in 1 Samuel 15:23—"For rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as bad as worshiping idols" (TLB).

These questions and answers are excerpted from the book Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions, published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Dr. Dobson is president of Focus on the Family, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the home. His daily radio program is heard on more than 1,400 radio facilities in the U.S. and Canada. If you would like a copy of the radio broadcast listing or the monthly Focus on the Family magazine (both are distributed free of charge), write: Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO 80995

teaches to attain salvation will bring only damnation. If this isn't putting the fox in the hen house, what is?

In great contrast to the impression left by ACU's leading men, James Dobson and his kind are enemies of the cross by virtue of the fatal errors they espouse (Matthew 12:30). Dobson's theology and teaching include soul-damning Calvinism, the doctrines of which erode foundational truths of the Bible (II Timothy 3:16-17; Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 11:25).

No allegation is here made that Dobson should be hated or mistreated in any way (Matthew 5:44). The desired end is to oppose the commendation of a sectarian in a way that will assuredly leave the impression that his teaching is exemplary. Biblically speaking, Mr. Dobson is not a Christian, that is, one who faithfully follows Christ and his teaching (John 12:48). Dobson is a false teacher (Matthew 7:15ff). Therefore, Dobson should be treated as a false teacher, that is, he should be re-proved and rebuked and not approved

and endorsed. This reproving and rebuking can be and should be done in genuine love (agape), but that genuine love is a far cry from the emotionally misdirected salve-all which is unsparingly sloshed over wickedness by the liberals of our day. The approving and endorsing of such men in the manner done by ACU cannot be done in genuine love (I John 5:3; Ephesians 5:11). Genuine love seeks the eternal good of all men (Matthew 22:39; 16:26). Genuine love hates evil and therefore never knowingly gives its doctrines or advocates a foothold (Psalms 97:10; Romans 12:9; II John 9-11)!

For those souls who insist on only seeing the "good" in others, despite evidence to the contrary, examine a bit more clear evidence from Dobson's teaching in his bulletin "Focus on the Family." Regarding the text of Jeremiah 17:9, Dobson said,

This record of evil makes it difficult to hold to the Pollyannish view that children are pure and holy at birth. Greed, lust, and selfishness have characterized us all. Is this nature also evident in children? King David thought so, for he confessed, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5, NIV).⁶

The Calvinistic doctrine of inherited sin or hereditary depravity is taught by Dobson's words. It is worthy of a side-note to mention that Dobson, who had just cited the King James Version for the passage in Jeremiah, then chose the dangerous New International Version to help him assert his false doctrine. To Dobson's credit he does go on to make a worthwhile point of truth in the context of the excerpted quote about the need of parents "to shape his (the child's) will and provide a solid spiritual foundation." However, Dobson's good point does not alter the fact that

Dobson for his "influence for the good of families."³ He further says of Dobson, "He is an outstanding educator, author and psychologist. It is out of gratitude for his great influence that we will honor him" (my emp., BB).⁴ Should one suppose that somewhere else in this public pronouncement that Money appends the warning, "But, watch out for Dr. Dobson's Calvinism" or "Be careful to sort out Dr. Dobson's error from the truth he teaches"? Don't hold your breath! Money is commending this denominationalist for his influence and that commendation, approval, endorsing, and honoring is what is heard and likely heeded by at least some of our impressionable youth and gullible brethren. If Dobson is "outstanding," as Money says, and if Dobson's influence is "great" in a commendable sense as Money indicates, and if Dobson's influence is influence for which Money avers he is grateful, should not one conclude that at least to the mind of Money, Dobson is one who surely understands the first principles of God's plan of salvation and one to whom both young folks and parents would be wise to give heed in fundamental spiritual matters? Certainly one could not be blamed for so concluding if he had nothing else to go on but the ACU leader's hobnobbing on the occasion of Dobson's ACU appearance.

ACU Today reports Dobson's visit to ACU's campus in an article titled "All that Matters."⁵ His speech, according to the article, emphasized salvation as the first priority for one's self and one's children. While there is certainly no fault to find with the profession of this goal, there is clearly a fault in endorsing Dobson as he professes that goal, when the ACU folks responsible know full well that Dobson does not teach the one and only Bible way to attain that goal. Furthermore, they surely should know that the way Dobson

he plants one of the tares of Calvinism. Such planting, despite the good seed planted with it, portends a harvest worth only burning (Matthew 13:40).

What's the problem, brethren? Is ACU unable to find faithful members of Christ's church (the one true church) to esteem, endorse, and recommend for Bible-based teaching about family matters or about man's primary goal in life? Are there no faithful brethren who could provide the same good points which Dobson provides, but do not hold Dobson's spiritually fatal doctrines? Could it possibly be that ACU is practicing the devil's unity in diversity scheme? There is enough evidence on this point to convince a California jury; ACU is a front runner in promoting unauthorized change and in the "denominationalization" of the members of the church of Christ.

Those truly appreciative of the one blood-bought church of Jesus Christ and the unity in truth taught in his New Testament know that it is imperative that the distinctive difference between the Lord's people and the multitudinous churches of men be illuminated rather than obscured or buried as was done with the ACU honoring of James Dobson (I John 4:1; Acts 17:11). May God help us to keep

striving to walk the straitened way that leads to life, to fellowship all who are in fellowship with God, and to mark and withdraw from our brethren who persists in walking disorderly (I John 1:5-7; II Thessalonians 3:6; Romans 16:17). Let us keep urging our brethren to THINK! To what spiritual treachery and eternal peril are you exposing your children when you entrust their guidance to ACU? Though ACU be supposed by many to be an aid to spiritual strengthening, in actuality its leaders do not have enough sense or enough concern to see the seriousness or the danger of endorsing a Calvinist. Making the matter worse, this departure is true to form for ACU.

ENDNOTES

1. Darrell Broking (ed). *ACU: "Changing the Unchangeable Gospel of Christ,"* David Brown, *ACU Ever Changing, Never Changing?*; Kevin Cauley, *The Worldly University*; Roy Deaver, Thomas Warren, and Mac Deaver, *Upon This Rock I Will Build My Church*; Bert Thompson, *Is Genesis Myth?*; numerous articles in past issues of *Biblical Notes*, *Contending for the Faith*, *The Firm Foundation*, and other reliable brotherhood publications.
2. Darrell Broking, *ACU: "Changing the Unchangeable Gospel of Christ,"* Clay A. Middlebrook, "You Reap What You Sow!" pp. 11-12.
3. Royce Money as quoted by Roy A. Jones II, Religion Editor, *Abilene Reporter-News*, Oct. 3, 1995, p. 2A.
4. Ibid.
5. Melissa Endsley, "All That Matters," *ACU Today*, Winter, 1996, Ron Hadfield, Editor, pp. 14-16.
6. James Dobson, *Focus on the Family*, January, 1995.
7. See publications listed in endnote 1.
8. Ibid.

AMAZINGLY AMAZING

Marvin L. Weir

I continue to be amazed at the "front" some brethren attempt to portray. In the February 1996 *Christian Chronicle* is the following advertisement:

"The Church: Who Needs It?" is the theme for the 78th annual Bible lectureship at Abilene Christian University. With moderns asking this question, we all need affirmative responses, said William E. Young, lectureship director. Theme speakers include William S. Banowsky...

Does Abilene Christian University believe that no matter what they do most folks will believe what they say? William Young would have people believe that those of "modern" persuasions are questioning the need for the Lord's church, and that those speaking on the ACU lectureship cannot wait to affirm that the Lord's church is needed. And, not surprisingly, but nonetheless amazing, the very first person listed to answer the "moderns" is **William S. Banowsky!** Please bear with me and consider the following analogy. The subject to be discussed at the *1st Annual Chickens Convention* is "The Chicken House: Who Needs It"? With danger lurking about from varmints, affirmative responses are needed, and

the first speaker is **Wile E. Coyote.** Please excuse me for not believing that Mr. Wile E. Coyote will teach the necessity of having safe, secure chicken houses that are varmint proof!

Mr. Young, do you really expect everyone to be gullible enough to believe something is true just because ACU says it is? Is this the same Bill Banowsky that while employed in Oklahoma called Billy Graham "one of the greatest gospel preachers who ever lived?" Is this the same Bill Banowsky who was a featured speaker at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas on Monday, April 11, 1988 at the 7:00 p.m. *evening revival service* with the theme being "*Days of Spiritual Awakening?*" Is this the same Bill Banowsky who "preached" (?) in the First Methodist Church in Fort Worth on Sunday, January 5, 1986 and said:

(1) That he was concerned about those on the "outside," but that "those of you (pointing to audience) in here are in pretty good shape." Did it dawn on this one who is supposedly opposed to modernism that most if not all those present had been *sprinkled* into the Methodist church? Or, could it be that Bill Banowsky believes that *immersion*

is not necessary for salvation—that a sprinkling is just as good?

(2) That Romans 8:28 applied to all the Methodists present that day as if they "loved God" and were "called according to his purpose."

(3) That the best thing they (Methodist church) could do was to keep Dr. Bailey (their pastor) on TV. Did Bill Banowsky not realize that Methodist doctrine is about as "modern" as it comes? Is Methodist doctrine what the masses of the world need to hear to be saved?

(3) That the first thing people need to learn how to do is "forgive God." He refers to natural disasters and children who starve to death and then blasphemously blames God for such by saying he "would not check into a hotel that was run like this world is run." He would have people "damn God" for such tragedy and then "forgive God." Excuse me for not understanding why Bill Banowsky deserves to be addressing the needs of the Lord's church!

(4) That "what your mind can conceive, and what your heart can believe, you can achieve." This is nothing short of humanistic teaching and utterly false! Many today "conceive" of work-

ing miracles, "believe" that they are capable of doing such, but they will never "achieve" the results for which they strive!

Instead of being noticeably different, Bill Banowsky tried to look as much as possible like the denominational clergy he was associating with. Dr. Bailey was in his official Methodist attire and Bill Banowsky was in his "gown" trying very hard to "blend in."

I would have never guessed the title of the so-called sermon had it not been scrolled across the TV screen. Yes, there is was—"Christ in you, the hope of Glory." Does Bill Banowsky believe that those of Methodist conversion have hope in Christ Jesus? The lesson did not state otherwise, in fact, it gave those listening considerable comfort in their present condition. Not one time did Bill Banowsky speak out against religious division, condemn a perverted gospel,

or challenge those present to obey the precious gospel of our Lord! Not once!

William Young visited me last year and assured me that both he and ACU were genuinely interested in doing what was godly and right! We discussed at length on that occasion Bill Banowsky and his infamous sermon in the Methodist church. He took notes to carry back to ACU! Now, as lectureship director, he allows Bill Banowsky to make a plea against modernism and defend the church. No thanks, I'm not buying *Wile E. Coyote* addressing a flock of chickens on the need of "Coyote proof" chicken houses, nor will I buy waterfront property in Arizona because someone assures me it is there!

—Reprinted from
Rowlett Notes

Abilene Christian University and the "Fires of Our Fathers"

In contemplating ACU's centennial year (2006), president Royce Money wrote:

I sometimes wish I could have a conversation with A. B. Barret, who, in 1906, founded what we now know as Abilene Christian University. I think he would be greatly pleased by what he would see and hear about ACU in 1996....We must do everything we can do to keep ACU faithful to its Christian heritage (*ACU Today*, Winter, 1996, p. 1).

Anyone who knows anything about the beliefs of the founder and early supporters of the old ACC would know that these brethren would be "spinning in their graves" at the denominational mess passing for Christian education at ACU today. What unmitigated gall and brash audacity president Money displays when he writes that A. B. Barret "would be greatly pleased by what he would see and hear about ACU in 1996!" If brother Barret were alive today would he not be disposed to take Money and crew to the proverbial "woodshed" to instruct them in "the way of the Lord more perfectly?" I doubt that Money and the rest of his denominational henchmen's britches would hold "shucks" when brother Barret finished with them.

Money and his apostate crowd have done everything in their power to wrest ACU from her true heritage. He knows that he is "telling a big one" when he pretends to hold the same beliefs regarding the Bible, the gospel, at what point one becomes a Christian, the Lord's church, denominationalism, and fellowship that Barret held (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). What a seared and callused conscience this man has (I Timothy 4:1, 2)!!

The following quotations are exemplary of the attitudes, beliefs, and concerns that once were demanded by ACU of her administration, teachers, and lectureship speakers. Today, they represent views that are alien to "the powers that be" at ACU.

What is the fact in the matter of the way to Heaven? Two or more roads or just one? This is very definitely fixed by Christ himself in His contrast of the two destinations, and

the two ways leading to them. He says, "The way leading to life is narrow and few find it, but the way leading to destruction is broad and many go that way." See Matthew 7:13. By no sort of juggling of words or logical scheming can this passage be made to say that there are many ways to Heaven. (John T. Hinds, "Coming to God," *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, 1924-1925, p. 202).

Denominationalism is the curse and bane of the age. So long as it remains to mislead and deceive the people, our work will not be finished. It is our duty fearlessly to unsheath the sword of the Spirit, boldly go forth to battle, and plunge it into the very heart of sectarianism, until, mangled and bleeding, it is left to die in its own shame (Guy N. Woods, "Christianity in a Changing World," *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, 1939, p. 57).

As I stand here and apprehend the thousands of elders and preachers that have been here in previous years, and have come or would like to be here during the coming week; and I think of the thousands of churches from which they came, I am thankful....May we be humble and not proud; but resolute in our purpose of standing by the word of God by which Christ exercises his authority. Others before us have been unwilling to let the fires go out; now the matter is in our hands. Let us be careful that the fires of our fathers do not go out (James Baird, "Authority in Religion," *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, 1952, pp. 166-167).

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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A COVER-UP MAGAZINE OR BLACK SHEEP IN WHITE CLOTHING

Johnie Scaggs, Jr.

Looking over one of the issues of *Wineskins* I could not help but think, "why don't they just say what they mean?" Volume two, number seven (1995) issue of *Wineskins* is devoted almost completely to the topic of changing the church. However, it is not meant to convey that idea, but rather the idea of changing 20th century traditions. The editors and writers of *Wineskins* are confused about what are 20th century traditions and what are the traditions that Paul wrote about. Although they speak of changing tradition, their true intentions are revealed throughout this issue. Paul spoke about holding to traditions, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (II Thessalonians 2:15). We understand that the traditions that Paul spoke of in the text were those things revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. These traditions were to be passed down to the next generations. Traditions of this nature are absolute truths that cannot be changed. One day we will be judged by the words or traditions that Paul made reference to. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). Christ condemned those who followed the doctrines of men, "But in vain they do worship me,

teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9).

There is absolutely nothing wrong with changing traditions, if we are speaking of 20th century traditions. But there is most certainly something wrong with changing the traditions that Paul spoke of in II Thessalonians 2:15. There is only one body of truth and that truth has been revealed to us through means of words written in the book called the Bible. "[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). We cannot change the spiritual aspects of our worship, if we should try, then we are out of bounds. The Hebrews writer informs us that God does not change, "And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Hebrews 1:12). We also learn from the Hebrews writer that Jesus does not change, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). If God does not change, and Christ does not change, then how can anyone ask for a change as it relates to truth. Truth is constant, it does not change. Whatever truth was 2,000 years ago, it is still truth today and must be obeyed if one is to receive any blessings from God.

NINTH ANNUAL

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1:00 p.m.	The Bible, God's Pattern	Jon Overcash
2:00 p.m.	The Inspiration of the Bible	Waymon Swain
3:00 p.m.	Guard the Truth about the Church	Jim Dobbs
3:45 p.m.	The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Edification of the Saints	Bill Lockwood
7:00 p.m.	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30 p.m.	Preaching what we Practice	H. A. "Buster" Dobbs

Friday, July 19

9:00 a.m.	How the Holy Spirit Works in Conversion	Joe Nichols
10:00 a.m.	The Bible, a Pattern in Morals	H. D. Simmons, Jr.

11:00 a.m.	Lack of Respect/Authority in Worship	Don Smith
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1:00 p.m.	Lack of Respect/Authority in the Home	Mike Hurley
2:00 p.m.	Is there "Unity in Diversity"?	Joe Sponaugle
3:00 p.m.	The Power of God's Word	Freddie Shows
3:45 p.m.	The All-Sufficiency of the Bible	Tommy Doran
7:00 p.m.	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:30 p.m.	Lessons Needed for Teenagers	Darwin Hunter

Saturday July 20

9:00 a.m.	Can We See The Bible Alike?	Garry Stanton
10:00 a.m.	Responsibilities in the Home	David Shires
11:00 a.m.	Does it make any Difference?	Lindell Mitchell

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If we want to change the physical aspects of our worship, then we can do so and still find ourselves pleasing to God. An example of this could be, should we have the Lord's Supper before taking up the offering, or should we take up the offering after we serve the Lord's Supper. Recently the congregation with whom I work decided that they would take up the offering, and then have a song and then offer the Lord's Supper. This they did to help people understand that the two were two different acts of worship. There is absolutely nothing wrong with changing things of this nature. These are called things that relate to traditions of the church during the 20th century. However, if we decided to take the Lord's Supper on any other day rather than the Lord's Day, or use something other than that which we are authorized to use, then we would leave the area of traditions of the 20th century, and enter the area of doctrinal matters that we do not have the right to change.

In his editorial Mike Cope said, "Some continue to confuse the change that writers of *Wineskins* often call for. We never want to abandon the centrality of God's word or the fundamentals of biblical truth just for the sake of being creative and marketable. We would much prefer to be irrelevant than to be unfaithful!" Mike, if you do not wish to be confused about what you all are saying, then why not say what you mean, and stop beating around the bush. Right after Mike states that some are confused about what they are calling for, Rubel Shelly states (article, "Change for the Sake of Change?") that, "More recently still, it has dawned on me that singing is not per se an 'element of worship' at all." It seems to me that Rubel would rather abandon the centrality of God's word and the fundamentals of biblical truth. At least that is what he is teaching. Rubel would have us to believe that singing is a part of the 20th century traditions and thus can be changed and, according to many, it must be changed if the church is going to blossom with the next generation.

Next, Mark Smith with an article called, "2 Generations, 1 Church," tries to show how the "baby-boomers" and the older generations are divided over traditions and not doctrinal matters. Smith compares the reaction that the younger and the older generations had when they saw the foundation to the temple laid in Ezra 3:10-13. He would have us to believe that this is the same type of reaction that

we are seeing today. There is no comparison. The older generation wept, because they had seen the beauty of the old temple, not because of the change per se. It is more of a comparison of my reaction and my children's reaction when my father and mother set up a trailer in the spot where once stood the house in which I was raised. I wept because of the fond memories that I had of the house and my childhood. My children however, never having experienced these memories thought that the new trailer house looked great and were excited about the change.

Smith is right when he states, "...intergenerational tension is as old as humanity." However, he is very wrong when he teaches that because of intergenerational tension the church must change that which is right and accept that which is wrong. Smith makes two comparisons that he believes are parallel. One is kitchens in the Lord's house and contemporary sounding music in the assembly. The second one is the use of the King James Bible and the N.I.V. From his own parallel, we can see that there is a problem with what is tradition and what is truth. Kitchens in the building belong in the area of 20th century traditions. However, music in the assembly is a matter of doctrine which cannot be changed. Also, those who use the King James Bible do so NOT because of 20th century tradition, but rather because we believe it to be a Bible that sets forth the truth. The N.I.V. however is not a reliable Bible, therefore we reject its use in the Lord's church. Yes, brother Smith, we do need each other, but only if we are each set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:17).

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Remaining Faithful—Revelation 2:10

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7:00 P.M. Is There the Possibility of Falling Away? Bill Lockwood
8:00 P.M. Bible Translations Jerry Moffitt

Saturday, August 24

7:00 P.M. Bible Class Material Don Tarbet
8:00 P.M. Colleges/Papers/Preaching Schools/Commentaries Dub McClish

Sunday, August 25

9:00 A.M. Importance of Bible Study Tim Ayers
10:00 A.M. Importance of Associations Lynn Parker
6:00 P.M. Importance of Sound Preaching Bubba Phillips
7:00 P.M. Importance of the Heart Kerry Clark

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Eddy Sandel (409) 295-6366

He says that the solution is respect for each other; he is right. However, before there can be any respect for any one of this world, there must first be respect for God and his word.

Sandra Woodroof Milholland in her article, "Change to What?", says that, "We treat each other as if the church is an organization with written and unwritten bylaws, rules, regulations, and exclusive membership rights." We do not have bylaws, Mrs. Milholland, written or unwritten, but we must certainly have rules, regulations and yes, we have the most exclusive membership that has ever existed. Have you not read what Jesus said, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and [of] the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Sounds very exclusive to me. Mrs. Milholland continues to say that, "...when the system has a rule that rules cannot be changed, that system will either die from a lack of emotional energy, or tear itself apart from energy of the wrong kind." Perhaps Mrs. Milholland would do well to read, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). Also, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18, 19). The truth cannot be changed. No, we cannot, "...agree to disagree." Jesus Christ and His apostles did not agree to disagree and neither can we if we would please our Lord.

Mrs. Milholland says, "The Lord's church will always survive, you say. True. But I'm not sure the Church of Christ will." Since when did the Lord's church and the church of Christ become different? The church that I am a member of, the church of Christ, is the Lord's church. It is that same church that the Lord spoke of in Matthew 16:18, the one Peter preached about in Acts 2, the one that the Lord added the saved to in Acts 2:47. It is the one church of Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23. The "rule-bound and, consequently, ineffectual," Pharisees,

scribes and rulers that she speaks of do not represent those who demand that the doctrine of our Lord be preached and maintained at all costs. The rules that these folks tried to keep (and which the Lord condemned) were rules which they made and added to the Old Law. By doing this they broke the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 4:2).

Mike, we do not misunderstand what you and others like you mean. You have made it very clear, although I doubt that you meant to do so. You and the writers of *Wineskins* wish to change the church of our Lord. You wish to destroy all that the apostles, preachers, and teachers of the past have built. I for one (and a host of others) will not stand by any longer and let you do so without speaking out against all that you and others like you are doing.

Do not be fooled by those who speak smooth words and try to convince you with ideas of peace. As long as we preach the truth, we will not be at peace with the world and many of our own will rise up against us. Remember the words of Jude, "But, beloved, remember ye the words that were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 17, 18). Also, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

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A NOTICE

After much exhortation with the leaders of the Sycamore church of Christ, Cookeville, Tennessee, we regret to make this announcement.

The Sycamore church of Christ leaders have invited Steve Flatt and G. P. Holt to preach in gospel meetings for them in 1996. Brethren Flatt and Holt are in fellowship with Rubel Shelly and other false teachers in the church of Christ.

The Bible teaches by direct command that faithful Christians cannot fellowship false teachers (Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:11; 2 John 9-11). Because of this Bible requirement we cannot have fellowship with the Sycamore church of Christ in these meetings.

It is a most serious thing to fail to respect the Bible as the Word of God and to fail to follow the teachings of the Bible. Jesus said, "And whatsoever I say on the earth shall be done in heaven" (John 14:14). Do not do things which I say? (Luke 10:16)

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THIS LIST REPRESENTS 41 OTHER CONGREGATIONS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THIS AREA AND HUNDREDS OF OTHERS WHO ARE OPPOSED TO THESE EVENTS

W. Ramsey and Ben Nash Sr., Elders of the Bethlehem Church of Christ, TN., representing the above listed congregations.

"CATALYSTS" (CHANGE AGENTS)

Gary W. Summers

The front page article of Leroy Garrett's *Last Time Around* (October, 1995) is entitled "Concerning Those 'In Error'" (he asked for my assessment). Leroy says he suspects many will identify with a letter he has received from a sister who has "hung in all her life." She apparently is on Garrett's mailing list (who else would write to him?), which means she must have been pondering his views for a while, which may explain her confusion.

She identifies herself as one who "grew up in the Church of Christ," which presumably means under its influence. One can be Jewish by birth, but one becomes a Christian by being taught (Hebrews 8:10-11) and then obeying the gospel, not by birth. She (seemingly unashamedly) confesses: "I have never as an adult believed that only those in the Church of Christ are Christians;" then she wants to know if she should leave it.

Now many faithful gospel preachers would probably ask her some questions, such as, "How does one become a Christian?" Or, "If you think there are Christians besides in the Lord's church, could you explain where they are and how they came to be there?" Or even: "What do you think is not nearly so important as what the Bible teaches on the matter; what does it say?" It may be very high-sounding and in harmony with the spirit of the age to allege that

Christians can be in all denominations, but it is altogether different to explain how such a phenomenon occurs. Take the Presbyterian Church, for example (in which the woman's husband grew up). It is a man-made denomination, not the Lord's church. Calvinism, the doctrine they follow, teaches that children are depraved sinners at birth; they are thus baptized (actually sprinkled) while mere babies.

Is the letter-writer willing to assert that those who have never heard the gospel (yet were sprinkled as babies) are saved? If so, exactly what New Testament has she been reading all these years? Certainly, she did not get such an idea from Jesus (Mark 16:15-16), Peter (Acts 2:38), or Paul (Romans 6:3-5). In order to become a Christian, one must "obey the gospel" (I Corinthians 15:14, Romans 6:17-18). Those who fail to obey it are lost (II Thessalonians 1:6-10). So how can there be a Christian in the Presbyterian Church, when they neither teach nor practice what the New Testament teaches?

LEROY'S RESPONSE

Most faithful gospel preachers would probably answer somewhat along the lines presented above (and send along some lessons on the nature of the church), but Leroy Garrett does not see fit to reply in such a fashion. He

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FRIDAY, JULY 26

- 9:00 a.m. "How Does Faith Overcome the World?" Bill Towry
10:00 a.m. "The One Faith" Larry Eoff
11:00 a.m. "The Days of Miraculous Faith" Royce Williamson
1:30 p.m. "Holding Fast Our Profession of Faith" Darwin Hunter
2:30 p.m. "For By Grace Are Ye Saved Through Faith" Tim Ayers
3:30 p.m. "Can We Depart From The Faith?" Shan Jackson
7:00 p.m. "The Sons of Elymas" John Moore
8:00 p.m. "Dealing with Chastisements" Carl Garner

SATURDAY, JULY 27

- 9:00 a.m. "Faith: The Substance of Things Hoped For, the Evidence of Things Not Seen" Jon Overcash

- 10:00 a.m. "Empty Faith" Michael Mayo
11:00 a.m. "Lord, Increase Our Faith" Robert Johnson
1:30 p.m. "Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself" Perry Cotham
2:30 p.m. "What Is My Responsibility As a Christian?" Al Macias
3:30 p.m. "Faith As Used In The New Testament" Joseph Meador
6:00 p.m. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
7:00 p.m. "Making Shipwreck of Faith" Ira Rice
8:00 p.m. "Sharing That Most Precious Faith" Don Walker

SUNDAY, JULY 28

- 9:30 a.m. "And Not By Faith Only" Eddie Whitten
10:20 a.m. "Lest Satan Should Get an Advantage of Us" Joseph Meador
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“advised this sister and her husband that leaving one church and going to another does not always solve the problem.” Please understand that Garrett is equating the Lord’s church with a denominational church when he gives such advice. The woman had written about leaving “the Church of Christ.” Since there is only one true church (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4), Garrett must know the only other “church” she could attend would be a denomination, and that appears not to bother him—even though he encourages her to stay where she is.

Why does he advise her to remain with a group that makes her feel like a “hypocrite” since she cannot agree with them? “...they have a better chance of being a catalyst for change if they remain where they are.” Such is apparently the philosophy of Shelly and others—don’t leave the church; be a “catalyst for change” instead. Remain as the Trojan Horse to destroy (oh, excuse me) reform it from within. The church needs these people about like a house needs termites.

NOTICE TO THE FIFTH COLUMN

To all of those who think they can “help” the church by subtly getting it to change, consider the response of at least one conservative.

Thanks for your consideration, but we do not want or need your help. We have the Bible and find it utterly sufficient in matters of doctrine and morality. If you had something constructive to offer, we would be happy to listen, but all you seem to want to do is tear down those things it took faithful brethren generations to build.

You mock the old hermeneutics of “command,” “example,” and “implication” (which Jesus himself used as methods of interpretation) and have replaced them with the touchy-feelies (if it feels good, do it). You accuse us of causing division over the instrument when you know full well that the source of the problem involved those who introduced it and who still refuse to renounce it for the sake of unity.

You would make of the Lord’s church a denomination and do away with the Bible’s teaching about salvation (Acts 2:38). Truth is of no consequence to you whatsoever; it has been cast aside for “love,” a soft, warm, gooey feeling that *overlooks* practically everything instead of *looking out* for the best interests of others (I Thessalonians 5:15), such as communicating the truth that could set people free (John 8:31-32).

Many of us intend to stand with the scriptures rather than follow the lead of the culture we live in. Homosexuals will not convince us that the Bible is in error about them, nor will feminists cause us to be silent about I Timothy 2:9-14. Neither will you remove us from the Biblical doctrine of fellowship (I John 9-11).

By aligning yourselves with the denominations you have robbed yourself of the chance to offer anything of value. Those defending the concept have been met and defeated by us for decades. And you don’t even have the courage to defend your beliefs in honorable public debate. Instead of remaining among the churches of Christ, why don’t you shed a modicum of your cowardice and join your

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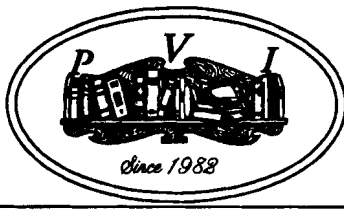
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denominational buddies? You will be happier *not* associating with those you hold in contempt, and we will be free of "catalysts."

"BROTHERS IN ERROR"

Much of Garrett's article responds to this sentence: "All these years I have been able to ignore this 'in error' applied to others but not ourselves." The reader can tell that the editor is delighted with this sentence since it affords him the opportunity to launch into one of his favorite themes.

Garrett writes: "As for this 'in error' mentality, it is a judgment that one will find only in Churches of Christ. I am not sure how or why it got started. It is a dubious construct, reflective of our inability to see ourselves as others see us. Even when we refer to others in the Movement who have been baptized, we refer to them as 'brothers in error.' If there are Christians in other churches, which we often question, they too are 'brothers in error.' I have never in all these years heard anyone among us refer to ourselves as 'in error.' It is always others who are 'in error,' not ourselves."

Is it true that the "in error" mentality is found only in Churches of Christ? One wonders if Leroy has ever heard of Jehovah's Witnesses. He may be unaware of it, but there are some fairly staunch Calvinists who would not hesitate to say that those who subscribe to the opposite doctrine (in this case, the truth) are "in error."

Anyway, the point should not be how many groups would say such a thing; the question is, "What does the Bible say?" "So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen..." (II Chronicles 33:9). The people were in error—spiritual and moral error.

Consider these two statements in Isaiah "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (3:12b); "For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (9:16). Jeremiah 23:13 states "And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err."

Would Leroy like to convince God that this "in error" mentality is of dubious construct? When people embrace lies in place of the truth, they are "in error." It's that simple. "Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof, because they have despised the law of the Lord, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked" (Amos 2:4). Just as people can walk in the truth (III John 3), so can they walk in error, according to the Scriptures.

The reason that people are "in error" is that they are like the Sadducees, not knowing the scriptures (Matthew 22:29). Jesus warned the disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (Matthew 16:6). Later, they understood that he referred to their *teaching* (Matthew 16:12). They were "in error" on their teaching!

What else could Jesus mean when he refers to them as "blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:14) except that,

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."

Regarding issues, a comment from the late N. B. Hardeman is often cited. While president of the old Freed-Hardeman College brother Hardeman said, "We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'"

**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

like many religious leaders of today, they are in error and teaching error? James says that brethren who wander from the truth must be turned back; those outside of truth must be brought back from the error of their ways (and are even called "sinners" instead of brethren). Peter speaks of those who "live in error" (II Peter 2:18) and warns against being led away with "the error of the wicked" (II Peter 3:17). Hopefully, these few passages will serve to provide Garrett the origin of the concept.

"AS OTHERS SEE US"

Leroy seems concerned about how others see us. It is always nice to be well-liked, well-thought-of. But whatever men think must take second place behind what God thinks. Elijah, Jeremiah, and Amos were not highly regarded in the community. Jesus was hated by the religious leaders of his day. In teaching the truth, he offended them (Matthew 15:12). "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Likewise, we must teach truth regardless of how those "in error" feel about it.

"THE MOVEMENT"

Many people are baptized for the remission of their sins, including Mormons. Why does Garrett choose to use this phrase? And whom does he include in it? Wouldn't it be better to use scriptural terminology so that we all might understand what he means?

ARE WE "IN ERROR"?

Garrett seems surprised that we do not refer to ourselves as "in error." Is this phenomenon really a mystery? The Bible says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (I Peter 4:11). Would it not be the height of folly to tell someone, "I don't know the truth; I am in error. But come and let me teach you anyway"?

"Buy the truth and sell it not," Proverbs 23:23 advises, and the New Testament likewise emphasizes this senti-

ment. "Sanctify them through thy truth," the Lord prayed, and added, "Thy word is truth." Others may not care about truth, but members of the Lord's church do. For such reasons we study carefully and are willing to test our beliefs in public debate. Liberals seem unwilling to do so, and we can't help wondering why. We sincerely believe we are teaching and practicing the truth, but if someone thinks we are "in error," let him point out the error and be willing to discuss it rather than hide behind vague innuendoes.

NONSENSE VERSUS GOD'S SENSE

Leroy further pontificates "It is nonsense because no such distinction can be drawn between those 'in error' and those who are not. We are all in error about some things, unless we presume that both our knowledge and behavior are perfect..." Anyone who is not absolutely stupefied by the preceding statements needs to read them again. Garrett believes that one cannot distinguish between those "in error" and those not. No wonder he can fellowship anyone!

Fortunately, the word of God teaches no such foolishness. "You reject all those who stray [err, KJV] from your statutes: for their deceit is falsehood" (Psalms 119:118, NKJ). Notice that: (1) God can distinguish between those in error and those not; (2) he rejects those who do err; and (3) there must be some who do not err from God's statutes, or there would not have been a psalmist left to record this verse!

Certainly, God knew that all are imperfect, especially in behavior. And he knows that all of us may hold a peculiar view or two, but even so, it is still possible to determine that someone has gone "onward" (II John 9-11) into "error."

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Notes & Quotes...

Gladys Aldridge, Tempe, Arizona: "I am so thankful for Contending for the Faith and the Firm Foundation...I'm so 'sick at heart' at the liberalism in the church—and it's getting worse and worse! I have friends in the congregation here in Tempe—members of the church—who will not stand up for the truth.

"I'm 83—and after 40 years in the Tempe Church of Christ—after many tears and prayers—I changed my membership to the Camelback Church of Christ in east Phoenix.

"Brother Ron Bryant is the minister at Camelback, and he still preaches the old time gospel. He stays close to the Bible.

"I've been taking my two grandchildren, who live here in Tempe...Casey is 15 and Jonna is 10. They love to go to Camelback, and I pray that I'll be able to drive to church (11 miles) until Casey is old enough to drive me!!

"I feel so grateful to God for giving me strength to change—and that my grandkids have heard some good, sound preaching..."

[NOTE: "I share your heart-sickness at the inroads that liberalism is making into the church," I replied, in part. "How anyone can ever have known the truth and then not stand up for it is beyond me.

"I noted your having changed your membership from Tempe to Camelback in East Phoenix. As long as they have a strong, sound preacher, they probably

will continue to be sound. However, if they ever change preachers and get one who is 'liberal,' look out! A liberalistic preacher, unopposed, can change even a sound congregation into something else within 90 days—it does not take a generation!" IYR Jr.]

Asghar Ali, Lahore, Pakistan: "We had a good lectureship, November 14-18, with 50-60 attending most of the meetings. I am glad I was part of it. It was good to know that two of our brothers: brother Hadayat, of Sialkot, and brother B. M. Sabir, from Sahiwal, have grown spiritually. But, on the other hand, we were saddened to know that some preachers (on brother Scott's support for

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five years) have been using instrumental music in their worship services. I wish our American brethren would be careful in selection of preachers. These men should have been proven before they be put on support. I have informed brother Scott of this problem..."

[NOTE: "I know what you mean about American brethren needing to be more careful whom they put on support," I replied, in part. "If those being supported do not even believe, teach or practice the truth, it is worse than useless—it actually contributes to the spread of error." IYR Jr.]

Jackie Kemmy, San Antonio, Texas: "I'm not sure how I got on your mailing list, but for over 6 months now have been receiving your publication. I have never asked to receive it or sent you \$6 per year fee. Each time I receive one of these and begin reading I get very upset at such sarcastic and judgmental articles.

"There are surely more important things that your writers and editors could be doing than downgrading all the members of the Church of Christ who are not doing everything exactly like you think they should be done. When do you in your 'Contending for the Faith' become the authority for all the Churches of Christ.

"I was raised in the Church of Christ and am thankful for that. Now, in my thirties as a wife, mother and highschool teacher am thankful for the Church of Christ I attend and the programs the church offers and supports. I have a feeling my church would be one on your list of the condemned.

"We occasionally sing songs from an overhead projector and 'heaven forbid' have a group that sings or does a skit during worship. Our youth group is so strong that I have seen them reach teenagers at the high school I teach who would never have had the opportunity to go to a church or meet Jesus without their encouragement.

"In conclusion, I would like to recommend that your writers get out in the community more. Try to help children, teenagers or senior citizens see Jesus and spend less time on negative criticism. There is a world out there that needs positive Christians and I'm afraid you and your articles are what give the Church of Christ a bad name. The last thing I need to read in my spare time is your 'high and mighty' judgment of everyone you can find. Thank you for taking my name off your mailing list..."

[NOTE: Off. IYR Jr.]

"Life with Christ is an endless hope. Life without Christ is a hopeless end." —Gideon C. Rodriguez, on the mini-lectureship, December 15, 1995, at Manila, Philippines.

EAST TEXAS LECTURESHIP

Eastern Hills church of Christ, of Marshall, Texas, was the venue of the first East Texas Lectureship, March 15-17, 1996. The overall theme of the lectureship had to do with miracles.

Specific topics covered included Definition of the Miraculous, Old Testament Miracles, New Testament Miracles, Purpose of Miracles, Cessation of the Miraculous, Demon Possession of the First Century, and Occult Miracles.

Speakers included Mac Deaver, Stephen Wiggins, Tim Ayers, Mike Wyatt, Joe Meador, Dub McClish, Jim Dobbs, Buster Dobbs, Joe Gilmore and Bill Lockwood.

When, 25 and 30 years ago, students from our colleges would go home and tell what was being taught, parents and elders refused to believe it. Now it is too late.

David W. Hester, Tuscumbia, Alabama: "There are some signs of encouragement. I hear that the elders at Sherrod Avenue are now trying to 'rein in' Sid Fulford and the teaching that is going on there...May God continue to bless you in your work."

[NOTE: "As for the Sherrod Avenue elders trying to 'rein in' Sid Fulford and the teaching that is going on there, while this is commendable on their part, it probably won't work unless they fire him and start over with a new man," I replied, in part. "Thanks for letting me know anyway!" IYR Jr.]

A first step is better than a stumble.

Without implementation, ideas are just academic.

Amy Hanes, of Memphis, Tennessee, went to Romania to do missionary work during the summer. Since returning, she continues to be in correspondence with at least one or two she studied with while there.

"Last time I wrote to you," she writes, "I told you about the girl whom I studied with the most; her name is Alina Nedea. I am again petitioning your prayers on her behalf. I received a letter from her recently and the following are excerpts from it:

"Since you all left, I feel very lonely. Right now, there is nobody I can talk to about God and His will for us; there is nobody here to understand me. My parents...didn't change at all...When Harvey [Stirling] came back for the first time...I was in Pitesti, but I couldn't go, because my mother didn't allow me to. But when Harvey came for the second time, I went to study just one day.

Only two hours...It was so little time...To get to the House of Culture was more than difficult: I had to run out of the house, to leave like a thief, when I was alone...After such a long time, I was able to talk to someone about what was really important to me...

"We have religion classes in school, but they are not like the 'classes' I had with you. Our teacher reads from other books than the Holy Bible and asks us to learn what she knows..."

"I continue to study the Bible alone, when nobody is around. I read a few chapters before I go to bed, and I sleep with the Bible under my pillow. I pray every night for all the people in the world who don't have the opportunity to know about God, for all those who live in countries where there is a war or another bad thing...I pray for peace...in the world, and I pray for you every night..."

Brother Virgil Bowen, longtime supporter of our work both at home and abroad, is growing older now. However, he wants to carry on in Oklahoma City just as long as he can.

He writes, saying, "I have lived here longer than anywhere else in my life, have more friends and more appointments to teach the Bible here, and more able to help you in your great work..."

[NOTE: We pray for brother Bowen that God may grant him many more years to labor together with us in his service. IYR Jr.]

Barry Hatcher, whose missionary work is sponsored by the Spring [Texas] Church of Christ, writes: "It is hard to believe. It seems as though only yesterday we were boarding a plane for Indonesia. But is almost ten years later and the [Southern Sumatra] Bible College is beginning its eighth year training men to reach the lost in the fourth largest nation on the globe.

"I am convinced that this is the best way to reach people of other nations.

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When the local people of a land have the opportunity to grow in knowledge of the scriptures, the results can be positive for the cause of Christ in terms of the truth spreading to many areas where otherwise it might take decades to reach by foreign missionaries. I continue to be impressed with the dedication of the men on the staff and with the men and women graduating from the college. Their willingness to suffer and sacrifice for the truth is an encouragement to all who have the opportunity to learn about them and their struggle to evangelize the country.

"As it stands to date, there are 35 graduates from six different islands working in the fields "white already unto harvest." I remember the first day, when in one of my orientation speeches to the first class, a speech I would repeat to each new class, I mentioned to them we would do our best to teach the Bible, but we were not planning to support anyone after graduation. I also remember one or two cutting his eyes in disbelief. We have continued this policy to this day, and I am glad we have. No graduate of the college is receiving support from American brethren on a monthly basis. A number of the graduates have returned to home congregations to become the local preacher and they have begun to support them in a fine way. There are a few graduates supported by two congregations in Singapore. This is good, because it encourages the Singapore brethren in their foreign mission work, and they do send men to check on the work they are supporting.

"I hope and pray we will be able to keep this work going for some time to come. I know there are many congregations and individuals involved in this, and I hope you will continue to read...staying informed and encouraged about the work. We certainly need your continued support as we enter the eighth year..."

[NOTE: Words cannot express the appreciation we have for brother Hatcher and his ongoing work in Indonesia. He and brother Donald R. Waggoner co-labored for years in this work, making it possible for numbers of their converts to be trained at Four Seas College, in Singapore, then return to Indonesia to work for the Lord. At last account, all of the teachers in the Southern Sumatra Bible College were trained initially at Four Seas College, some of them even returning for our third-year course. Thus those of us connected with Four Seas College, in Singapore, consider ourselves as "laborers together with God" both with brethren Hatcher and Waggoner and with their and our graduates in Southern Sumatra. The fact that they, too, have trained and produced 35 graduates to work on six different islands of the Indonesian archipelago is deeply gratifying to us. God bless them all.

Since leaving Indonesia, brother Waggoner worked in Albania and now continues in Venezuela. IYR Jr.]

Graham Cain, one of the elders of the Northwest Church of Christ, of Hurst, Texas, had to be hospitalized with another heart attack in January. "But it was

not one calling for an operation," he writes. "It was not near so bad this time."

We were misinformed regarding his age, having been told he was now 85.

"I'm afraid someone gave you a little 'shove' regarding my age," he continued. "Two more months and I will be 83."

"I see that I was giving you too much credit," I replied. "However, even 83 is 'a good start'." We pray that he may have many more.

A Texas Brother had written to our Associate Editor David Brown for help on a certain subject troubling the congregation where he attends. Brother Brown sent him a book and several back issues of Contending for the Faith in which that matter was addressed.

"I don't know if I accomplished anything with our elders or not," the brother wrote back; "but I did get their attention. It seems to me that they are more prone to be on the defensive and to 'circle the wagons' with each other than to defend the truth and look objectively at what is taking place in the church...Thanks again, and my prayers are with your work."

[NOTE: When brother Brown forwarded this letter to me for my encouragement, I wrote to the querist, "We know what you mean about not knowing if anything was accomplished with your elders. So many so-called elders these days are more defensive for the 'status quo' than they are for the truth of the gospel. This is probably the No. 1 reason that the churches of Christ have apostatized over the past 30 years—even most elders did not know the truth or did not care enough 'by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers'." IYR Jr.]

Maurice Brown, from Rockford, Illinois, writes: "Keep up the good work in standing for the truth. Love your paper. Keep it coming!

Robert Doak, Pennsboro, West Virginia: "I enjoy reading the paper very much. I've been taking it for 20-some years. I think much good is accomplished through this paper for all that are concerned for the truth."

Dan Goddard, Collinsville, Illinois: "I have resigned my position here at Collinsville. In the Spring of 1997 I will be moving to Sheridan, Wyoming, to work with brother Charles Pledge. I am presently raising my support for that work. If you know of any congregations that might be willing to support a work in the United States, please let me know.

"Right now I need a congregation to oversee my work...Please help me to locate an overseeing congregation through Contending for the Faith.

"If you know of a good man looking for a place to preach, have him get in touch with me for possible work here at Collinsville in the Spring of 1997."

[NOTE: Longtime readers of this paper all will recognize the name of Dan Goddard. His numerous, valuable articles al-

ways are of great benefit; we appreciate them all.

Any congregation looking for a good man to oversee and/or support, please get in touch with him at once. Address him: 1400 Troy Road, Collinsville, Illinois 62234 or telephone: (618) 667-6708. IYR Jr.]

Mrs. Jean Faber, Woodsfield, Ohio, renewed her own subscription enclosing a new gift subscription, saying, "I wouldn't want to miss a single issue. It's certainly necessary to keep abreast of happenings in the brotherhood. Much of what you publish is quite disturbing but is quite necessary...Keep on 'Contending For The Faith'."

[NOTE: Much appreciation to sister Faber for her renewal, new subscription and comments. We realize that much of what we publish is very disturbing; however, it is only as brethren and sisters in Christ learn what is happening among us that anything is ever done to correct it." IYR Jr.]

Felix & Ruby Geiger, Apple Valley, California: "We really enjoy reading this magazine as it tells the truth."

Much appreciation to brother Leon D. Schrei for writing to Associate Editor David Brown, saying, "I'm proud to renew my subscription to Contending For The Faith. The paper has always been a source of great encouragement and strength to me. I have every confidence that under your leadership the paper will continue the same cause it did under brother Rice. God bless you, brother Rice, and CTF."

Mrs. Lee Roy Parish, of Greenbrier, Tennessee, expressed another view, saying, "Christians do not print stuff like this. If you don't have something good to print, print nothing. I will be praying for you...I do not want to hear from you again."

Troy Leland, of Crockett, Texas, subscribed, saying, "I have recently become aware of the many avenues in which to keep track of the things affecting the church today. I feel Contending For The Faith is an excellent publication...Thank you and keep up the good work!"

Buck H. Hunt, who lives in McAlester but attends at Crowder, Oklahoma, subscribed for one year and ordered all five of brother A. G. Hobbs' tracts on the New International Version, saying,

Why not help

Contending FOR THE **Faith**

grow, and give a gift subscription to a friend?

"We have some brother Christians who are using the NIV Bible and are teaching it to so many other new children in Christ, and the Easy-to-Read Version from World Bible Translation Center, Inc., of Fort Worth, Texas. I have one of those Bibles and find it very different."

Mrs. Thomas C. Brown, of Madison, Tennessee, asked to be taken off our mailing list, saying, "My husband has passed away, and I don't like your views."

[NOTE: Deleted. IYR Jr.]

Didrik A. Aske, Loves Park, Illinois: "I have managed to get a few of these 'Contending For The Faith' publications, and I must say that it far outweighs the contents that I have read from similar publications (from other sources). This is a very good publication and I am enclosing a check for \$10.00 so I can receive it on regular basis..."

"I have also read Goebel Music's book, 'Easy To Read Or Easy To Misperceive.' I must say with all sincerity I was very much shocked as to what is going on. No wonder there are so many problems springing up within the church in these days."

"I want to be among those who contend for the truth as God gave it, and not from some perverted versions that there are so many of!"

Fred Abraham, of Zimbabwe, Africa, now is attending the British Bible School in Corby, England. He writes: "I came across your wonderful gospel paper 'Contending For The Faith' of July, 1995. Your paper is excellent. I appreciate the good work you are doing through the paper."

"I would like to receive your paper monthly; but I am sorry that at the moment I do not have enough to subscribe. I would appreciate if any of the brethren may be willing to help me subscribe the paper."

"I am a student at the British Bible School (a school for church of Christ), and I am from Zimbabwe (Africa). I was baptized on the 1st of June 1986 at Avondale Church of Christ, Zimbabwe, by Joe

Lyon.

"Please may you advertise in your paper that I am looking for Christians who will be interested to correspond with me."

[NOTE: Brother Abraham's mailing address is 37 Ripley Walk, Corby, Northants NN18 9JR, England. Any wishing to subscribe for him, please send same to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383. IYR Jr.]

J. E. Choate, Nashville, Tennessee: "The liberal element in the Bible faculty in our schools will not admit any connection with [postmodern theology] and will ignore the matter as if the facts do not exist. However, I mean for them to be aware of the fact that they are not going to slip all of this without their hands being called..."

"Postmodern theology is something new and something late which I have been diligently researching the past year...I have now reached a comfort zone of assurance that I know enough about postmodern theology to follow the huge footprints of our liberal brethren all over the place."

"We can't shut them up, but we can keep them wary and looking over their shoulders to see if we are following. And in God's good grace and with patience and time, we can build the case against the change agents and their strategies..."

"I think the article that Wayne [Coats] wrote about the Ryman GA meeting was timely and hits with a powerful impact. Neil Anderson is so influenced and impacted by his liberal brethren whom he admires that he is lost in the underbrush of the trees and cannot find his way out to the river."

"The two areas in which our brethren are most vulnerable is the entanglement in liberal theology and the Restoration Forums. They are so entangled in a web spun by the Joplin digressives that they will eventually try to extricate themselves after it is too late."

[NOTE: Much appreciation to brother Choate for the study and work that went

into his article on "THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN/POSTMODERN THEOLOGY" that appeared in our November/ 1995 edition. A native of Wingo, Kentucky, he attended Freed-Hardeman College, Murray State College, George Peabody College, and received the B.D. and doctorate degrees from Vanderbilt University. Having taught 40 years at David Lipscomb University and served 48 continuous years in pulpit ministry, he now is Professor Emeritus of Bible and Philosophy at DLC. IYR Jr.]

Mrs. Virginia McCoy, of Zanesville, Ohio, enclosed \$100.00 toward our "special mailings" fund, saying, "Thank you for this effort. I wish it didn't cost so much."

[NOTE: Like sister McCoy, I, too, wish it didn't cost so much; however, we all know the price of POSTAGE these days. We have no control over that. Even the cost of PAPER has gone up 40% over the past year. IYR Jr.]

Truth for the World, a media mission work under the oversight of the church in Olive Branch, Mississippi, has begun a 15-minute weekly program over WSM Radio, 650 AM, in Nashville, Tennessee. The program is aired at 8:15 p.m., Central time, every Sunday. WSM has an extensive coverage area, reaching virtually all of the Eastern United States during the evening hours. Jim Dearman is the speaker for the program...Truth for the World broadcasts are heard in every continent, mostly through shortwave facilities. Follow-up is done through literature and campaigns into receptive areas.

Clyde & Wilma Lewis, Agra, Oklahoma: "It is so sad how many have strayed away from God's word. We really do enjoy 'Contending for the Faith.' Keep up the good work."

REMINDER

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IT'S TIME TO RENEW

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Claxton Church of Christ Homecoming, "Claxton at 45," Aug. 16-18, 1996. For information, contact: Roscoe Fields, 442 Henderson Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931, phone: 423-945-2331, E-mail: roscoef@esper.com.

THE QUESTION

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ONLY

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A DEBATE

The Disputants

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OUR STANDARD (AND STYLE) FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Although *Contending for the Faith* does not solicit articles for publication, we recognize that some of our readers like to try their hand at writing from time to time—and we both welcome and encourage such endeavors.

On the other hand, as our regular writers all know, we *do* have a certain standard and style that we prefer; and when articles are submitted without deference to these, the editing process can be time-consuming indeed.

To help forgo such on our part, please clip out these instructions and place them on or near your computer when writing articles:

1. Titles should be typed, all caps, one inch from top of first page.
2. Drop down four carriage returns and type just your name. [By “just your name,” we do not mean something else.]
3. Drop down four more carriage returns and begin article.
4. The first line of all paragraphs should be indented five spaces.
5. Entire article should be double-spaced, *i.e.*, do *not* give extra space between paragraphs.
6. Leave inch margins on all four sides of each page. [This leaves necessary room for our editing markings.]
7. Leave emphasis to our editorial discretion.
8. Do not spell out scripture citations, such as FIRST JOHN, ONE SEVEN. Just make it I John 1:7.
9. Use Roman numerals in referring to books of the Bible, *e.g.*, II Chronicles (not 2 Chronicles).
10. Resist abbreviation. For instance, spell out the names of all books, such as Deuteronomy (not Deut.) even if it kills you. [It won't!]
11. At close of your article, drop down two spaces, and type your address, also double-spaced, flush right. Do *not* abbreviate. Spell it out.
12. If #10 seems to contradict #8, it doesn't. Thanks for your cooperation, anyway!—The Editor

HOW WILL THEY KNOW?

*I felt discouraged and lonely today;
Unimportant, forgotten and blue;
When in the mail came a short little note
That said, "I'm thinking of you.
I haven't seen you in quite a long time,
And I miss your dear cheery smile...
But how will you know I'm thinking of you
If I don't tell you once in a while?"*

*It set me thinking when I got that note
How much those words meant to me.
If they brightened my day (and they certainly did),
How much happier others would be
If we showed them our love and told them we cared
With kind words and a warm, friendly smile...
For how else will they know we are thinking of them
If we don't tell them once in a while?*

—Eastside Edifier

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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.

Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherley, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

• • • • •

Pensacola—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, Tel. (904) 455-7595. Minister, Michael Hateher. Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgwood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P. O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10, 11 AM, 5:30 PM, Wed.: 7:00 PM. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

• • • • •

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) 758-7406.

—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., Lorán Gearhart, Tel. (307) 634-3040.

IRA AND VADA RICE HONORED AT THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING LECTURESHIP

Curtis A. Cates

The Memphis School of Preaching and the Knight Arnold Church of Christ were very privileged to host a dinner in honor of Ira Y. and Vada Ott Rice on Monday, April 1, 1996, during lectureship week. A near capacity crowd of some 450 Christians were present at The Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Appreciation Dinner. It was very fitting that the one who has likely done more for world evangelism in this generation than any other person be honored in the lectureship on the theme of "The Apostle Paul: Great Soldier of the Cross."

Those who paid tribute to brother and sister Rice and their topics were as follows; Joe Gilmore, San Jose, California, spoke in appreciation of brother Rice on the topic "Since Both Were Single Together in California"; Noah Hackworth, Foster City, California, on "More Than Thirty Years Association"; Gary Colley, Austin, Texas, on "As a Gospel Preacher"; Harrell Davidson, Obion, Tennessee, on "Long-Time Supporter of Missionary Work in Singapore"; Guss Eoff, Mathis, Texas, on "As a Fisherman and Fellow Missionary"; Curtis A. Cates, Memphis, Tennessee, on "From First Missionary Clinic to Fellow Fund-Raiser for Memphis School of Preaching"; Keith A. Mosher, Sr., Memphis, Tennessee, on "First Met Fund-Raising for Missionary Work; Overseas Twice Together"; Alexander Nesterkin, MSOP student from Murmansk, Russia, on "As Viewed from Russia and from Student at Memphis School of Preaching"; Garland Elkins, Memphis, Tennessee, on "As One Accused of Troubling the Brotherhood"; Wayne Coats, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, on "Whatever Comes to Mind"; Bobby Liddell, Memphis, Tennessee, on "As a Fellow Minister"; Joseph A. Meador, Austin, Texas, on "As Encourager of Young Preachers"; Ira Y. Rice, III, Olympia, Washington, on "As Viewed by a Son"; David Brown, Spring, Texas, on "As an Editor"; Perry Cotham, Grand Prairie, Texas, on "As a Friend and Fellow Preacher"; and Archie W. Luper, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on "Personal Confidant—Three Times Around the World Together." The prayers were led by Billy Bland, Coldwater, Mississippi (and MSOP) and Harold D. Mangrum, one of the Knight Arnold elders.



Each of the participants had words of enthusiastic and grateful appreciation for the tremendous sacrifice, courage, and loyalty to the word which have been characteristic of the work of this great couple.

Born in Franklin, Texas, to Ira Y. and Eula Edna Davis, Ira was reared in Norman, Oklahoma, where he was graduated from the University of Oklahoma with the B.A. degree in journalism. His sixty-four years of preaching have included work with congregations in Oklahoma, Texas, California, and Washington, plus his extensive, far-reaching work and influence overseas. He has preached the gospel in sixty-nine countries, having traveled all the way around the world seven times and halfway around the world 76 times. He has conducted numerous preacher training schools and founded Four Seas College in Singapore. He has written extensively, and he was founder and editor of *The Christian Soldier* (1939-1948) and is founder and editor of *Contending for the Faith* (1970-present). He began the work in Southeast Asia, in Singapore and in Kuala Lumpur and Kluang, Malaysia. He has encouraged countless men to start the work in other countries and

do world evangelistic work.

Brother Rice was presented a plaque which reads as follows:

*In Grateful and Laudatory Recognition
for Sixty-Four Years of
Distinctive Contributions to the Cause of Christ,
This Award Is Presented to
IRA Y. RICE, JR.
COMPASSIONATE CHRISTIAN
ERUDITE EDITOR
COURAGEOUS DEFENDER AND LOVER OF TRUTH
FAITHFUL PREACHER
WORLD EVANGELIST
CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR
DISTINGUISHED AUTHOR
ACCOMPLISHED SINGER, TEACHER OF MUSIC
Memphis School of Preaching
April 1, 1996*



▲ Brother and sister Rice enjoying the banquet in their honor. Some 450 attended the banquet.



▲ Brother and sister Rice have five children and nine grand-children. Pictured here from left to right are: Ira Rice III and his wife Milly, Ira and Vada Rice, René Harless, and Lynette Beasley. Two other daughters, Ramona Schroeder and Rochelle Whitaker, were not in attendance.



Brother Rice gives rapt attention to his good friend and Master of Ceremonies, Curtis Cates, Director of the Memphis School of Preaching. Brother Cates did a wonderful job in planning and directing the banquet. ▼

“While the Cat’s Away...”

Knowing that brother Rice would not report the MSOP banquet held in his and sister Rice’s honor, I decided to wait until he was on the other side of the world to report the event. I want to personally thank the elders of the **Knight Arnold Road Church of Christ** and especially brother **Curtis Cates**, Director of the **Memphis School of Preaching** for their recognition of the Rices’ rich and full life in service to the Lord. Too few in the brotherhood realize the tremendous sacrificial work that this Christian couple have accomplished in spreading the gospel and defending the faith over the last 50 years. May God continue to bless them in their labors for him.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*



Brother Rice listens intently to **Alexander Nesterkin** of Murmansk, Russia as he tells of one of brother Rice’s adventures while in Murmansk. Brother and sister (**Tatyana**) Nesterkin are medical doctors. They are presently enrolled in Memphis School of Preaching. When they finish their studies in MSOP, they will return to Murmansk. ▶



HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

...L.F. Bittle pointed out as early as 1873 in his letters to Jacob Creath, it had...been the tendency of colleges to fall in line behind the popular sides of issues in the brotherhood. Colleges, as a general rule, will as a matter of policy pursue for a time a midway 'safe' course until it is known which side will be the most popular, and then will jump with full force on that side....Consciously or unconsciously, this has been the tendency. The reason is clear: colleges must have money to operate, and if they get too unpopular, they will not have enough funds to run! (As quoted by Earl Irvin West, *The Search For The Ancient Order*, Vol. 2 (Ann Arbor: Cushing Malloy, Inc., 1950), p. 461).

It should be emphasized at this writing that Bittle's observation is 123 years old. Within 50 years of Bittle's comments his predictions were realized. During that period of the nineteenth century, the colleges went from following "a midway (safe) course" to "jump[ing] with full force" on the "popular" digressive Christian Church bandwagon.

Today, history has repeated itself. While the colleges operated by the brethren were struggling institutions whose boards, administrations and faculties were dedicated to the "Old Paths," they were primarily interested in serving the interest of faithful Christians. Many of those involved in the colleges were faithful gospel preachers. They never lost sight of why such schools were begun and the biblical authority supporting their existence.

Today the administrations and faculties of such schools are comprised of professional college persons who are, in many ways, interested in being like the state universities. They are in their various positions because of their degrees rather than their faithfulness. Many of these people are of the world by their training, and if religion is involved, it is too many times dominated by denominationally educated men rather than men who are dedicated to the gospel of Christ.

That late brother Glenn L. Wallace, who for some time was the preacher for the College Church in Abilene, delivered a lecture on April 20, 1970, at the Pepperdine University Lectures entitled *The New Face of the Church*. The following quotes are excerpts from that lecture.

We have a growing number of theologians who care little for what the Bible says and they are making it clear

that they believe that the early Christians were simply a misguided sect and the founders of a mere denomination.

In 1967, Leroy Garrett of the extreme radical left wing of the brotherhood, reported on a meeting of Campus Evangelism in Dallas, Texas, at the Baker Hotel. He wrote:

"More than 300 church of Christ young people were there and my immediate impression was that I was beholding the New Face Of The Church Of Christ. The old church of Christ orthodoxy is dying—a new brotherhood is emerging. The daring young princes among us have crossed their Rubicon—they have set faces toward Antioch rather than Jerusalem." (*Restoration Review*, Jan. 1967).

The article written in 1967 seems now almost like a prophecy of what we are looking upon in 1970. The New Face of the Church is being sketched in many places and in many ways. Some are knowingly contributing to the destruction of Truth; others are ignorant of that which really faces the brotherhood in the decade of the '70s.

Twenty-six years later we are far beyond the "sketching" stage. Those "daring young princes" of 28 years ago have accomplished much for their diabolical cause. For years, the universities of the brethren have planted, sprouted, and cultivated "apostasy plants"; plants that look good for spiritual food, that are "pleasant to the eyes," and "to be desired to make one wise." Thereby beguiled, students ate of the fruit thereof. In turn, they gave the "forbidden fruit" to the gullible, fickle, and gadding bride of Christ. For years, she has feasted on biblically unauthorized food. Even to this hour her ravenous appetite is not yet satisfied.

From one of these pseudo "Christian Universities" one would receive as much teaching regarding the absolute, objective, rightly-divided Bible, the gospel, and the church of our Lord as one would receive from **Vanderbilt or Texas Christian University**—which is none at all. However, we must never forget; God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the gospel, and the church recorded in the divine volume have not changed. Therefore, why should Satan's young, or now, old princes move us from the infallible, the inerrant, the all-sufficient and complete word of God? It will read on the Day of Judgment just as it reads now (John 12:48).

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

A Look at a Night with the

PROMISE KEEPERS

Wil Sadler

[Corroborated by Robert Hubbell]

June 1, 1996

If anyone thinks I am getting any pleasure out of giving this report, he is sadly mistaken. It makes my heart heavy with sorrow to bring this sad news to your attention, but if we are not willing to expose error of this magnitude then we share in the blame.

I know that many of us have heard about the Promise Keepers. It is an "inter-denominational" organization of [so-called] "Christian" men with the lofty purpose of making them better husbands and fathers. While its goals are truly lofty, its approach seems far from lofty. Let there be no doubt, the Promise Keepers are well organized and here to stay.

My problem, as a Christian man, is: Should I be involved in this movement? From what I have seen, first hand, my answer is, NO! In fact, I will go so far as to say that a faithful Christian man cannot be involved, in any way, with the Promise Keepers.

I am not saying that we should not, as Christian men, strive to be better husbands and fathers. What I am saying is that we should not compromise the Lord's Church to achieve that goal. In fact, we cannot compromise sound doctrine for any reason and still become better husbands and fathers.

NOT FAULTING DENOMINATIONAL PREACHERS

I want to say up front that I am not faulting any of the denominational preachers for any of their actions at this

rally of the Promise Keepers. I believe they acted out of a sincere commitment to God and within the guidelines of their religious organizations. I am critical of **Jimmy Adcox** and the **Southwest Church of Christ**, because they know better, and to know and do not is sin.

I do not for a moment want to leave you with the impression that I think they are insincere in their beliefs or actions. As far as I could tell, they believe completely in this Promise Keepers program and they truly believe it is all right to join themselves with religions whose organizations, teachings, and practices are not found in God's Holy Word. I fault in particular the elders of the Southwest Church of Christ for sponsoring this "rally."

NOT CONDEMNING SIGHT UNSEEN

Some might say that I shouldn't condemn something sight unseen. I am not doing that. I went to a meeting of the Promise Keepers (held jointly with the Central Baptist Church and the Southwest Church of Christ at their building). I have seen more than enough to know that the church needs to distance itself from this organization and warn others about it.

The theme song of Promise Keepers is about "breaking down walls with reconciliation." The walls they are talking about are the walls of sound doctrine that separate the church of our Lord from the denominations. This message is clear and undeniable. The other main message is that if you are opposed to denominations, you are a racist. Over and over again it was said during this "worship" service,

(Continued on Page 3)

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Editorial...

Adcox and Southwest/Jonesboro, Arkansas Church Learning That They Cannot Have It Both Ways

Over the past several years brother Jimmy Adcox and the elders of the Southwest/Jonesboro, Arkansas church, where Adcox preaches, have emitted many uncertain sounds causing consternation among faithful churches of Christ in the Jonesboro area.

Affecting to be a genuine church of Christ (thus entitled to the confidence and fellowship of fellow churches of Christ roundabout), more and more they have followed the "change agents" among us seeking to lead the churches in paths contrary to the New Testament pattern.

At least one of the identifying marks of a true church of our Lord is *unity* based on *speaking where the Bible speaks and remaining silent where the Bible is silent*. The denominational churches are sectarian primarily because they *reject* such unity. Where the Bible is silent, they want to keep right on talking. Consequently, over the past approximately two centuries there has been NO FELLOWSHIP between the churches of Christ and the denominations.

SOUTHWEST'S HOSTING INTER-DENOMINATIONAL CONFERENCE CAUSES VEXATION OF SPIRIT

It is hard to imagine that Jimmy Adcox and the Southwest/ Jonesboro elders are so dense that they could not understand the vexation of spirit their hosting an interdenominational conference would cause among the churches of Christ both in the immediate surrounding area as well as in the brotherhood in general.

Nevertheless, on the front page of Section D of *The Jonesboro Sun* for May 26, 1996, there it was: the Southwest Church of Christ had agreed to host the interdenominational "Promise Keepers" Conference that was coming to Jonesboro just a few days later. Also, Jimmy Adcox had agreed to speak right along with denominational preachers who would address the conference.

IDENTIFYING DENOMINATIONAL SPEAKERS

As to whom these preachers would be and which denominations they came from, consider the following:

Dave Wardell, described as co-founder of "Promise Keepers," formerly was the State Director for the Colorado Fellowship of Christian Athletes, an interdenominational organization.

Louis A. Monroe, while serving as a "pastor" in St. Joseph, Missouri, led the Interdenominational

Ministerial Alliance of that city as their president for seven years.

Dr. Rodney Reeves, currently serves as pastor of Central Baptist Church, in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Adrian Rogers represents the Fullness of Joy Church, whatever *that* is.

NEARBY CHURCHES OF CHRIST REFUSE FELLOWSHIP, ENDORSEMENT

As many articles as have been published brotherhood-wide, exposing both "Promise Keepers" as well as their sister organization "Men of Integrity" as *inter-denominational*, what made Adcox and the Southwest elders think it would be acceptable for them to host and/or participate in such a contrary-to-God's-word event!

If they did not know any better than that, what are they doing in the leadership of a supposed-to-be church of Christ?

So incensed were other congregations of our Lord in the Jonesboro area that under date of June 1, 1996,

they felt impelled to place a large (quarter-page) ad in the same *Jonesboro Sun* in which the original announcement had appeared five days before. We are reproducing this ad right out of the *Sun* on Page 7. [Although seven churches paid for and signed this ad, many, many more would have done so had there been time enough to contact them before the offensive event was to occur.]

After studying the ad, please go back to Page 6 and read the original announcement, reproduced by permission from the *Jonesboro Sun*. We plan to print several reactions published by various brethren and churches of Christ from the general area.

Southwest/Jonesboro may think they can have fellowship with the denominations and with the churches of Christ, too. They can have fellowship with *one* or the *other*, but *not both!* The choice is theirs.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

A Look at "Promise Keepers"

(Continued from Page 1)

"Break down the walls of racism, break down the walls of denominationalism (meaning those opposed to denominations)." This word picture was painted again and again that night: If you stand against denominations, you stand for or with racists.

LORD'S CHURCH WAS COMPROMISED

I believe the Lord's Church was compromised from the opening remarks of the preacher of the Southwest Church of Christ, **Jimmy Adcox**, to the closing remarks of **Adrian Rogers**, a denominational preacher, and every denominational speaker in between.

I am going to share that evening with you, step by step. We will look at what took place and what was said.

The program given to me at the door of the Southwest Church of Christ building...said:

[The brackets are my comments.]

N.E.A. MEN OF INTEGRITY
WAKE UP CALL
SOUTHWEST CHURCH OF CHRIST
SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1996

WORSHIP / PRAYER / WORSHIP
BRO. JIMMY ADCOX
[Southwest Church of Christ]

BREAK DOWN THE WALLS (VIDEO)

ARE YOU RECONCILED TO GOD?
BRO. LOUIS MONROE
[Baptist preacher and two state
leaders of Promise Keepers]

BREAK

FAN INTO FLAME (VIDEO)

ARE YOU RECONCILED TO YOUR BROTHER??
BRO. RODNEY REEVES
["PASTOR" Central Baptist Church]

WHAT'S NEXT
BRO. DAVE WARDELL
[Co-founder of Promise Keepers]
WORSHIP / CLOSING PRAYER
BRO. ADRIAN ROGERS
[Denominational Preacher]

This program was printed by the Southwest Church of Christ! Notice that these men of different denominations are referred to as brothers.

Jimmy Adcox was the first speaker of the night and I will let his words speak for themselves:

JIMMY ADCOX'S OPENING WORDS

"What a great honor and privilege to be a part of the Promise Keepers rally in Jonesboro tonight. And I know many of you have come from Jonesboro and some have come in from other places. And we're delighted that you've come to be a part of all of this. And I also know that by the very nature of this meeting that many of you are not only from different places and backgrounds and life situations, but probably also from different churches and that we have all come together really for a common purpose of uniting ourselves in allegiance to Jesus Christ in order to combat a common foe that all of us face. And try to lift up families, lift up our marriages, lift up our children and be the kind of men our community and God wants us to be. And we appreciate your commitment and willingness to come and be a part of that tonight.

"There are two or three people I want to express appre-

ciation to before we begin tonight. One is Scott Walker, a member of this congregation, who worked very hard today, and not just today, but all the way up leading to this, to kinda make preparations for what happens in this building. Scott, I want to thank you. And I want to thank Carl Medley and Jim Ponder. These are the two men I interfaced with over the last couple of weeks in preparation for tonight, and I learned to continually love and appreciate both of them. Their wonderful, gracious spirit has just manifested itself toward us in so many different ways as they tried to be sensitive to our needs here at Southwest and our participation with you. And one of the ways they did that is when they came to us they said we'd like to do it in your building. We'll sing acappella because we know you're an acappella singing church. And out of deference to some of our folks and our convictions here, they were delighted to be willing to do that. And many of you may not have sung acappella in a large group before, or if you have you probably haven't done it with just men. But we have a group tonight that's going to be leading our singing and I think you'll find a very joyful experience and we look forward to you joining us in that tonight as well. But the wonderful spirit they've shown in their deference toward us this week, I think highlights one of the great attitudes which is found in Promise Keepers.

"One of the great themes for this year is reconciliation. And they have certainly manifested that spirit. And so with that same spirit, we welcome you here tonight and we are glad to be a part of what's happening here. And we're glad you're here to participate in this.

"I think all of us will agree that when men get together with honest open hearts and seek God's face and seek his will it must cause Satan to tremble. Because men who seek God have power to make such an awesome difference in our communities, in our marriages, and in our families.

"One of the unique things about tonight and about all Promise Keepers meetings, this is not just an effort to improve our lot in life with human effort; it's an effort to seek God with his guidance, his strength, and so part of what we are doing tonight will be worship and we have a group of men who will be leading that worship and they call themselves Five for One, and I think you will see quickly there are seven of them tonight. I haven't figured that out. But they're going to be leading us in worship tonight and I think you'll enjoy singing with them. I think you know who the One is and after tonight you will know who the Seven are as well. And we'll be able to join our hearts and voices in praise to God this evening.

I'd like to ask you to join with me in a word of prayer and after that prayer we'll turn it over to the Five for One and they'll lead us in some songs. Let's pray together.

"Father, we thank you for the commitments and hearts of these men who've gathered here tonight. They have come, Father, because of faith in you and strong convictions of what you want them to be. And so they've come, Father, to gather encouragement from each other and we come, Father, to give encouragement to one another. And we come to open our hearts to you, to seek your will about what we need to be as men and fathers and husbands and as Christian leaders in our community. And, Father, we pray tonight that you will bless our speakers, and that you will bless each person who is here, and that you will bless these men as they lead us in worship. We pray that our hearts will be bent toward you, and we pray that being here tonight will draw us closer to you and guide us and direct us more and be the kind of men you have called us to be. We give you thanks and praise for

all your blessings and we ask you to give a special blessing now. In Jesus' name, Amen."

THIS WAS A "WORSHIP SERVICE"

And so the evening began. I want you to remember that Jimmy Adcox said this is to be a worship service. During this "worship service" two videos promoting Promise Keepers were shown. Each of these videos contained singing accompanied by instrumental music. During this "worship service" three men came forward and were "saved" by faith only.

The singing group got up and led singing, which, some of the time was scriptural. I felt that at times it lacked reverence. The lead singer (as he was called by the singing group) jumped around the stage and acted more like a rock singer than a song leader. He talked over the top of the group while they sang. The group also made sounds like humming and rhythm noises (I really have trouble describing the sound, but it wasn't words); and solos were sung.

WHAT "PROMISE KEEPERS" BELIEVE

Next Carl Medley (I'm not sure of the spelling) spoke. He is the Northeast Arkansas representative of the Promise Keepers and is with the Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro. Carl Medley spoke in a dignified way as he presented what he and the Promise Keepers believe. I believe he was sincere and honest in what he believes and what he told us, although his remarks were not scriptural. He said they believe:

1. God in three persons.
2. The Bible in the original Greek is infallible.
3. They believe in the deity of Jesus:
 - a. The virgin birth
 - b. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - c. That Christ will return to earth.
4. That the Holy Spirit does miracles in helping in the New Birth and helps us lead a Christian life.
5. Faith Only Salvation.

THE PROMISES OF THE PROMISE KEEPERS

1. To be committed to prayer, worship, and obedience through the help of the Holy Spirit.
2. Vow to give glory to other men.
3. Practice sexual purity.
4. Strong marriages and families.
5. Honor your "pastor" (preacher)
6. Reach beyond racial and denominational barriers.
7. Obey the Great Commission, Great Command, and to love the Lord with all your heart, and soul, and mind.

I think any Christian would have little trouble agreeing with him on many of these points, but there is no way we could amen some of them. I don't doubt for a moment that Carl meant every word of what he said.

ARKANSAS/MISSOURI MANAGER SPEAKS

The next speaker was Louis Monroe. He is the Promise Keepers' State Manager for Arkansas and Missouri. He said:

1. The Lord woke him up at 4:00 o'clock that morning.
2. That he felt the presence of God even as he spoke to us.
3. That God predestined all of us to be there that night.
4. He quoted I Corinthians 6:2.

5. He said to just pray "Be merciful to me a sinner."
6. He said the Lord laid on his heart for men to come forward. While Louis spoke the singing group sang.
7. Three men came forward and were "saved" by that action.
8. Louis asked "Pastor Jimmy" (Jimmy Adcox) to come up on the stage with him. Louis put his arm around Jimmy and said, "Pastor Jimmy, these men are going to need your help now." Jimmy nodded and smiled. These three men were referred to as saved several times during this worship service."

"KEY MEN" RE: PROMISE KEEPERS

After Louis Monroe spoke, Carl Medley spoke some more about the Key Men in the Promise Keepers. These men are to go back to their churches and get more men involved in the program.

Then we had a ten-minute break.

After the break, the singing group came back on stage. Some of them made strange rhythmic noises while others of the group sang words.

Then we saw another video about Promise Keepers which, once again, included singing with instrumental music.

BAPTIST "PASTOR" SPEAKS

The next speaker was **Rodney Reeves**, the "Pastor" of the Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro. He said:

1. He quoted Luke 14:7 and II Corinthians 5.
2. He claimed all types of religions would be in Heaven.
3. He believes miracles still exist through the Holy Spirit.
4. All religions can teach us. He named many different religions. He received a standing ovation. Jimmy Adcox stood and clapped.
5. It doesn't matter what religion you come from when you meet God.
6. He said that whether we were black or white, Church of Christ or Southern Baptist, we would all be honored guests at the Lord's table. [I agree that it doesn't matter whether you are black or white, you will be welcome at the Lord's table. Once again the race card was used in this "worship service."]

PROMISE KEEPERS' CO-FOUNDER SPEAKS

The next speaker was **Dave Wardell**. He is the co-founder of Promise Keepers. He said:

1. First he praised Pastor Jimmy for having the Promise Keepers at his church. He said he read that some men were writing against him. Dave told Jimmy to hang in there because God would redeem the time.
2. He said Coach Bill McCartney saw visions from God of stadiums being filled with men.
3. He said all who were present were one in unity of spirit.

"TASK FORCE" LEADER SPEAKS

The next speaker was the "Task Force" leader. He thanked the Southwest Church of Christ for giving them the use of the church building for free. He then asked for money to be collected at the door as they left.

ADRIAN ROGERS SPEAKS

The last speaker was **Adrian Rogers**, a denominational

preacher from Jonesboro. He said:

1. He had never worshipped in a Church of Christ before, but that he enjoyed himself. (laughter and applause)
2. He said they were going to sing at least one acapella song the next Sunday at his church. (laughter and applause).
3. He said to give God a hand. (standing ovation— Jimmy Adcox stood and clapped)
4. He asked the three "saved" men to come forward.

These events happened on June 1, 1996 at the Southwest Church of Christ building in Jonesboro, Arkansas. I have not mentioned every little detail, but I have tried to cover what took place. Throughout the "worship service" there was clapping and shouting (even during the singing).

I have given Jimmy Adcox a copy of this report. If he responds to it, I will add his remarks to it when I give it out in future.

SADLER'S LETTER TO ADCOX

When brother Sadler sent a copy of the foregoing notes and remarks to brother Adcox four days later, he enclosed the following covering letter:

June 5, 1996

Dear Jimmy Adcox,

I am enclosing a copy of my notes and remarks concerning the Promise Keepers rally you and the Southwest Church of Christ sponsored on June 1, 1996. I attended that rally and it saddened me greatly. While I feel, as many Christian men would, that the thoughts expressed (about becoming better husbands and fathers) by the Promise Keepers have merit, you cannot justify fellowshipping the denominational world for them.

If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I would have had a hard time believing you would have said the things you said or did at this rally. You went way beyond "reconciliation," you totally surrendered all sound doctrine for the teachings and practices of false religions. When you came up on that stage to give your blessing to those three men who thought they were saved (just by their action of coming forward), you lent yourself to the possibility that they might not ever hear the truth, Why, even the Church of Christ preacher told them they were truly saved! Why should these men ever think they are not saved?

Surely even you would not deny that deliberate violation of Christ's Law of Grace is not going to be covered by that grace. How did Jesus say we would be known as His disciples—wasn't it by the fact that we would keep his commandments? Were they being kept that Saturday night? I think not.

You are a good and powerful speaker and you could do so much good for the Lord's Church. It's a shame that you have chosen the path you have. I've watched you through the years growing bolder in your opposition to the Truth.

If I am mistaken in my view of what went on June 1, 1996 at the Southwest Church of Christ, then please enlighten me. Show me, with the Word of God, how you can justify what happened that night. I'm willing to hear your explanation and discuss this matter with you.

In Christian love,
[Signed]
Wil Sadler

[EDITORIAL NOTE: having finished reading brother Sadler's first-hand account of what transpired at Southwest/Jonesboro's interdenominational "Promise Keepers" Conference, now read the following article photo-reproduced by permission of *The Jonesboro Sun* as it appeared in their edition for Sunday, May 26, 1996]:

Promise Keepers conference is set

To be held at Jonesboro church

By CHRISTINA QUICK

Sun Staff Writer

When thousands of men came together in Denton, Texas, two years ago as part of a nationwide movement known as Promise Keepers, Carl Medley of Jonesboro was among them.



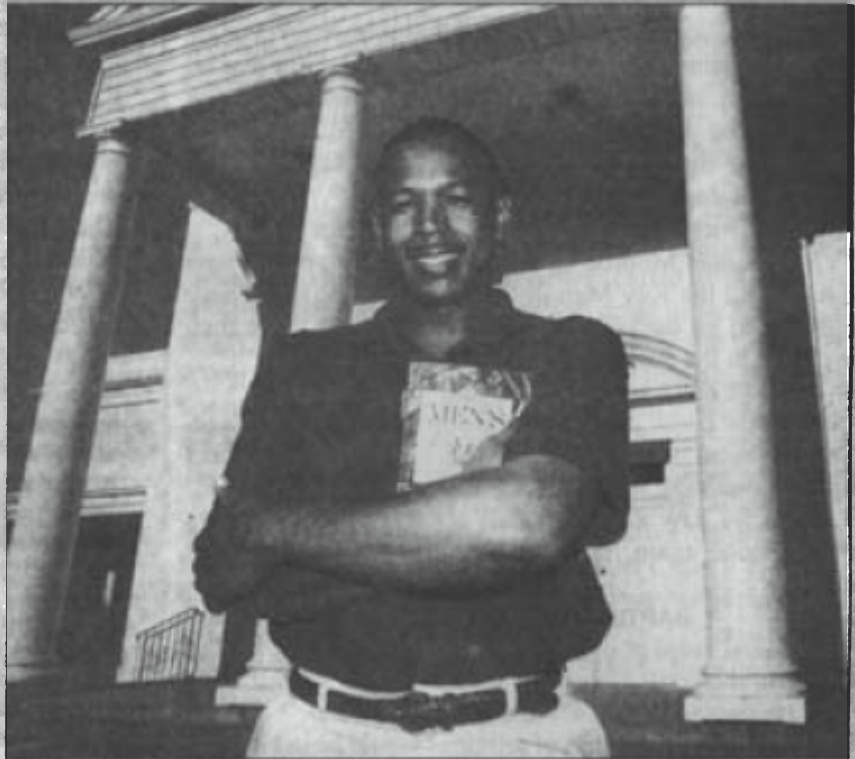
Dr. Dave Wardell

Today Medley, 31, a former Federal Express shipping clerk, is the full-time Arkansas representative for Promise Keepers and is helping plan a local conference for the group.

"I used to be one of those men who kept making promises and breaking them," said Medley, who began volunteering for Promise Keepers after attending the Texas

conference.

Promise Keepers encourages men to make and keep commitments to God, as well as to their wives, chil-



CARL MEDLEY IS PLANNING A PROMISE KEEPERS CONFERENCE

SEE PROMISE — 12D

Promise

dren, friends and churches.

The Bible-based, non-denominational movement was founded in 1991 by Bill McCartney, former head football coach at the University of Colorado, and Dr. Dave Wardell, former director of the Colorado Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Over the past few years, Promise Keepers conferences have packed football stadiums and sports arenas across the country, attracting crowds of 55,000 to 60,000 or more. Hundreds of smaller, regional rallies have also taken place.

Promise Keepers, which targets men only, is based on several key principles.

The seven promises that participants are asked to make involve honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to the Bible; pursuing relationships with other Christian men who can offer support and encouragement; building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values; becoming an active participant in a local church; striving for racial unity; and endeavoring to influence the world by spreading the gospel message.

Medley said he hopes Promise Keepers can make a difference in Northeast Arkansas.

"I worked with kids for years and I saw the high divorce rate," said Medley, who formerly worked in a local after-school program. "We want to see the divorce rates go down in our community. We want to see the crime rates go down. We believe that all starts with a man keeping his promises."

On Saturday, a local Promise Keepers conference will be held at the Southwest Church of Christ in Jonesboro. Medley said he hopes to see the sanctuary packed with men.

"We have room for about 2,000 men, so we'd love to see that many show up," he said. "We even have an overflow room in case there's more."

Promise Keepers' co-founder Wardell will speak at the rally, along with Arkansas/Missouri director Rev. Louis A. Monroe. Also speaking will be Jonesboro pastors Jimmy Adcock of the Southwest Church of Christ, Dr. Rodney Reeves of Central Baptist Church and Adrian Rogers of Fullness of Joy Church.

"We want to see the city come together, especially churches of different races. That's one of the

goals of Promise Keepers — reconciliation," said Medley.

The conference will last from 6 until 9 that evening. Casual dress is

acceptable, Medley said.

A room will be provided at the church for women who wish to pray during the event.

[NOTE: In response to this article, the following ad appeared in the Sun for May 31, 1996]:

DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
 2001 W. Washington, Jonesboro, AR 72401
 Phone 501-932-1643
SERMON SUBJECT:
Lord's Day Morning, June 2, 1996:
SHOULD CHURCHES OF CHRIST JOIN THE
MEN'S MOVEMENT, i.e., PROMISE KEEPERS
OR MEN OF INTEGRITY?
 OR
HAVE THOMAS B. WARREN, N. B. HARDEMAN,
FOY E. WALLACE, JR, IRA Y. RICE, GARLAND ELKINS,
CURTIS CATES, AND A HOST OF OTHER FAITHFUL
GOSPEL PREACHERS, UPHELD THE IDENTITY OF THE
CHURCH AND THE PURITY OF THE FAITH IN VAIN?
J. K. Gossett will be the speaker.

Although the men's-only movement has been criticized by some women's activists, Wardell said Promise Keepers, which strongly encourages participants to be better husbands and fathers, is as beneficial to women as it is to men.

"If we are keeping our promises, the women ought to be about 150 percent in support of Promise Keepers," he said.

Promise Keepers also encourages men to be more open with their emotions.

"Our dads taught us to be hard workers," Wardell said. "Our dads taught us that big boys don't cry. Then we go into our marriage and it's not working."

"Us men for a long time had to put on our masks for different reasons," added Monroe. "We had a mask we wore at home and a mask we wore at work. Men weren't allowed to cry and different things."

At national Promise Keepers conferences, hundreds of men often break down and cry, Monroe said. Others embrace and pray together.

"He's able to receive the word for the very first time because he don't have to wear the mask anymore," Monroe said. "Before he knows it, the Holy Spirit has him worshipping God as he's always wanted to. Coming to honor God — that's what it's all about."

Nationwide, 22 national conferences are being planned for this year, with over one million men expected to attend, Wardell said.

A conference will be held at Liberty Bowl in Memphis Oct. 11-12. Previously, the closest national conference had been in Dallas.

"We hope hundreds will go from this area, maybe even thousands. It will be great," said Medley.

Medley, a layman member of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro, was appointed to his position earlier this year. Based in a Searcy office, his duties will include speaking at churches throughout the state about Promise Keepers and assisting pastors in setting up men's ministry programs.

He said he also hopes to establish a strong prayer and support network among local pastors of all Christian denominations.

"No, we're not trying to assimilate," he said. "We just want people to realize that we need to work together."

For more information about Promise Keepers, call Medley's office at 268-5375.

[NOTE: In further response to Southwest's compromise, a quarter-page ad appeared in the Sun for June 1st (see right).]

NOTICE

**WE, THE UNDERSIGNED CHURCHS
OF CHRIST, NEITHER FELLOWSHIP
NOR ENDORSE THE CURRENT MEN'S
MOVEMENT, REPRESENTED BY
PROMISE KEEPERS AND/OR MEN
OF INTEGRITY.**

**Downtown Church Of Christ
932-1643**

**Fisher Street Church Of Christ
932-3920**

**Egypt Church Of Christ
972-6089**

**Swifton Church Of Christ
485-2670**

**Viva Drive Church Of Christ,
Trumann
483-7396**

**Bay Church Of Christ
781-3313**

**Pyburn Street Church Of Christ
Pocahontas
892-5596**

BAPTIST CHURCH BULLETIN SHOULD REMOVE ALL DOUBT

For those among us who will not believe a report unless it comes from some source other than a Christian brother or a church of Christ, the following item front-paged on the Central Baptist Church bulletin for May 29, 1996, should remove all doubt.

Please note that their own bulletin was calling on their own men to join them at the Southwest Church of Christ, of Jonesboro, for the 6:00 p.m. "Wake-up Call" of the Promise Keepers, saying that their own "Bro. Rodney" would "also speak," joining with

men from across the area to "lift up Jesus."

A Baptist "pastor" to "lift up Jesus" in an interdenominational service sponsored by a Church of Christ in a Church of Christ building? Who could believe it! But there it is photo-reproduced for all to see from their own Baptist bulletin.

Knowing Christ and Making Him Known

CHURCH & HOME NEWS

Central Baptist Church



Volume 44

May 29, 1996

Number 22

Calling all men!

Wake-up Call this Saturday

6:00 p.m.

Southwest Church of Christ

Men, join us this Saturday evening, June 1, for the Wake-up Call featuring Dave Wardell, co-founder of Promise Keepers. Our own Bro. Rodney will also speak as we join with men from across the area to lift up Jesus. Southwest Church of Christ is located at 1601 James Street, near the YMCA on Nettleton. Join us!

PUBLIC NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF FELLOWSHIP

Jesse Whitlock

It is in such a time as this that I am forced to recall the words of the apostle Paul, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16)! Sometimes preaching the gospel of Christ is not the popular thing to do. Yea, sometimes it is a most difficult thing to do.

It is necessary for me to give notice that we must now withdraw our fellowship from certain individuals in the church! There are some who have sinned and brought reproach upon the name of the church. When such a one is reprov'd and will not repent we must withdraw our fellowship. "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" (II Thessalonians 3:6).

QUALIFIED ELDERS WILL APPROVE

Let me state that any qualified elder in the Lord's church will endorse the action I am now taking. I have not been prying into anyone's background. However, over a period of time I have taken note of certain things that need to be brought to our attention. I have secured sufficient information from which to speak and make these charges. For the good of the church in this place I am calling upon all those who are faithful in Christ to withdraw fellowship from the following:

Sister Lips A. Draggin' [I Timothy 5:13]
Brother Always Complainin' [I Peter 4:15]
Sister Anything I. Neverdo [James 4:17]
Brother Pre Eminent [III John 9]
Sister Ima Barely Cumin [Hebrews 10:25]
Brother Luke Warm [Revelation 3:15-16]
Sister They Say [II Corinthians 10:10]
Brother Hurry N. Leave [Galatians 2:11-13]

It is essential that every faithful child of God determines to have nothing to do with the above mentioned. Let us remember the command of the apostle Paul, "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Titus 3:10). Certainly others could be added to this list. We must withdraw our fellowship immediately. Whatever it takes, let us do it for the preservation of God's family in this place. It is God's command (II Thessalonians 3:6-14).

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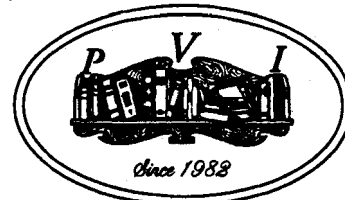
In Part 1, Miller traces the history of the "change movement" in the church, a valuable body of material with which far too few are familiar.

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Dave Miller is Director of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School, Hurst, Texas. He is a seasoned Gospel preacher who has earned three master's degrees and the Ph. D. degree.

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PREACH THE BIBLE AND LET OTHERS ALONE

Dan Goddard

Many modern preachers, having grown tired of the opposition that has been exerted against them for denouncing error and sin, have developed a more tolerant attitude toward these evils, and have come to realize that the "positive" approach does not incur such unpleasantness upon the preacher as will a negative approach. They have learned that people do not become angry nearly so easily if merely admonished, exhorted or encouraged to do the right things, provided they do not reprove or rebuke when they fail to do right or when they do that which is absolutely sinful. They have found that they do not have to move to a new job quite so often (and what preacher likes to move?) if they completely overlook the bad and commend the people for their good qualities, being sure they never say anything which might hurt someone's feelings. If they are very careful to avoid controversial issues, never saying anything that anybody might disagree with, they almost always receive an invitation to return. And people always remark about how kind they are, how they never say anything to hurt anyone's feelings. "Good old brother so-and-so! Isn't he the sweetest man!"

The idea is "preach the Bible and let others alone." It is proposed that we should just give what the Bible says on a given subject and ignore what others believe or teach

even though it is diametrically opposed to the truth. "If," they say, "you would have more influence with people, you must ignore their sins and simply paint the picture of what a Christian should be, making it so beautiful that they will want to quit sin. Never criticize others. Never denounce error. Avoid conflicts. Seek the common ground. If you should make a "cut" at sin and error be sure that it is done so indirectly that nobody has the slightest idea what you are talking about.

WHERE THIS PHILOSOPHY LEADS

Following this philosophy, in five years the church of our Lord will be holding unity meeting with the sects, calling on "Brother" so-and-so, who is a pastor of a prominent denomination, to lead in prayer. The church will not know *where* it stands or what it stands *for*; indeed it would have ceased to stand for anything. Its identity lost, it shall not long endure.

One does not have to be a prophet to know that there are certain tendencies already evident which cannot help but result in the hurt of the church. There are far too many in the church who embrace suggestions given in the preceding paragraphs. Some preachers have accepted this philosophy. Their sermons have taken on the sectarian hue. What they preach would be received in the most popular

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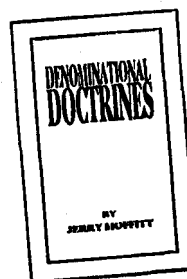
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denomination as in the church of the Lord.

BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REQUIRED

Certainly I am not opposed to "positive" preaching, that is, setting forth the truth and giving a vivid picture of the Christian with all its beautiful aspects and characteristics. But it is my firm conviction that *this is not enough*. The reason that I do not think it is enough is because the Lord and his apostles did not think it was enough. True, they set forth the truth. Yea, they used the "positive" approach a great deal. They set forth the good qualities which should characterize Christians. But the Lord and his apostles also coupled the "negative" approach with the "positive" approach. They not only set forth the truth, but they gave the consequences of rejecting it. They gave the truth, it is true, but they *also* dealt with the false teaching and corrupt doctrines of their day. They contrasted truth with error. Jesus said, "**Ye have heard it said**" (this is the "negative" angle), "**but I say unto you**" (this is the "positive" angle). True, he gave "positive," but he also exposed the false position.

He not only suggested that we must *keep the word of God* (the "positive") but he also denounced the Pharisees for *keeping the traditions of men* (the "negative" approach) and suggested that by doing so they made void the word of God.

Paul told Timothy to "**preach the word**" (this is the "positive" angle) but also said, "**reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine**" (this takes on the



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"negative" aspect, denunciation of their conduct). Paul wrote to Titus, "**holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers**" (Titus 1:9). This exhortation includes both the "positive" and the "negative" aspects—exhort in the sound doctrine (the "positive"), and convict the gainsayers (the "negative")—the better of dealing with those who would pervert the truth and their false doctrines. How could a man "**convict the gainsayers**" if he merely exhorted in sound doctrine alone? Notice that Paul said "both" exhort and convict. If a man just "preaches the Bible and lets others alone" he is not convicting the gainsayers!

SHALL WE DENOUNCE NOTHING, OPPOSE NOTHING?

The idea of some is to denounce nothing, oppose nothing, rebuke no one for sin. Just commend the good and preach the truth and ignore the errors and sins of the day. It is too bad that Stephen did not know the "modern" approach when he preached his last sermon! His life would no doubt have been spared. But Stephen knew how corrupt the hearts of those Jews were to whom he was speaking. He had the courage to tell them the truth. "**Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as was ordained by angels, and kept it not.**" (Acts 7:51-53). This is what we mean when we speak of the "negative" approach. I am not suggesting that every preacher who gets in the pulpit before an audience should accuse his hearers of being "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears;" but I am proposing that there are times when comparable language is needed to break the hard heart of the conscience-seared sinner. I am persuaded that the only way that a lot of error that has been sown in men's hearts can be taken out, is by an outright, frank, courageous

discussion of the error with all its evil aspects and by a contrast of the error with the truth.

The Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew, chapter 23, would hardly be called the "positive" approach as he said "**woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.**" He denounced their inconsistencies (vv. 2-12); their absurd practices in the matter of oaths (vv. 16-22); their hypocrisy in rejecting small things and the greater evil (vv. 23-24); their outward cleanness and inner corruption (vv. 29-39). Certainly, Jesus set forth the glorious truth, but he also denounced false teaching and sinful conduct in the lives of his hearers.

Paul gave many admonitions and exhortations to whom he wrote. He taught them the truth (the "positive" side). There is no question here, but notice that he also gave negative teaching. He denounced the Corinthians for their divisions, lawsuits, fornication, corruption of the Lord's Supper and their disregard for the well-being of the spiritually weak. He denounced Galatian Judaizers for their corrupt teaching. He warned the Colossians against the traditions of men. He warned the Thessalonians against idleness.

While much of Peter's epistles were given to the "positive" aspects of teaching, he also warned against false teachers and gave the destiny of mockers and bondservants of corruption.

All of these examples and many more which could be cited, show the "negative" aspect in inspired teaching. We must, then, not only preach the truth, teach the alien sinner the way to Christ, exhort men to Christian faithfulness, and help them to see the beauty of the Christian life, but we

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must also convict the gainsayer, show the fallacy of error, show the destiny of false teachers and all who follow them. We must speak courageously against sin and error. We must help men to see the folly of sin and the end of those who believe a lie.

ALL-NEGATIVE IS JUST AS WRONG

It would be wrong for a man (as some do) to confine himself to "negative" teaching alone. It is no more pleasing to God for a man to do this than it is for him to emphasize the "positive" alone—there is a happy medium. We must use discretion in determining what the situation demands. This is our charge from God.

We need the courage that Paul reflected when he said "And on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Ephesians 6:19, 20). Yes, it must be done in kindness, love and patience. But it must be done!

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Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR
One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."
Regarding issues, a comment from the late N. B. Hardeman is often cited. While president of the old Freed-Hardeman College brother Hardeman said, "We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'"
**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

JUDGE NOT?

Jimmie B. Hill

“Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1). Many times these words are quoted by those who resent being corrected for their wrongdoing or in defense of another’s wrongdoing. What they fail to understand is that the Greek word *krino* (judge) has a very wide range of meaning and is used in more than one sense depending on the context in which it is used.

To assign such a rigid meaning in this verse (that no judging at all is permitted) would cause several problems within the remainder of the New Testament. For example, does the Lord prohibit the civil judgment of the courts upon criminals (Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-14)? Or, does he prohibit the judgment of the church, through its members, upon those who walk disorderly (Galatians 6:1-2; II Thessalonians 3:6)?

He does not prohibit private judgments upon wrongdoers and false teachers because he himself tells us that we are to judge them by their fruits (Matthew 7:15-20). Then what does he prohibit?

He prohibits rash, uncharitable judgments made by those with a fault-finding spirit who have a disposition to condemn others *without a proper examination of the charges!* That means we are to **“prove all things”** (I Thessalonians 5:21). That means we **“judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment”** (John 7:24). A judgment that is made according to the truth and facts in a case would be a righteous judgment and not the subject of this verse. Did our Lord contradict himself? Of course not!

WHY DID JESUS SAY, “JUDGE NOT”?

Jesus made the statement in John 7:24 because the people accused him of having a devil after he healed the impotent man on the Sabbath (John 5). The healing of that man and the consequent carrying away of his bed *appeared* to be in violation of the sabbath law.

However, a higher law of God (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 12:7) took precedence in such a case. They recognized this

in the case of circumcising on the sabbath (as the Lord pointed out in verses 21-23) but failed to see it in the healing of the impotent man. Their “unrighteous judgment” was a result of their ignorance. As Jesus elsewhere pointed out to the Sadducees, **“You do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God”** (Matthew 22:29).

In Matthew 7:2 the Lord says, **“For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again.”** If one judges another harshly, contemptuously, and unrighteously, he may expect the same kind of judgment. Those who mete out unrighteous judgment will be judged more severely, not by man, but by God. Mature Christians will try and avoid unrighteous judgment, vindictiveness, and cynicism.

WE CANNOT JUDGE RE: SALVATION

We cannot judge one another concerning salvation. Even our Lord did not do this while he was on the earth (John 12:47). In John 12:48, he says this judgment will come of the last day. However, if I know my brother is in sin (and this according to scripture), I know that his soul is in jeopardy unless he repents of that sin. I cannot know whether he will repent or not, but I can know that unless he does he is lost. And this is righteous judgment.

We can know the truth (John 8:32); we can know transgression (I John 3:4); and we can know the fate of those who do not repent of transgression and do not obey God (Matthew 7:23; 25:41-46; Jude 13). The word of God is profitable for every good work and righteous judgment is a good work (II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 5:13-14). May we all study God’s word and judge righteous judgment that we might point out error and uphold God’s Truth.

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Notes & Quotes...

Stanley D. Crews, minister, Williamston, South Carolina, enclosed a bulletin from the University Church of Christ, of Murray, Kentucky, saying, “The article entitled CHARLEY’S CAMPUS COMMENTS reveals the stand of this church and especially their Campus Minister. Speakers such as Stanley Shipp, Harold Shank and Jeff Walling and worshipping at Highland Street Church/Memphis show what stand in the present brotherhood turmoil this church takes.”

[NOTE: In his “Campus Comments” article, Campus Minister Charley Bazzell

wrote, in part, “Every year at this time Dana and I make plans to attend the annual National Campus Ministries Seminar. This year it is being held in Memphis. It is being hosted by the campus ministry at the University of Memphis and is co-sponsored by several ministries in this region. We are fortunate to be one of those participating sponsors...Some of this year’s key speakers include Stanley Shipp, Milton Jones, Harold Shank, Jeff Walling, and Jim Brinkerhoff...”

We are not too familiar with the teachings of Harold Shank and Jim Brinkerhoff;

but we know what Stanley Shipp, Milton Jones and Jeff Walling teach. Any congregation who would invite these latter three either does not know what has been going on or is as disloyal to the truth of the gospel as they. Shipp never has corrected his public endorsement of Jim Reynolds’ ACU speech on direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Jones’s book Discipling: The Multiplying Ministry was the principal text that led Boston/ Crossroads so far off into doctrinal error. Walling is still off on Instrumental Music and the Christian Church. IYR Jr.]

Russell J. “Joe” Bell, long-time supporter of our missionary efforts to get the

gospel to the world, died July 7, 1995, at his home in Jerseyville, Illinois, at the age of 86.

Brother Bell was a farmer and a motel owner/operator for eight years at Prescott, Arizona, before retiring in 1974. He was a member and former elder of our Lord's church in Jerseyville.

Geneva Bell, his wife of 66 years, survives.

Jerry C. Brewer, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: "Just a note to encourage you to continue the good fight. False doctrines and indifference to the truth against which so many of us warned 30 years ago are bearing their insidious fruit...As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord..."

[NOTE: "How right you are," I replied in part, "that the [errors] we tried calling attention to the brethren so long ago now are reaping their bitter harvest. How sad to think that it did not have to be this way! IYRJR.]

James L. Russell, Sacramento, California: "The August issue of CF is the best yet! Very timely for me—how it hits the false teachers that seem to be everywhere I turn to. More power to your presses! I have subscribed for CF—I forgot for how long. It is my salvation...Real eye-opener...May God continue to bless your work."

Sam G. Roach, Manila, Philippines: "The Bible study with the fourth year deaf students at the Philippine School for the Deaf started with 26 present, and up to 45 as expected.

"Due to Catholicism, I was told that the parents of those who did not come would not allow them to participate in the study. Moreover, since then, the class grew from 26 to 41. I will be with them through October 27th.

"Sister [Norma] Pelayo is trying to meet with the school principal to ask for permission for my continuing my study with the same students, the Lord willing..."

"If permission is granted...my plans are to study the Gospel of John, which will include 'God's Teaching About Marriage, What Jesus and Paul Said About Marriage.'

"Interest is good. In fact, I am scheduled to meet with at least two of the students at Makati next Saturday at 3:00 p.m. for open Bible study regarding the Lord's church. Others may come also."

At present the only space that the deaf work in Manila has available for Lord's Day meetings is on Sunday afternoons at Makati Central, where brother **Manuel K. Pelayo** preaches to the hearing congregation on Sunday mornings.

"As you well know," brother Roach continues, "there is a great need for additional room for growth...If we have a gospel meeting for the deaf, where will the deaf be able to meet for their services on Sunday mornings? I believe we could accomplish more by meeting on Sunday mornings rather than the afternoons. This problem must be taken care of in some way..."

"While I was a student in the Deaf School in Little Rock, as I recall, the

school auditorium was used by a group of Jews to have their services on Saturdays. With this in mind, I wonder if it would be possible and practical for us to consider obtaining a place in a school building for the deaf to have their own services on Sunday mornings? Perhaps another room or two might be available if needed...The cost would be based on per day used rather than monthly rent similar to what Makaati and others are doing..."

[NOTE: "Thanks for letting me know how your work got started with the fourth year deaf students at Philippine School for the Deaf," I replied, in part. "I am not surprised the Catholic parents of some would not allow them to participate—at least to begin with. I noted that participation had grown from 26 to 41... Certainly this was encouraging to you.

"As to where the deaf will be able to meet on Sunday mornings, I know this is a continuing problem and concern. Were the churches in general of a unity of spirit in the Manila area, this should be no problem. However, with those standing for the truth in such a minority, and money so hard to raise both there as well as here, it is difficult indeed...Your idea of possibly finding a Jewish auditorium that could be rented within reason, money-wise, might be a possibility on a per-day basis. I'll bear this in mind and we can discuss it when I come. Also what to do about training workers there to carry on...If we can find those to help who have deaf members of the family our prospects should be better."

Anyone interested in helping brother Roach in his work among the deaf in the Philippines, please address him: **Samuel G. Roach**, % Manuel K. Pelayo, Post Office Box 1944, Manila, Philippines. Brethren **Barry Grider**, **Jason Roberts** and I were in the Philippines for a mini-lecture-ship this past December; and I did indeed discuss the deaf work and its many problems with brother Roach. IYRJR.]

Guss & Lily Eoff, Mathis, Texas: "It is good to know that the brethren got rid of that liberalistic preacher. Wouldn't it be wonderful if more congregations would do the same? Better still, if they would not hire them in the first place.

"Lord willing, we will leave November 2nd for the Far East...Larry is planning to go with us. He is to have a part in the workshop in Malaysia and speak on the Lectureship in Singapore.

"I still don't have all my material ready for the workshop. They are expecting me to teach 12 hours over three days. I plan to use an overhead projector to illustrate much of the teaching."

Ian McPherson, Bellerive, Tasmania, Australia: "We are holding our 2nd An-

nual Eastern Shore Lectureship from **Thursday, May 2, through Sunday, May 6, 1996**. This will be held in our church building at 18 Carbeen Street, Mornington, Tasmania, Australia 7018.

"Last May we held our first lectureship with the theme, 'The Transformed Life.' There was a very positive reaction to this by those who attended, and we are very enthusiastic about making our 1996 Lectureship even better.

"This year our theme is taken from the **Book of Acts**. The aim is to promote unity through sound Biblical teaching. We want to EDIFY and EDUCATE with the view of presenting the whole counsel of God in a loving and balanced way. We want to handle issues in a mature fashion as well as re-ground ourselves in the basic doctrine that has made our brotherhood the true church of the Lord."

COME OVER INTO MACEDONIA AND HELP US (ACTS 16:9-10)

I am approaching 75 years of age, and my wife of 50 years (due to putting up with me all this time) is a little past her prime, also.

We have seen in the past 30 or so years the church in Washington state, which was never as staunch as the Bible belt, drift step by step into attitudes and actions not pleasing to God.

This is a great place to live, with excellent climate and many financial opportunities.

I believe the church would grow in this location if there could be found two or three more families who would consider moving here and starting a sound congregation. Young couples who are sound in the faith could build a great life for themselves both financially and spiritually. People retired from their jobs, but not from the work of the Lord, could be a great help in this effort, also.

I pledge the sincere help of my wife and me in working with you in every way that we can. Our home is always open to anyone who is interested in surveying this work, just visiting, or looking for a place to live and work.

Please feel free to contact me at any time, day or night, Questions invited. (Signed) **Ronald T. Keever**, 702 South Volland, Kennewick, Washington 99336 or telephone (509) 783-2504.

David C. Dugan, 4614 South Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri: "I would like to continue pressing the issue on this new 'Men's Movement,' as some have labeled it. After the recent 'Ridin' For The Brand' program in our area, a brother who participated in the program wrote the follow-

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ing in his bulletin:

"RIDIN' FOR THE BRAND WAS AWE-SOME! WOW! The conference on men leading their families was a tremendous success. The speaker Steve Farrar did a great job, showed from the Bible the importance of men owning up to their God given responsibility in leadership. I heard men say things like, 'I wish I'd heard this years ago.' or 'Too bad brother was not here.' Over 1,000 men attended!

"I was so impressed with the spirit of unity and fellowship that we all experienced. Just to sit in AGREEMENT along side Christian, Baptist, and Evangelical churches on such a timely, vital GOOD CAUSE (Titus 3:8) was wonderful! Not to mention the other 'FORTY' CHURCHES OF CHRIST THAT WERE REPRESENTED!

"We have purchased the whole conference on audio tapes, as well as some great videos. Please take advantage of checking them out for your personal use."

"It is part of the 'change agents' agenda to bring about changes by means of joining hands with those types of groups. Another group that is sweeping the country is 'The Promise Keepers' program...The Promise Keepers are scheduled to be in many different cities throughout the country. Brother Rice, we need to warn our brethren of these programs that undermine and pull men away from the truth and erode the uniqueness of the Lord's church."

Ken Willis, minister, Morrison, Tennessee: "Clyde Ann and I are about back to normal now that we have had a few days to recover from jet lag and catch up on things here."

"We left on February 27th and returned on April 1st. Travelling with us were Ken and Barbara McAfee, also from Morrison."

"We arrived in Singapore on March 1st. I spoke that night at Jurong, and brother McAfee spoke at chapel the next day."

"Since Hara Raya was on, we had to fly to Malaysia. He conducted a three-day elder workshop at Klang, while we flew on to Ipoh to conduct a meeting there."

"After the meeting in Ipoh, we flew over to Kota Kinabalu to spend three days with the seven members there. Brother Cornelius Tan (the only male member) continues to faithfully press the cause there."

"On March 12, the McAfees and Wilises flew to India. It was the McAfees' fourth trip to India and first in Malaysia and Singapore."

"We conducted a ten-day training school in Tamil Nadu state. Taught from 9:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. in one more hot, humid warehouse. Attendance averaged 120 with highs over 150 a few days. Only funds limited us to this number. While we concentrated on further grounding Christians and teaching preachers, eight left Hinduism and were baptized into Christ."

"After a few days looking around and preaching in a few other towns it was time for us to return home. The McAfees are still there but will return next week."

"We left India and came back to Sin-

gapore for two days of R & R before heading back to the states.

"Singapore was just heavenly after being in India. But if the Lord wills, we want to go again next year or as soon as the brethren will let us. We're still toying with the idea of going back into full time work. Eddy Ee encouraged us to come back to Singapore."

"We rejoice that seven have been baptized and two restored since we arrived back in Morrison."

World Video Bible School, of Rural Route, Box 121, Maxwell, Texas, on August 31, 1995, shipped its 20,000th tape, which was mailed to a man named G. Daniyal, in Madras, India.

Mr. & Mrs. T. R. Stevens, of Mineral, Texas, helped \$200.00 toward our "special mailings."

Russel & Grace Thompson, of Mesa, Arizona, enclosed \$10.00, saying, "We appreciate your reports."

Robert B. Moore, of Marlow, Oklahoma, sent \$15.00 for Bibles for Russia, saying, "I have enjoyed your magazine Contending for the Faith for many years."

My father Harry C. Moore loved your mission work and your strong stand for the truth. I hope my money can be used to further the printing of Bibles in Russia."

Roy & Elizabeth Barfield, of Rogers, Texas, send \$50.00 each month to help with our preacher/teacher-training work at Four Seas College, in Singapore."

Jimmie C. Morgan, of Taft, Texas, sent \$50.00 several times on our "special mailings"—also \$50.00 on our ACU/Special mailing. R. Perrault, of San Antonio, Texas, helped \$20.00."

Handley Church of Christ, of Fort Worth, Texas, has sent from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 each time numerous times on our "special mailings."

Clarkson Church of Christ, Elwood Haynes & Alisa Haynes, all of Clarkson, Kentucky, send \$200.00, \$30.00 and \$10.00, respectively, each month to help us contend for the faith."

BOB SPURLING HAS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, NEEDS OUR HELP

We realize how much each congregation must watch how they spend God's money. Also, we know how many good works are in the brotherhood. We appreciate all the good works that are being accomplished worldwide. We are aware that preaching the gospel should be our first desire. We know that each of you are busy doing the best you can in spreading the gospel to a dying world.

We hope you can be of help with us in helping a faithful gospel preacher and his family who at the present are going through great afflictions—the Bob Spurling family who has faithfully worked in the vineyard of our Lord for 28 years. Now he needs the help of faithful brethren to help him bear his burdens.

Brother Spurling has been diagnosed to have multiple sclerosis. The Mayo Clinic has also confirmed the diagnosis and, besides confining him to a wheel chair, the M.S. is causing him gradually to lose his sight. (Just a short time after he was informed about M.S. his daughter was killed in an automobile accident.)

We (the elders of Crestview) would like for you to help us in raising money that would go on his house mortgage. This would give them an assurance of a place to live. We are pleading with you to take a special contribution for this effort. If you have any question, you could contact us at 205-594-7325 or you can contact me (Thomas Wortham) at 205-561-3603. Please send all donations to:

Crestview Church of Christ
Post Office Box 166
Boaz, Alabama 35957

Please read to your congregation and help us with this good work. In Christian love, (Signed) Thomas Wortham (an elder) for the elders at Crestview

Merwin L. Greeley, of Glidden, Texas, enclosed \$100.00 "to help get Behold The Pattern out before the brotherhood."

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

It's "Their Theology," Stupid! Critiquing Christian Jubilee '96

J. E. Choate

A personal request was made to the editor of *Contending for the Faith* to run two "squibs" printed in the featured column of **Brad Schmitt** in the Nashville *Tennessean* (see Page 4). The first reason for this request is to document and to account for the hostile attitude of **Dr. Rubel Shelly** toward the traditional churches of Christ. The second reason is to point up the fact that putting down the conservative churches of Christ has been the constant theme of all past Jubilees.

Waylon Jennings, the popular "outlaw" country singer, has a church problem. He says that of all the churches, he finds the churches of Christ are the worst. However, we consider Waylon Jennings honest and susceptible to open biblical teaching despite his "anti-social" anger.

On the other hand, we hold no such brief for Dr. Shelly who will be satisfied with nothing less than to drive into oblivion the conservative churches of Christ. His spin on the anti-social statement of the "outlaw" country singer documents Dr. Shelly's contempt for churches of Christ.

FACTS ABOUT JUBILEE '96

Rubel Shelly and the Jubilee organization put into place a scenario to show that they are the "good guys," and that the conservative churches of Christ are the "bad guys" in the broader arena of Christendom. The building of a habitat house for a needy mother is indeed praiseworthy. But it is a despicable act to use this noble undertaking as a part of the publicity to put a good face on Jubilee, and put an ugly face on the churches of Christ.

Whoever advised **Ray Waddle** about this year's Jubilee fed him wrong information. Nashville/Christian Jubilee Inc., does not have a national following. Out of 100s of churches of Christ in this general area, some 14 churches

provided support for Jubilee. There were *not* 10,000 people in attendance at Jubilee at 11 a.m., on July 4, or at any other time during Jubilee sessions. The numbers I saw in day attendance could have ranged 3,000 and 4,000 on two consecutive days.

Waddle also was fed the story that Jubilee, in its eighth year, represents a departure from the traditional churches of Christ assemblies because of its offerings on personal and social issues. Jubilee '96 most assuredly represented a departure in that biblical doctrine and church traditions which were held up for ridicule by principal Jubilee speakers.

PUTTING CONSERVATIVE CHURCHES OF CHRIST UNDER ATTACK

The attacks against the conservative churches of Christ on the Jubilee Floor were by no means clever or subtle. This fact is particularly focused in the lectures of **Jeff Walling** and **Phillip Slater**.

Jeff Walling has all the polished aplomb of a sophisticated Californian. He did not play on the "good ole boy" image. He was the only "original" in the entire Jubilee cast. Walling is trained in speech and theater which matches a handsome presence and a splendid versatile baritone voice.

His was an exciting presence as he sold the "theology" of the Willow Creek Community Church to an appreciative audience who greeted his "put-downs" of churches of Christ with high levels of applause and uncontrollable fits of laughter. Jeff Walling raised the question in his lecture—"if there were 'community churches' in the area" as if he was unaware of the "split-away" Hendersonville Community Church whose preacher, **Ken Dye**, tried to wrest control of this conservative church from its duly appointed elders.

(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

J. E. Choate (at 80 Years of Age) is Doing the Finest Writing of His Generation

It is my personal opinion that the finest writing being done these days in this or any other gospel paper is that by J. E. Choate, of Nashville, Tennessee.

Having equipped himself decades ago to write as he does, having taught for 40 years at Lipscomb University before retiring as Professor Emeritus, and having preached the gospel throughout the Nashville area for more than 50 years, his vantage point qualifies him brilliantly to write these articles as no one else has or can.

CONCERN FOR "OVER-KILL"

In submitting his follow-up article re: the so-called "Nashville Christian (?) Jubilee '96," which starts on Page 1, brother Choate expressed concern lest too much be written exposing this brotherhood aberration now in its eighth year.

Among other things, he wrote, "It was clear that Rubel Shelly et al meant to put a good face on Jubilee '96, lead the brethren to forget Jubilees past, and lay the groundwork for a sensational Jubilee '97. They thought to make the 'Habitat for Humanity' a symbol for a compassionate Jubilee and its organizers.

CLARIFYING FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

"This never came out that clearly for the general public. Rubel Shelly got his picture in the papers for this and for Project Goodwill. However, the general public never got the full import of what the Jubilee promoters had in mind..."

Brother Choate's current article puts an X-ray on the underlying themes running through the Jubilee by dealing with facts and personal observations which put Jubilee in a different (and we think true) light.

"I cannot see any good in something that is intrinsically good," he continues, "when the purpose is to do harm in another place under a false guise..."

SHALL WE TIRE OF EXPOSING ERROR?

"This is the hope of the liberal change agents that the churches will tire of the continual exposing of false teachers and learn to live with them. More than once I have heard 'that they are afraid you will write them up.' If this ever is a motivation, it is unworthy.

"I do think that staying on one subject too long when the facts are exhausted will reach a diminishing return. I shall continue writing as I am doing. When brethren are no longer interested in my efforts, I will stop."

CHOATE IS ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE

As editor of *Contending for the Faith*, I quite agree with brother Choate that when the facts are exhausted it is possible to stay on one subject too long.

Re: the Nashville "Jubilee," however, such is not the case. Interest in what he has been writing—and continues to write—remains high. New facets continue to surface. As long as they do, both he as well as we need to keep abreast of what is going on.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

It's "Their Theology," Stupid!

(continued from Page 1)

Such churches take their cues from the Willow Creek Community Church out of Chicago. The most popular DLU Bible faculty, **Doug Varnado**, is the senior pastor. The DLU Senior Vice President and CEO endorsed the Willow Creek "theology" by preaching in the Hendersonville Community Church pulpit by invitation.

The elders of any unsuspecting church who send their youth leader and their children to be entertained by this funny man may find their children returning bemused by the religious antics of their elders and making similar jokes about the local preacher, song leader, elders, and even their own parents.

A "step down" imitation of Jeff Walling is the new youth minister, Phillip Slater, of the Madison church of Christ. His main "gig" is into the "contemporary worship" rituals of the new "jerrybuilt" denomination Churches of Christ. Phillip's humor is of the comic book variety with display cartoons poking fun at the leaders of the local churches of Christ. His act will play well around **Steve Flatt's** carnival spectaculars from the building of a "Noah's ark" to the fabrication of a "Jonah's whale."

THE DOUBLE TRACK OF NASHVILLE/CHRISTIAN JUBILEE '96

Dr. Shelly and the Jubilee planners had two chief cards to play in Jubilee '96. The first order of business was the multiple lectures and classes which were carefully planned and crafted with a variety of themes designed for all age groups.

The main publicity attraction of Jubilee '96 was the building of a habitat home for a needy and deserving mother. Acts of goodness of this kind require both grace and sweat, and are always to be commended. Our response to this, on the other hand, was to regard the "habitat for humanity" project as a publicity tool to tear down God's "habitat for humanity," the Church of Christ which was hammered out on the cross in 33 A. D. Jesus Christ then paid all the cost and built his church.

We commend brother Shelly's interest in homes for poor people, and share his disgust for the criminal torching of churches, synagogues, and temples. However, we fault him on two fronts. On the one hand, he would build a habitat house for the poor, and torch the churches of Christ on the other hand. And there is more than one way to torch a church than with a match and gasoline.

DR. SHELLY PLAYS HIS RACIST CARD

We were left guessing as to how Jubilee '96 would be played before the public. We were knowledgeable that the building of a habitat house would be a part of the Jubilee publicity campaign. Just personal aggrandizement? He did so by heaping abuse on the conservative churches of Christ implying that such churches were afflicted with a "church burning" mentality.

What did Dr. Shelly have in mind when he made this statement reported by Ray Waddle that he is "embarrassed that white conservative churches did little or nothing to support the rights of the blacks in the 1960s and often actively resisted them."

The rest of the story follows on the heels of Jubilee. A news story was run on the front page of the *Tennessean* under the headline "GOODWILL IN BLACK AND WHITE." Plans were announced for Project Goodwill, a biracial alliance of local ministers with Shelly named as a principal planner. The primary objective is to show their outrage at the burning of churches, and especially black churches. The alliance will spearhead a drive to rebuild torched churches by raising funds.

In a subsequent feature, the "Nashville Eye," printed in the *Tennessean*, Dr. Shelly has an essay under the caption "The Sin of Silence" which addresses the torching of churches. This is a heinous crime regardless of the structure whether it be a temple, mosque, or a house of ill repute.

[Dr. Shelly compares this viperous hate crime to the horrors of the Nazi holocaust. However, I find it completely detestable when he implies that the churches of Christ were a part of the movement to deny the constitutional rights of black people. No churches of Christ and their leaders ever participated in the ugly displays in the 1960s as Shelly infers.

Dr. Shelly, have you read in *The New Yorker* (July 15, 1996) (and I am confident that you have not,) the article titled "Playing With Fire" by **Michael Kelly** which addresses the question, "Who is burning the churches, and who is exploiting the issue?" His conclusions are that the truth is something far more than a picture in "black and white." Kelly's basic conclusion is: "From the evidence to date, the true picture is less clear, and less apocalyptic, than what the public has been led to believe."

Kelly puts the matter as largely one of politics. Shelly would make it a matter of white racist hate-mongering hatched from the same egg which created the Nazi holocaust. Dr. Shelly, you should do some conscience searching and be ashamed that you would implicate the churches of Christ in these sinister plots.]

AND IN CONCLUSION

Dr. Shelly, why don't you and your kind devote your energies to your own "jerrybuilt" denomination Church of Christ, and keep your hands and voice out of the affairs of the conservative churches of Christ. Dr. Shelly, build habitat houses and ferret out the "torchers" of the property of American citizens. [It turned out in the burning of the (black) Murkland Presbyterian Church that it was done by

an emotionally disturbed 13-year-old girl without the slightest suggestion that it had been motivated by racial animus.]

Brother Shelly, we are sick of your "cheap shots". and scurrilous attacks on the traditional churches of Christ. We are sick with a kind of "Kierkegaardian sickness unto death" with the "change agents" and their "big sick denomination." Just go away, and stop disturbing the peace of your brethren who have tried to make sense out of your "theology" for much too long.

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

Rubel Shelly Goes Right Along With Waylon Jennings' Vicious Attack Re: Churches of Christ

When Randy Mayeaux started making outright attacks against the churches of Christ in the late '80s, it was not long before he resigned that huge salary they were paying him at *Preston Road/Dallas* and started a church of his own.

Rubel Shelly has been edging closer and closer to following Mayeaux's heretical course now for several years. However, it was not until country singer Waylon Jennings attacked the church in his recent autobiography that Rubel finally joined suit.

In the Nashville *Tennessean* for June 27, 1996, in Brad Schmitt's column, "Brad About You," he quotes Jennings' advance copy of his autobiography, as saying, "Of all the religions I've run into, the Church of Christ has probably got it wronger than anybody."

Both of Jennings' parents belonged to a Church of Christ congregation. Concerning the church, he went on to say, "They're self-righteous, narrow-minded, and truly believe they're the only ones going to Heaven. If you don't believe the way we do, they say, you are going straight to hellfire and damnation. With a side order of brimstone."

When asked if he thought he would make a lot of fundamentalists angry, Jennings is quoted as saying, "Well, I probably will. But I don't care."

RUBEL SHELLY AGREES

If there ever was a time for Rubel Shelly to keep still, this would have seemed to be it. However, in Brad Schmitt's column the very next day (June 28, 1996), the *Tennessean* quotes Rubel as in agreement with Waylon, acknowledging that the church in days past might have fit such a description.

In his response, Shelly told Schmitt that he "hopes, though, the church has grown beyond the views that only Church of Christ parishioners are true Christians.

"Thanks for the quote," Shelly wrote. "It will serve me well in trying to teach against what I inherited and have had to come to terms with."

From what Jennings said, he has about as much use for the churches of Christ as his singing buddy Willie Nelson has for the IRS. Now that Rubel has joined Jennings in his attack on the church full bore, how long will it be before he, too, leaves the church *in fact* as he did *in heart* 13 years ago?

When Randy Mayeaux finally saw that churches of Christ were not about to follow his Willow Creek/Community Church agenda, at least he finally had the grace to *leave* so he could do as he pleased. As near as we can tell, soon it will be "Move over, Randy Mayeaux, Rubel Shelly is coming through!"

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

Waylon, don't sugarcoat it

In case you haven't had your fill of religion controversies lately, I offer you this, from an advance copy of Waylon Jennings' autobiography:



JENNINGS

"Of all the religions I've run into, the Church of Christ has probably got it wronger than anybody," Waylon writes.

His parents both belonged to a Church of Christ congregation.

"They're self-righteous, narrow-minded, and truly believe they're the only ones going to Heaven. If you don't believe the way we do they say, you're going to go straight to hellfire and damnation. With a side order of brimstone."

Geez, Waylon, don't you think you'll make lots of fundamentalists angry?

"Well, I probably will. But I don't care."

Preacher responds to Waylon

From the Brad About You mailbag: lots of comments on Waylon Jennings' calling the Church of Christ "self-righteous" and "wrong" in his autobiography.



JENNINGS

Rubel Shelly, minister at the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ, provided the most thoughtful and sensitive. He acknowledges

the church in days past might have fit such a description. Shelly says he hopes, though, the church has grown beyond the views that only Church of Christ parishioners are true Christians.

"Thanks for the quote," Shelly writes.

"It will serve me well in trying to teach against what I inherited and have had to come to terms with."

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When Does A Movement End?

Kevin Cauley

Recently, a special edition of a publication from Abilene Christian University was called to my attention. This publication is entitled *Directions In Ministry*. There was an article in this issue by Drs. C. Leonard Allen and Jack Reese entitled "ACU and the Continuing Restoration." This article is an abbreviated version of an essay which they wrote for the *Christian Chronicle*.

In this reduced article, they comment on four "commitments" which they glean from the restoration movement. These are: (1) "the deep commitment to the authority of the Bible;" (2) "the practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper;" (3) "the commitment to unity within diversity;" (4) "the rejection of creeds as tests of fellowship."

One might glance over this list and, with the exception of the third commitment (unity within diversity), find nothing wrong with it. However, the fact that this third commitment is included in this list causes me to ask a question: Are these men affirming these commitments *solely* because they believe them to be Bible teaching, or is part of their reason for affirming these commitments the fact that they want to be part of a "continuing restoration movement?"

It is true that these men believe these "commitments" to be Bible principles. However, that is not their *sole* reason for having these commitments. The *other* reason they have these "commitments" is that these commitments are part of their "restoration tradition."

Let it be said that it is not the purpose of this article to examine specifically these "commitments." (I happen to believe that their third commitment [unity within diversity] is in error. The other three I believe are supported by Bible teaching. The fact that they are supported by Bible teaching is the *only* reason that I would believe them.) Rather, the purpose of this article is to examine this *supplemental* reason by which they come to these "commitments." This reason: they want to remain inside a *continuing restoration*

movement. They state plainly in their abbreviated article, "...we want to affirm the Restoration Movement and its ideals and to make it clear that these are the ideals that Abilene Christian University upholds."

First let me say that there is nothing wrong with wanting to restore the New Testament church. I believe that if we want to be faithful to God and save the souls of the lost that we must restore the New Testament church. For it is only in this church that salvation can be obtained (Ephesians 1:3, 22, 23 teaches that all spiritual blessings are in Christ's body, the church. Salvation is a spiritual blessing. Therefore salvation is in Christ's body, the church.) However, I am opposed to the idea that the churches of Christ today are **nothing but a part of a continuing restoration movement**. This idea of restoration is that it is ongoing and continuous; it never ceases. In this same A.C.U. publication, Dr. Ian Fair said, "The leaders of the early Restoration Movement made a firm commitment that this process should be ongoing, and that we should never canonize human effort or our religious past." According to this concept, we can never fully restore the New Testament church in all of the major areas of significance. Thus, we must be content that we are simply part of an *ongoing movement* to restore the New Testament church. Let's think about this idea of a "restoration movement."

Many preachers are familiar with the idea of "movement." Preachers move more than any other "professionals" of which I know. I myself have moved a few times—and let me say that once I have unloaded the last box and put it away according to my plan, I have completed the movement. And, once I have put everything away, I have completed the restoration of my worldly blessings to a condition in which they are once again able to serve me.

Notice, the very idea of a "movement" involves that one has *not yet arrived at* his desired destination. Brethren such as Ian Fair, C. Leonard

Allen, and Jack Reese fail to realize the purpose of a movement. A movement is designed to get us someplace. And to continue to remain within a movement is to say that I really do not want to get to the place I desire to go.

Now, when one tacks the word "restoration" onto the beginning of the word "movement," obtaining the phrase "restoration movement," we get this concept: *not yet having arrived at* restoration. However, the restoration movement is all about fully restoring—*arriving at*—the New Testament church [and I mean by this, (1) how we get in the church, (2) how we worship in the church, (3) how we are to structure the church, and (4) how we work in the church]. And, once we have restored the church, the *movement* to the church is *finished*. Thus, we are no longer *in a movement* to restore the church, but we are *in the church* which has, in fact, been restored.

God is *not* going to save a movement toward restoration. God is going to save those who have *been* restored; God is going to save the church. And if we continue to want to be part of a movement *toward restoration*, thus not wanting to be part of that which is *restored*—the New Testament church itself—then we want to be part of something that is *not going to be saved*, and I do not want any part of that. I do not want to be a member of something which in and of itself implies that I can never arrive at that which I seek to restore. Rather, I want to be a member of that which has been restored, the Lord's body, his church. I am committed and convicted to something also. I will teach what the Bible teaches; I will be part of the church for which the Lord died and shed his blood, and I will reject what these so called scholars are calling the "restoration movement." Really, it only takes one generation to fully restore the church. And once that restoration process is *complete*, the *movement* has ended.

—202 East Oak Knoll Circle
Apt. 232J
Lewisville, Texas 75067-8850



A PUBLIC DISCUSSION, which could prove to be historic, took place between the Churches of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church, June 17-19, at Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Representing the Catholic Church were three priests, Paul



Rothermel, Edward Connolly, and Benjamin Luther, seen together on left above; Churches of Christ were represented by Jerry Moffitt, H.A. Dobbs, and Darrell Conley, together on right above.

TRUTH PREVAILS IN POTTSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Barry Grider

If there were ever a congregation that is willing to stand against all odds, it is the tiny congregation that meets in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, 100 miles northwest of Philadelphia. For some time this group of just a few Christians has boldly challenged the largest local denominational group in their area, the Roman Catholic Church, to meet on the polemic platform, and to compare their doctrines with that of the Bible. **Victor Carmichael** and **Gregg Lehman** both preach and hold secular jobs, as they labor in this difficult region. They constantly are sowing the good seed, which may be close to bearing fruit. Regardless, they will not back down from standing for the truth of God.

Earlier this year, in the local paper, they openly challenged the Catholic church to debate. After much discussion between the two parties a format was selected. Brethren **H. A. Dobbs**, editor of *Firm Foundation*; **Darrell Conley**, evangelist of the Northern Oaks church of Christ, San Antonio, Texas; and **Jerry Moffitt**, evangelist of the Portland church of Christ, Portland, Texas were called upon to defend the truth. Three Catholic priests, **Paul Rothermel**, of Reading, Pennsylvania; **Edward Connolly**, of Pottsville, Pennsylvania; and **Benjamin Luther**, of Paducah, Kentucky, would seek to defend their Catholic doctrine.

PROPOSITIONS SIGNED

The propositions that were signed by both parties were as follows:

June 17

Darrell Conley will affirm:

The true church, the one established by Jesus Christ, recog-

nizes the Bible as its only authority in faith and practice. *Paul L. Rothermel will deny.*

June 18

H. A. (Buster) Dobbs will affirm:

The distinctive Catholic doctrines about Mary, the Eucharist, and the Pope contradict what the Bible teaches.

Edward B. Connolly will deny.

June 19

Jerry Moffitt, H. A. Dobbs, and Darrell Conley from the churches of Christ, *Paul L. Rothermel, Edward B. Connolly, and Benjamin F. Luther* from the Catholic Church, will constitute a panel that will answer questions from the audience written and handed in during the first two nights of the debate.

Once the propositions were signed, brethren Carmichael and Lehman began blitzing the entire Northeast with advertisements concerning the debate. This attracted the attention of Christians, Catholics and many denominational groups. Elmer and Eula Green, a retired couple and faithful members of the Pottsville church, operated a booth at the local mall, where they presented information concerning the debate and also distributed tracts that introduced people to the Lord's church.

GRIDER GOES TO ASSIST

Since Gregg Lehman was a classmate of mine in the Memphis school of Preaching, I was determined to go and be with him for this evangelistic yet highly confrontational week. When truth battles error you can always count on confrontation and I wanted to assist my fellow soldiers the best possible way.

I arrived in Pottsville on Saturday, June 15th so I would have the opportunity of worshipping with the congregation the following Lord's day. It was my privilege to preach at both services. Also present were Rudy, Sharon, and Matt Cain, and Weylan Deaver, all of whom are with World Video Bible School, in Maxwell, Texas. Thankfully, they came to videotape the debate.

APPROXIMATELY 300 ATTEND

It was good to see close to 300 present for the first evening's session which was being held in the Nativity Blessed Virgin Mary High School. How delighted I was to meet JoAnne Howe. Sister Howe is a *former nun* but now a *faithful member* of the Lord's Church. She has written several books including *A Change of Habit*, that tells of her life as a nun and subsequent conversion.

Brother Conley effectively proved through the scriptures that one can be a member of the true church of Christ by following the Bible alone. Mr. Rothermel, however, disagreed. He believes that man needs continued revelation in understanding what God would have him do. Thus, the need for oral traditions given by the Roman Catholic church. We know this to be erroneous since man is no longer inspired and God's Word is sufficient in everything (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

Tuesday evening brother Dobbs continued brother Conley's theme that the scriptures alone are our sole authority and that there is no biblical authority for a pope, the Eucharist, the worship of Mary, et al. Mr. Connolly (not to be confused with brother Conley) agreed that one may not read in the Bible concerning these Catholic doctrines. However, he believes that the church has the authority to continue to make changes, even if such is not mentioned in the Bible. As with all religious differences, the issue centers on religious authority. One should ask the question, "Is it from heaven or from man?"

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

On Wednesday evening, the disputants entertained



THE FAITHFUL FEW who make up the Pottsville, Pennsylvania church of Christ, seen left to right (above), include Gregg Lehman, Elmer and Eula Green, and Louise and Victor Carmichael. The successful debate shows what even a few can do when they stick together and have a mind to do something special for the Lord.



NO ONE WAS MORE EXCITED about the debate than JoAnne Howe. The former Catholic nun, now a faithful Christian, is pictured, left to right, with H.A. Dobbs, Barry Grider and Jerry Moffitt.

questions from the audience. Hopefully and prayerfully each person in attendance listened attentively to the answers. Our brethren responded to each question with a Bible answer. One of the Catholic priests, Mr. Connolly, had mentioned his mind was already made up. Hopefully, many in the audience will not react as such, but will openly and honestly investigate the scriptures. While some in attendance became rather testy the third evening, still others sat intently listening.

Brother Jerry Moffitt joined our brethren for the third evening and Benjamin F. Luther joined his fellow priests.

Brother Moffitt would not back down from truth under any circumstances, even when he was being heckled by the Jewish moderator. Mr. Luther was reared by faithful members of the church. How sad to see him stand so piously wearing his black garb and white collar. I was reminded of the pitiful state of those who know the truth and turn from it. (I Peter 3:20, 21)

GOD'S WORD HAS FREE COURSE

The three-night discussions surely awakened people to the evils of Catholicism in this sleepy little town. Whether or not some will respond positively to the truth, awaits to be seen. However, we can be thankful that the word of the Lord has free course, and that it sufficiently defeated error. Also, we can know that many who previously had not heard the pure gospel received an opportunity.

How grateful we should be to the brethren in Pottsville for their defense of the gospel and their desire to make it known. All of us could learn something from them. I am confident they will continue to press for more such discussions with various religious groups. As Gregg Lehman's mother told her Lutheran minister, "you better watch out, they are coming for you next." What we could accomplish if only all of us had such determination.

—4400 Knight Arnold Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38118-2932

NAMING NAMES IS A NO-NO

Wayne Coats

There is a little school in a certain city which has been operating for many years. The school is in a certain state—but I will not call its name. For many long years the school has conducted many wonderful lectureships and a part of the lectureship programs has been an “Open Forum” wherein many men and subject matters have been openly discussed. That would be the reason for calling it an “Open Forum.” Some forums are not very open.

The last time I attended the lectureship there I was intently interested in the “Open Forum,” but was I ever disappointed when a certain young fellow who seemed to be somewhat announced at the opening of the Open Forum, “We will not call names.” What? I thought, where am I and what am I doing here? Does that mean that I cannot call my name if and when I might be introduced to someone? Does such a gag rule mean that my brethren do not have sense enough to discuss men and movements in an intelligent manner? Why must brethren be mum relative to men? What kind of timid, fearful, squeamish, mushy, compromising attitude has taken hold of soldiers who have become fearful of their own shadows?

WONDER WHO THIS WAS?

I well remember many years ago when I was an uncertain student in that certain school in that certain city. A very faithful brother from a certain city had a religious debate with a certain heretic at the school during the lectureship. The two men discussed the matter of the located preacher and evangelistic control and oversight. I needed to hear that discussion. It would not be held today since, “We must not call names.”

At another lectureship at the school a certain preacher (rather small in stature and with a dry grin) presented a series of lessons which pertained to a debate which he had conducted with a Digressive preacher on the subject of instrumental music. Brother Wal—I mean the certain preacher had a big chart and on that chart he had the name of that false teacher and he had the temerity and colossal gall to call that heretic’s name, and the amazing thing is that he was later employed by the school—but that was before the time when brethren would not allow name calling during the lectureships. That was also when lectureships were of value in exposing false teachers.

When that little man began to indict, charge and convict the gainsayers, often times a little strand of hair would fall down onto his forehead. One and all knew that the beast and the false prophet were in for a resounding defeat. That was before the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God was swapped for the sugar bowl. That was before brethren became obsessed with how to influence people and receive gifts without calling names.

HOW CAN BIBLE BE OBEYED?

When the Bible clearly, plainly and directly commands, “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), how is this to be done? Is it to be done? If a fiat is set forth that, “We cannot call names,” then how about some nut issuing the rule that, “We cannot pray while here?” It should be clear that the same book which teaches people to pray, likewise teaches them to mark false teachers. I do not believe brethren need to act a fool when they pray or when they mark false teachers, but I resent with all my soul the use of a gag rule in order to appease hypersensitive church members.

Since when did, “Lay by in store” need to be observed to the exclusion of, “Mark them which cause divisions . . . and offenses...”? I do not believe the Holy Spirit was babbling uselessly when he said, “Mark them...” He was not referring to the old traditional practice of marking a hog by cutting a shallow fork in the right ear before turning it out to free range. I believe the Holy Spirit used the word “Mark” in the sense of identifying the false teacher. That is done when God-fearing men believe the Bible. It is not done where men pleasers are rowing the boat.

HOW LONG WILL RULE STAND?

I had mentioned to my wife—what’s her name—that we need to write a check for \$25,000 and send it down to the school. But in order to do that, the check would need to be made out to a certain school which forbids calling names so I will just have to make the check as follows: **PAY TO THE ORDER OF An Uncertain Un-named School**. On second thought I dare not send a check with my name signed thereto because someone might be offended. There are some places which forbid the calling of names. The only solution is to sign the check Anonymous.

If others decide to write a check to some uncertain school, please do not make the mistake of one brother who wanted to use a big word while announcing a business meeting. He said, “We want this meeting kept promiscuous, and make sure the sisters do not know what we talk about.” Do not ever sign your name to a promiscuous check.

—705 Hillview
Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122



CLOSE TO THE EDGE

Don Myers

[NOTE: Consternation reigned among the churches of Christ throughout much of Arkansas, when it became known that Jimmy Adcox and the Southwest Church of Christ, of Jonesboro, were hosting the interdenominational Promise Keepers rally in early June. Following is what appeared in the June 2, 1996 church bulletin, *The Reasoner*, published by the church at Biggers, Arkansas.—Ira Y. Rice Jr., Editor]

It's hard to explain as we go through life why certain memories are forever etched in our mind, and will go to the grave with us, while most memories fade away, never to be remembered. One particular story has stuck with me over the years.

Several years ago, during a gospel meeting here at Biggers, the preacher (whose name I can't recall) told the story of a traveller and his family who had to cross a dangerous mountain pass by foot. The pass was narrow, with sheer cliffs at the edge. The first guide asked said he would take the family down the middle of the pass. The second guide asked said he knew a few shortcuts, but they were close to the edge. The third guide asked said he would keep as close to the mountain, and as far away from the edge, as possible. The traveller, with the safety of his family coming first, quickly chose the third guide.

This story was brought to mind this past week by an article that appeared in *The Jonesboro Sun* Sunday, May 26. The Southwest Church of Christ in Jonesboro hosted a "Promise Keepers" seminar Saturday, June 1. Promise Keepers is a supposedly "non-denominational" movement, of men only, designed to encourage men to "keep their promises" to God, wives, and family. Certainly these are good causes, and God would desire that all men keep their promises.

However, problems quickly surface with Promise Keepers. As the accompanying article shows (reprinted with permission of the *Jonesboro Sun*) the organization is *not* non-denominational; it is inter-denominational. Speakers at the Southwest church are to include the Reverend Louis Monroe, Jimmy Adcox of the Southwest church, Dr. Rodney Reeves of Central Baptist,

and Adrian Rogers of Fullness of Joy church. Will brother Adcox and the elders there be able to "Amen" the prayers surely to be offered by these denominational speakers? Can they openly fellowship denominational doctrines and leaders who believe and teach contrary to the Gospel? How *close to the edge* does Southwest want to get?

Brother Dan Flournoy of Irving, Texas has written a tract, entitled, "Beware of Promise Keepers" in which he clearly documents that the organization *falsely* teaches: (1) the *direct operation* of the Holy Spirit, (2) an *un-Biblical organization*, (3) salvation by *faith alone*, and (4) acceptance of *instrumental music* in worship. When Jesus prayed for unity in John 17:11, was this what he had in mind? Paul states in Romans 16:17-18, "**MARK THEM that 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.**"

Fortunately, there are still some sound congregations who are *not* deceived, and who want to stay as *close to the mountain* (gospel) and as far away from the edge as possible. The reverse side of the accompanying article appeared in *The Jonesboro Sun* Saturday, June 1. The listed congregations declare no fellowship with, or approval of, the Promise Keepers movement.

Pray for these congregations, elders, and preachers who are willing to take a stand in defense of God's word, Pray for unity, but on God's terms, not man's. "**Can two walk together unless they be agreed**" (Amos 3:3)?

There is an old saying that "birds of a feather flock together." It is not surprising to see that brother Jimmy Adcox now appears and speaks on the same program with Rubel Shelly, Jeff Walling, Mike Cope, Marvin Phillips, and others of like mind, about whom have been written countless articles concerning their false teachings. What price will men pay for popularity, acceptance, and numbers? "**For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul**" (Matthew 16:26)?

—Biggers Church of Christ
Biggers, Arkansas 72413

[The article and ad referred to were reprinted in our July issue by permission of *THE JONESBORO SUN*.]

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They Printed The Truth— But It Was A Mistake!

Jesse Whitlock

What an embarrassment to the A.D. 70 errorists of our day. Recently I received the January (1996) issue of **Max R. King's** theology called, *The Living Presence*. When I receive my copy each month I announce the latest issue of the "Lying Pestilence" has arrived. So imagine my surprise upon reading **Jack C. Scott, Jr.'s** opening statement on the front page of his ongoing (and on and on and on...) article: "Eschatology: 101." His explanation immediately draws attention:

Before beginning this article we need to correct a misprint from our last article that was important to the meaning of the argument being made. In Vol. 6, No. 3, page 8, in the first column, the first full paragraph, the last sentence reads: "It is obviously set within some imagined time..." It should have read: "It is obviously not set within some imagined time...when this eternal covenant and physical time would be brought to an end." It is hoped that the reader saw this as a mistake. The futurists believe that the eternal covenant will some day end. The point was intended to show the opposite. [Emphasis on "NOT" supplied by Scott—JLW]

Upon reading these lines I immediately thought about the writing of Holy Writ in II Peter 3:16, "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." One must be "unstable" in order to accept the heresy that the cross of Christ and the day of Pentecost must somehow take a back seat to the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

In reading the previous article by this author (Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 6-12), I noted the usual diatribe, this time, based on Isaiah, chapters 24-28; 51; 65-66, advocating "the subsequent establishment of the new heaven and earth and Jerusalem. It is obviously set within some imagined time when this eternal covenant and physical time would be brought to an end." And this is where he is most anxious to add the needed "NOT"!

MAYBE THEY NEED A NEW VERSION

Perhaps Scott and company can take a lesson from the Jehovah's Witnesses. Judge Rutherford's followers quickly found that they could not convince people that Peter's plain statement in II Peter 3:10 was somehow in error. So, they came out with their own translation called *The New World Translation*. Then they changed the words of Peter to read, "...and the earth and the works in it will be discovered." [Emphasis mine—JLW]. However, they still found it hard to be consistent. The NWT still stated "...the chaff he will BURN UP with fire..." (Matthew 3:12) and "...a third of the earth was BURNED UP, and a third of the trees was BURNED UP, and all the green vegetation

was BURNED UP..." (Revelation 8:7). [Emphasis mine—JLW]. II Peter 3:7 causes trouble for the Jehovah's Witnesses and the A.D. 70 errorists of our day as well. The NWT still says "...by the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire..." Shades of contradiction—what shall the false teachers do?

When I compared the two issues of the "Lying Pestilence" and noted the desperate attempt to be among that number "who changed the truth of God into a lie..." (Romans 1:25) it struck me that they need to produce their own translation of the Bible. They could take their direction from Genesis 2:17 and 3:4, "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Cf., "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Did you note the "not"? Isn't this precisely the position of Kingites today? They could call this perversion the "New International Covenant Eschatology Version."

THEY COULD WREST THESE PASSAGES, TOO!

Imagine some of the passages that could be wrested to keep up with the "King-sized" mistakes of this heresy:

II Peter 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will [NOT] come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall [NOT] pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall [NOT] melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall [NOT] be burned up." [N.I.C.E.]

Acts 2:16 "But this is [NOT] that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." [N.I.C.E.]

John 5:28-29, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is [NOT] coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall [NOT] hear his voice, and shall [NOT] come forth..." [N.I.C.E.]

Acts 1:11, "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall [NOT] so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." [N.I.C.E.]

II Corinthians 5:10, "For we must [NOT] all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ..." [N.I.C.E.]

Colossians 2:14, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it [NOT] out of the way, [NOT] nailing it to his cross; and [NOT] having spoiled principalities and powers..." [N.I.C.E.]

Acts 17:31, "Because he hath [NOT] appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness..." [N.I.C.E.]

John 14:3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will [NOT] come again, and receive you unto myself...
[N.I.C.E.]

I Corinthians 15:26, "**The last enemy that shall [NOT] be destroyed is death.**" [N.I.C.E.]

I Corinthians 11:26, "**For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do [NOT] show the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall [NOT] be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**" [N.I.C.E.]

Certainly we can see where the possibility for a new perversion on the market is feasible. Every A.D. 70 preacher and church would surely need such a tool to give credibility to his error. Obviously, no clear-thinking individual can take a reliable translation of the Scripture, study it and conclude that the final coming of Christ, the establishment of the church, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead all occurred with the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70.

Yes, the truth was printed—but it was a mistake!

P.S. "*The A.D. 70 Theology*", written by brother **Curtis A. Cates** is an excellent refutation of King's heretical system of theology. A copy may be ordered from Cates Publications, 9194 Lakeside Drive, Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654 for \$4.50 + \$2.00 P&H. I am confident that no A.D. 70 advocate can meet or refute the powerful argumentation put forth in this mighty work!

—Post Office Box 1782
Ardmore, Oklahoma 73402

Remember Uzzah

Mac Deaver

The Philistines, in the days of Eli, had captured the ark of the covenant from the Jews. Later it again came into Israel's hands. It remained for a while in the house of Abinadab, but David finally thought it time to bring it back to Jerusalem. So he provided a new cart and had the ark placed on it. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the cart.

It was a festive occasion, and a grand day!

God had in days gone by, however, given specific instructions as to how the ark was to be transported. It was a special and sacred piece of furniture, and it was to be handled accordingly. God's way of transporting it was to be observed.

But...when they came to the threshing floor of Naccon, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it: for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Uzzah: and God smote him there for his error and there he died by the ark of God (II Samuel 6:6-7).

Naturally, David became very displeased. After all, why should God employ such drastic measures in making a point? Uzzah, no doubt, meant well. His act, evidently, was an act of good intention and sincere concern, but God left the distinct impression upon Uzzah's surrounding survivors that Uzzah's act was wrong. God meant what he had already said!

Today, it is so easy for people to begin to doubt the seriousness of God's word. It is one thing for a person to casually admit that God has spoken. It is quite another thing for a person to be impressed with the fact that God's word is to be treated reverently in a spirit of obedience.

It matters not the issue: worship, marriage-divorce-re-marriage, fellowship—whatever. If God has addressed a matter, we can rest assured that God said what he intended to say and will back the statement by the authority of heaven.

In a society where God's name is blasphemed in the most trivial of circumstances and where the morality of Christ is rejected because of its lack of convenience, the church of our Lord must be exceedingly careful lest her attitude toward the scriptures becomes casual.

If you are ever tempted to think that in the final analysis God, after all is said and done, really does not mean what he says, remember Uzzah.

—Reprinted from *Power*
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[NOTE: It is the policy of some papers NOT to reprint something that already has appeared elsewhere. Not so with *Contending for the Faith*. When we see something deserving of wider circulation, we are happy to reprint it. So with brother Deaver's article on "Remember Uzzah."—The Editor]

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“Distant Voices”

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

What is there about going off to some secular school like the University of Iowa for a Ph.D. that makes some of our brethren think they know more about the church of our Lord and the restoration movement when they get back?

C. Leonard Allen, who now teaches at Abilene Christian University, claims to have been brought up in the churches of Christ. I do not question this. What I do question are 1) how fully and how carefully he was taught the truth of the gospel in the congregations that he attended—and 2) what could he possibly learn about the church from a *secular* school that he could not learn from the *church itself*?

Readers will recall my review of Allen's book, *DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ* (which he wrote in collusion with Richard T. Hughes) as it appeared in the November/1995 edition of *Contending for the Faith*. I wrote that review while sick abed with the flu in February, 1995, a thousand miles north of Moscow above the Arctic Circle, in Murmansk, Russia.

Today (May 20, 1996), I am 77 miles north of the equator, in Singapore. Having read and studied Allen's book *Distant Voices* (ACU Press, Abilene, Texas 1993) on the planes bringing me here, I feel impelled to jot down my impressions from the book while they still are fresh on my mind.

“DISTANT VOICES” WOULD WEAKEN OUR FAITH

That there are *some* good things to be learned from Allen's book, let me be fair enough to acknowledge. However, it is not for those *good* things he wrote that I now take pen in hand. Rather it is to the things he said which would *weaken our faith* and *lead us back into apostasy* that I feel it necessary to reply.

I had not gotten past the *front cover* of *Distant Voices* before a question already had peaked in my mind. It was not the *title*, but the *sub-title*, that made me wonder—“*Discovering A Forgotten Past for a Changing Church*.” The church of which Allen is a member may be *subject to change*; the one to which I belong is *not*. The thought occurs that he and I may be members of *different churches entirely!* The church I espouse and to which I am unreservedly loyal is described as the *body of Christ*. If Christ *himself* cannot change (Hebrews 13:8), then how can his *body* change? Even to *suggest* such a thing is contrary to all that I believe or that God's word teaches!

“COMMUNITY CHURCH” CAME OUT OF MINTER LANE

Next I noted in his “Acknowledgements” that he lists *Minter Lane Church of Christ*, of Abilene, Texas, as his “home congregation.” This tells me a lot.

[Minter Lane, in its earlier days, was a genuine church of our Lord—at least I personally so recognized it and gave it credit for so being. However, across the years, “uncertain sounds” began coming out of Minter Lane, including, as recently as 1992, the departure of one of its elders, **Max Tipton**—evidently with the blessings of those who were left—to start an interdenominational *Community Church* in Abilene.

Readers will recall our reproducing the Abilene *Reporter-News* report of this in our issue for August/ 1992. In that article, the *Reporter-News* Religion Editor reported that the said “Community Church” was “a long way from where the church started—as a *special Bible class* at a local Church of Christ.” *Which Church of Christ? Minter Lane!* [I suggest you go back and study that report so you will know where Minter Lane is “coming from.”]

The fact that the “worship committee of that congregation” asked [him] to prepare a series of historical vignettes centered around the theme of “*heritage*” out of which this book grew is no assurance whatever for its *truth*. Minter Lane began drifting toward liberalism years ago and there is no indication that it is *ever* coming back to the “old paths.”

“DISTANT VOICES” USED IN TWO SENSES

Toward the close of his first chapter, entitled, “Discovering a Forgotten Past,” Allen says, “I use the phrase ‘distant voices’ in a double sense: first, ‘distant’ simply in that these voices come from a time now long past; but second, and more importantly, ‘distant’ in that they are the *minority* voices among Churches of Christ, the voices that have been drowned out, the softer voices.” I have no qualms with his *first* use of “Distant Voices;” it is with his *second* use that I take issue.

The effort to restore plain, simple, New Testament Christianity (from **James O’Kelly** onward) did not reach its goal overnight. As the restorers sought to eliminate error and restore truth, that goal ultimately was reached; it was step by step, however, not instantaneously.

Regardless of multifarious contemporary efforts to compromise truth and lead the church back into the error whence it had escaped—Allen's efforts included—the

ONE TRUE CHURCH, the CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT—was reproduced in both the 19th and the 20th centuries, and some of us are determined that it shall proceed both into the 21st and centuries beyond that Jesus may present it unto himself as his bride when he comes.

DID ALLEN EVER REALLY BELIEVE?

What does Allen really mean, on page 5, when he states that “Churches of Christ are now in a time when the central or dominant voices of the twentieth century tradition are being questioned?” Evidently he means that he, **C. Leonard Allen**, is in the process of making “shipwreck” of his *own* faith and that he *no longer believes* what maybe he *once* did, if he *ever* did!

As for his *second* use of the words “distant voices,” just because such voices may have been in the minority, drowned out, softer or fainter, this in no way supports the supposition that such voices were *true*. What does it matter if those voices came from “people largely forgotten”? If they were not *true* voices, perhaps they *should* have been forgotten—**C. Leonard Allen**, notwithstanding.

CLAIMING, PROVING: TWO DIFFERENT THINGS

In Chapter three of *Distant Voices*, Allen refers uncritically to **John Winebrenner**'s book, entitled, *History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States*. Rather than pointing out that just because someone *says* something, that, within itself, does not necessarily make it so, he further refers to **John W. Nevin**, “a theologian in the German Reformed Church,” who, upon reading Winebrenner's book, noted that “most of the groups held one basic thing in common”—the claim to possess “no creed but the Bible.”

To *claim* such and to *prove* it are two different things entirely. All my life, I've heard denominationalists *claim* that they go only by the Bible; but when their creed books are put to the test alongside the Bible, that is all they were—just claims unsupported by the facts.

It is not such *claims* which “multiply denominations endlessly,” as Allen implies on pages 16-17, but being *untrue* to those claims. Rather than exposing the *falsity* of those making *false* claims, Allen *lumps all together* as “a sea of sects all claiming to possess nothing but the primitive faith and practice.” Without saying it in so many words, but by implication and innuendo, he would include the church of our Lord, right along with what he pictures as “other denominations,” as *causing sectarianism* by our claim of “no creed but the Bible.”

ALLEN UPHOLDS STONE, DENIGRATES CAMPBELL

Emphasizing that **Barton W. Stone**, “unlike **Alexander Campbell**,” avoided religious debates, it is clear that Allen upholds Stone while denigrating Campbell. Rather than looking to *the Bible* as our *only hope of Christian unity*, Allen says that Stone “did not believe that a set of correct doctrines” would ever unite believers.

This evidently is Allen's view, as well! Rejecting such an idea, Allen advances *Stone's* thinking as “the basis for unity” Not what Stone called “Book Union”—relying on the authority of creeds. Not “Head Union”—rejecting all creeds and boasting of taking the Bible alone. Not “Water

Union”—a unity founded on the doctrine of immersion of believers in water. But a *fourth* approach—“*Fire Union*”—a unity based on the Holy Spirit indwelling the hearts of believers. In larger context, “believers,” according to Stone/Allen would *include the denominations—not just the churches of Christ!*

DOES ALLEN BELIEVE IN WOMEN PREACHERS?

By Chapter 4, Allen appears to espouse the cause of women in the ministry. Highlighting what he calls a “teaching ministry” by **Nancy G. Cram**, he traces her coming into contact with **Elias Smith's** “Christian” movement in Vermont. He refers to “at least seven” active preachers in the “Christian” movement whom one of them (**David Millard**), a prominent preacher in said movement in New England, “had been converted under her influence.”

Allen describes **Nancy Cram** as “one of the most successful and well known” of **Elias Smith's** “female preachers.” In fact, he lists her and several others, saying, “From the days of **James O'Kelly** in the 1790s to **Smith** in the early 1800s, women were quietly appointed to preach in the eastern branch of the restoration movement.” From the way he presents this whole matter, it appears that Allen approves.

The very quotations he offers from several of those eastern “female preachers” bolsters this impression. For example, on page 29, he states, “if ‘female preachers’ were fairly common in the eastern part of the early restoration movement, they were less so in the western part.” however, he notes one exception—**Nancy Mulkey**, the daughter of “Christian” preacher **John Mulkey**, in Monroe County, Kentucky, who served as an “exhorter” where her father preached.

With an evident note of sadness, however, Allen reports that “the work of ‘female preachers’ and ‘exhorters’ soon receded,” the predominant cultural model for the role of women as limited to the domestic sphere becoming “the predominant model in the restoration movement” and remaining so through the remainder of the 19th and the 20th centuries (page 30).

DOES ALLEN UNDERSTAND HOW RESTORATION UNFOLDED?

Rather than presenting the restoration movement as a continuing, gradual (not instantaneous) unfolding of insights, Allen, in Chapter 5, fails to explain **Campbell's** not setting forth the doctrine of “baptism for remission” of sins until his debate with Presbyterian **W. L. McCalla**, in 1823. From his description leading up to this announcement, instead of crediting the New Testament for **Campbell's** unfolding conclusions, he seemingly credits **Campbell's** subjective reaction to what he calls the “dominant Protestant model of conversion.” If that is all it was, then, certainly, one baptism would be “just as good as another”—the same going for the “plan of salvation,” as well.

Developing this chapter, Allen recites **B. F. Hall's** excitement as he discovered “this message” while reading “**Campbell's** case for baptism” in the 1823 debate, calling it the “keystone in the gospel arch,” and saying that he had

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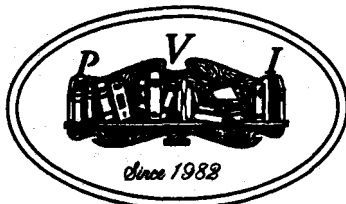
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found the "long lost link in the chain of gospel obedience," now seeing "the evidence of remission which I had never seen before." He credits Hall's discovery of "baptism for remission of sins" with the spread of this notion rapidly throughout the Western Reserve.

With no indication of his own conviction in the matter, Allen credits this simple message of belief in Christ, repentance and baptism for remission of sins, as much as anything else, with fueling the rapid growth of "Campbell's movement" [note that] in the 1820's and 30's.

STONE, SMITH SHAKE HANDS ON BASIS FOR UNITY

One of the most colorful men associated with Campbell in the restoration movement was **John Smith**—also known, in restoration literature, as "**Raccoon John**" Smith. Allen's Chapter 6 begins with an overflow crowds assembled to hear Smith on January 1, 1832, at Lexington, Kentucky.

Barton W. Stone with many of his followers were present, Stone had been calling those standing with him simply "Christians." Those liking to Campbell referred to themselves as "reformers" or "disciples."

When Smith closed his address with an appeal that brethren no longer call themselves Campbellites or Stoneites but come to the Bible as "the only book in the world that can give us all the light we need," Stone was so deeply moved that he stepped to the platform, saying that he had "not one objection" to the ground laid down by Smith as the "true scriptural basis of union among God's people" and that he was "willing, now and here, to give him my hand."

As the two faced each other and shook hands on it, the audience burst into celebration. By the following Lord's name they met together, sharing the Lord's supper, symbolic of their unity.

ALLEN'S HIDDEN AGENDA FOR "UNITY"

Allen then reveals his hidden agenda for this recitation, saying that one would be quite mistaken to assume the two groups "declared their unity only after having resolved their doctrinal differences. Far from it."

Allen clearly believes that unity can (indeed, must) be achieved on some basis *other than doctrine*. The significance of unity based on all coming to the Bible alone—at least for Allen—somehow means something wise (or more than), not just doctrine.

What else is the New Testament if not the doctrine of Christ! After a litany of doctrinal items on which Stone and Campbell disagreed, such as the "proper name for the movement, the works of the Holy Spirit in conversion, the importance of baptism, the frequency of the Lord's supper, church government, the meaning of the atonement, the doctrine of the trinity, and other matters," Allen observes that while both men agreed that "scripture taught baptism for the remission of sins," they disagreed on whether "formal fellowship" should be extend to unimmersed. The question is: On how much doctrine can brethren disagree

and still call it "unity"? Just to "agree to disagree" is unity in name only, not in fact.

ALLEN CLOSER TO STONE THAN TO CAMPBELL

In the closing pages of Chapter 6, Allen edges far closer to Stone than to Campbell. He thinks Stone's defense of *sincerity* being the basis for Christian unity and fellowship is far superior to Campbell's emphasis on correct teaching.

[Could this view account for ACU's appointing that *Methodist preacher* as editor of its school paper, *The Optimist*? With such a view, would it be wrong for that former elder at Minter Lane to break away from the churches of Christ and begin that "Community Church"? If not, this would help explain some of the doctrinal anomalies now clearly existing at ACU and among the churches in Abilene. *Allen and ACU simply no longer believe what Campbell and others have contended for these past 150 years but are now following those "distant voices" which lost the day back then.*]

Without coming right out and saying so in so many words, Allen's selective quotes from Stone show where his own views are coming from. For example, when he defers to Stone's three "reasons" for extending fellowship to "sincere believers," though unimmersed, is he stating just Stone's views—or *his own*, as well? Clearly he is laying a groundwork for churches of Christ receiving those of a different "doctrine" based on their "sincerity." He has no qualms referring to such sincere, though unimmersed, people as "Christians" and "Christian characters." He goes right along with Stone's frequently stressing something not obviously, necessarily so, saying that "in apostolic times...fellowship required agreement only on a few fundamental truths: the existence of the Father and the Son; that Jesus is the Christ; that Christ came in the flesh; that he died and rose again; and that one must believe on Jesus and obey him." He quotes Stone as *opining* that baptism by immersion is the "only baptism," but that he would not make his *opinion* a term of Christian fellowship! [If immersion for baptism is not part of the *doctrine of Christ*, re: II John 9-11, what else is it? To contend that it is only "opinion" goes contrary to the doctrine itself! Far be it from any of us to defend something Campbell believed or taught *just because he taught it*; but when we read it straight from the doctrine in the New Testament, it is so, regardless of what Campbell, Stone or anyone else believed or taught.

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ALLEN'S VIEWS ON HOW GOD WORKS?

In studying Allen's 7th chapter (on "How God Works") I could not be certain whether his own views agreed either with Stone's or with Campbell's. Whereas the two movements had formally united in 1832, evidently believing that they "shared the same basic theology and goals," Allen points out that two "strikingly different view of how God works in this world" continued to exist.

What they agreed on were: 1) both rejected human creeds, and 2) both sought unity through restoring primitive Christianity. But how such a restoration should come about was something else again!

In Stone's view, nothing short of a direct intervention by the Holy Spirit himself could effect a restoration of the Christianity that existed from the beginning. He saw no authority from the scriptures why we should conclude that "the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit" should be withdrawn from the church." As far as Stone was concerned, the only reason miracles did not continue was because of unbelief.

Campbell, on the other hand, contended that God's power to affect people was only through the word. Being "filled with the Spirit" meant being filled with the words of the Bible through study.

Whereas both envisioned a millennium to come, Stone looked for Jesus Christ to return to this earth, set up his kingdom, and rule and reign on earth for 1,000 years.



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Campbell taught that "Just insofar as the ancient order of things or the religion of the New Testament is restored, just so far has the millennium commenced."

Relative to conversion, Stone said that without a direct intervening of the Holy Spirit, "religion is but a dream." He continued to favor *interdenominational* "revivals," including the practice of "praying through" at the mourners' bench.

ALLEN DELIGHTS IN "LUNENBURG LETTER"

As consistently as Campbell had pressed the view in and since the McCalla debate (re: baptism for remission of sins), brethren generally were more than a little disturbed by what became known as his "Lunenburg letter," written in response to a query from Lunenburg County, Virginia, in 1837. Allen delights in discussing that letter under the heading of "Who Is A Christian?" (Chapter 8).

Having studied Campbell's reply across the years, I personally never have been able to defend it and do not do so now. For whatever reason, Campbell *compromised* the restoration principle in his reply, allowing for some to be considered Christians who may not have been immersed for remission of sins.

The subtle distinction that Campbell had made in his debate with McCalla, as between "real" and "formal" washing away of sins simply will not hold. The washing away in the blood and in baptism are one and the same. As seen in John 19, Jesus was *already dead* when the Roman soldier pierced his body with a spear. Hence his blood was shed *in his death*. Since Paul teaches that we are *baptized into his death*, it is *there* that sinners contact the blood and their sins are washed away. If this is not the case, there would be no blood in our obedience. Immersion apart from the blood of Christ would be what many denominationalists charge—"water salvation."

Let's just admit it, brethren, Campbell was *mistaken* in his Lunenburg letter. We can follow Campbell as long as he follows truth, but when he, too, errs, Romans 3:4 still requires that we "let God be true and every man a liar." This would include Campbell.

It matters "not a whit" whom *Campbell* viewed as a Christian, but what did *God* say. God said the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. A *disciple*, by definition, is a *loving learner*. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). He *commanded baptism for the remission of sins*. How therefore could one truly be a Christian who has not obeyed his Lord in baptism!

As this chapter develops and concludes, Allen clearly joins Campbell in wavering on the issue of baptism for remission rather than standing upon the doctrine as set forth in the word of God.

ALLEN DOWNPLAYS DEBATES

Coming to Chapter 9 on "Room for the Spirit," the thought occurs that Allen's books—all of them—are just *one long polemic* mostly *compromising with error*. Rather than viewing religious debates as genuine defences of the gospel (Philippians 1:7, 17), he downplays them as "a popular form of entertainment." Whereas they brought

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."

Regarding issues, a comment from the late N. B. Hardeman is often cited. While president of the old Freed-Hardeman College brother Hardeman said, "We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'"

THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.

“success in the rough-and-tumble world of denominational competition, he contends that they ”also spawned bitterness and fragmentation.”

One of Allen’s “distant voices” was a medical doctor, **Robert Richardson**, long a colleague of Alexander Campbell’s. The effect of doctrinal controversy, Richardson wrote, was to “distract the mind, destroy love, generate dislike, jealousy, revenge, [and] foster the passions of the carnal nature.” How one with such a mindset ever got to associate with a master debater like Campbell is unclear; but how a compromiser like Allen chose to highlight him seems obvious.

Richardson viewed the restoration movement as *part of Protestantism*—and that Protestantism had become one “grand doctrinal controversy.” He viewed “belief in doctrines as consisting in correct intellectual views” practically as the abnegation of inward spirituality.

NEITHER UPHOLD “WORD ONLY”

Rather than looking on the gospel as God’s *only* power to save (Romans 1:16), Richardson rejected insistence that God could influence human beings “only through material objects and revealed words.” He felt, Allen maintains, that the “word only” position “led many people in the movement to deny any significant present-day role to the Holy Spirit and thereby foster a formal formalism.” He looked upon the “word only” and the “Spirit only” positions espoused by many as the antithesis of each other.

Neither Richardson nor Allen give much credence to the word itself being *spiritual* (John 6:63) and the Holy Spirit indwelling and influencing the heart *through the word*. While recognizing the emotional excesses characterizing many who emphasized “Spirit only,” Richardson demurred at what he styled the “Spiritless faith” of the “word alone” advocates, saying that if he had to choose between the two, he would choose the “Spirit alone” position, for such views “at least lead the mind to seek after fellowship with God; and embody the idea...that there is a real communion to be enjoyed with the spiritual world.”

But *why have to choose*, since the New Testament teaches that the Spirit works on our hearts through the word! Allen does the cause of truth disservice even to *suggest* that Richardson could have been right! Spirit and word, in the Bible, go hand in hand. It is anomalous to try to separate them—even in thought. Allen cannot point to *one thing* concerning the Spirit that he knows *separate and apart from the word*.

MAY CHRISTIANS DIFFER IN MATTERS OF FAITH?

Captioned “The Bond of Peace,” Chapter 10 continues Allen’s agenda that Christians have a right to differ. Insisting that the movement’s pioneers made allowance for differences under the slogan “in faith unity; in opinions liberty,” he seems oblivious that such liberty is limited to *opinions only*, not to matters of faith (doctrine).

Citing agreements reached in an 1841 meeting in Nashville, when 29 churches were represented to discuss “church policy and teaching,” he argues that their agreeing that differences among believers “always manifest either

ignorance of the law or a determination to rebel against it”—and **Tolbert Fanning’s** later agreement in principle—were a “shift away from” the movement’s pioneers.

DOES ALLEN UNDERSTAND PIONEERS AND FANNING?

I hold no brief to defend “the movement’s pioneers”—just the word of God; but I have *read* the pioneers—also Tolbert Fanning, founding editor of the *Gospel Advocate*—and it is Allen who either misunderstands or misconstrues both. He makes a distinction where there is no difference!

A cardinal principle of the restoration plea is that people can understand the Bible alike. Yet, in the body of this chapter, Richardson is described as arguing that one cannot simply say, “The Bible alone is our creed”—that “expecting people to understand it alike will simply insure continued division in the Christian ranks”—and Allen agrees with Richardson.

He says that Richardson distinguished “between the Bible and the gospel,” that there was no Bible, *per se*, for the apostles and early preachers to unite upon, rather that their union was “upon the gospel alone.”

The gospel, rather than including the whole New Testament, Richardson contended, “consisted of the simple facts of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection” (I Corinthians 15:3-4). Allen calls this “the *baseline* of faith.” [Could this be where Rubel Shelly got his “*core gospel*” idea?]

Allen expands that “Believers would never unite on a broad doctrinal platform...but they could unite on the simple facts of the gospel.”

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DOES ALLEN BELIEVE IN "FAITH ONLY"?

The only "authorized test of orthodoxy" for Richardson—and Allen—was the simple confession, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," *i.e.*, faith only! Richardson wrote that "Christ is not a doctrine, but a person." He said the second basic principle of the movement was a distinction between "the Christian faith" and "doctrinal knowledge"—that to believe in Christ means not simply to believe what he *says*, but to have a "*direct relation and fellowship with Him as a person.*" Just how this was to be accomplished except through doctrine he did not say. Nor does Allen. Both are nebulous at this point.

For Richardson, his first two basic principles "provided the foundation for the *third*: the restoration of 'SIMPLE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY' as the true basis for Christian union." He contended that Jesus' prayer in John 17 was not for a "universal, visible union," but for a "spiritual unity." Rather than it requiring "a doctrinal uniformity or an ironing out of differences," Richardson believed Jesus' prayer was for "a oneness given by joint participation in the Spirit." He did not conceive that the churches of Christ ever had wholly left the Baptists, arguing that they [the Baptists] still were his brethren! In this chapter it is hard to distinguish whose position we are discussing—Richardson's or Allen's. Certainly, the Baptists would be hard to persuade that this is the true view held by the churches of Christ in general!

IS SPIRITUALITY SUPERIOR TO REASON?

Having already devoted two whole chapters to Robert Richardson, I was taken aback that Allen did the same in Chapter 11, as well. Titled, "Holy Mysteries," this chapter enlarges on Allen's agenda that Richardson was *almost alone* in emphasizing things of *the Spirit* as contrasted with "*doctrinal, polemical, and organizational matters,*" which, he contends, "preoccupied the movement."

Whereas he throws a sop or two toward the necessity for reasoning on the scriptures, still, he maintains, *spirituality is superior to reason*, since the latter results in "a cold-hearted, lifeless formality, that freezes the energies."

Allen credits Campbell himself, "on a few occasions," with raising such concerns; but even in that single paragraph he makes it seem only a *sometime* thing with Campbell, whereas Richardson "made it a *lifelong focus.*"

Though he says that "Richardson did not cast out reason," he had just quoted him as saying that the "*mysteries of faith are more sublime* than those of *reason.*" Why put an "either/or" twist on things that are supposed to be "both/and!"

OSBURN'S BOOK, ALLEN'S CHAPTER 12, SAME TITLE

Having earlier reviewed Carroll Osburn's book on *The Peaceable Kingdom*, I was shocked to see Allen's Chapter 12 bearing this *same title*. Perhaps I should not have been—they are like two peas in the same pod.

The purpose behind Allen's chapter, however, has little to do with its title. He has an agenda for *change*. Not the

sort of change that comes about *naturally*, but the kind being *forced* by "change agents" such as Rubel Shelly, Lynn Anderson, Max Lucado—and C. Leonard Allen!

CIVIL WAR AND PACIFIST VIEWS

To establish his premise, he goes back to the American Civil War, when, he declares, "the majority of church members held pacifist views." He cites Alexander Campbell, Tolbert Fanning, Moses Lard, J. W. McGarvey, Benjamin Franklin, David Lipscomb, and many others as urging Christians "to stay out of the war."

Zeroing in on Lipscomb, in particular, he traces Lipscomb's developing views as opposing not only Christian involvement in *war*, but in *all* political affairs, even to the point of teaching that Christians *should not even vote*.

Re: Lipscomb's pacifism, Allen says we "must see its deep roots in his understanding of the kingdom of God, which he feels is traceable to Barton W. Stone." "Like Stone before him," Allen states, "Lipscomb believed that all human government represented the rebellion of mankind against God's sovereign rule and the transferring of allegiance to the kingdom of Satan." Allen quotes Lipscomb as saying that Christ came to rescue this world and to restore it to its "primitive and pristine allegiance to God." When this happened, Lipscomb believed that "*this world [would] become the Eden of happiness and peace.*"

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1912), as well as through his book *Civil Government*, Lipscomb was able to spread his pacifist views far and wide among churches of Christ. However, Allen states, "By the time of World War II...Churches of Christ were growing increasingly at home in mainstream American culture and thus ever more content with Protestant morality. With the war ever raging, the strict pacifist stance prominent in Lipscomb's time made little sense to many people...By the late twentieth century, Lipscomb's view of God's kingdom and the pacifism tied closely to it had been long forgotten among Churches of Christ."

All this—and more—Allen says, "provides one telling indication of the change Churches of Christ underwent in the opening decades of the twentieth century." Indeed it does! Whether for truth or error, this evolutionary change, in fact, took place. However, what a difference in *this* sort of change and those changes being forced arbitrarily upon the churches at this time!

ARE WORLD'S POOR "GOD'S CHOSEN"?

Concentrating almost wholly on David Lipscomb's view of the poor of this world as "God's chosen," Chapter 13 is headed "God's Chosen Vessels." "For Lipscomb," Allen writes, "true Christianity was inextricably wrapped up with regard for the poor. Indeed... that ministry to the poor serves as a fundamental identifying mark of the true church" (page 94). He cites Lipscomb as believing that the "poor of this world were the chosen vessels of mercy, the specially honored and blessed of God. They, as a class, constitute his elect."

One implication Allen draws from this is Lipscomb's belief that "since God adapted the Christian faith to the 'common people,' they were the ones 'best fitted to maintain and spread that religion.'" Lipscomb thought that common people not only were more easily reached with the gospel, but, when converted, they usually made the best members.

Wealth, on the other hand, Lipscomb felt, tended to corrupt the church. "The rich, and worse, those not rich who aspire to ape and court the rich," he observed, "are the greatest corrupters of the church." for this reason, he advocated that churches should seek to "maintain an atmosphere where the poor will feel welcome and not alienated."

EFFECT OF WEALTH ON PREACHERS

Lipscomb was greatly concerned for the effect of wealth on preachers. "Large salaries," he wrote, "turned their heads in another direction, exciting their thirst for wealth, corrupting the simplicity of their lives, and unfitting them for successful work among the common people."

Furthermore, Lipscomb felt, large salaries tended to put a gag on the pulpit. "The preacher will cater to his supporters," he wrote; hence large-salaried preachers tend to gloss over the sins of the rich, while exaggerating and condemning sins of the poor. "Especially is this true," he added, "in fashionable and wealthy churches and communities."

CHAPTERS 13 AND 14 MOSTLY CORRECT

I did not find much wrong with Allen's treatment in Chapter 13. The same is true of Chapter 14, wherein he

continues discussing Lipscomb's feeling that "true Christianity [is] inextricably wrapped up with regard for the poor" and that "ministry to the poor serves as a fundamental identifying mark of the true church" (page 94). I agree especially with his description of Lipscomb as identifying "deeply with the common people and the poor" (page 95).

I cannot go along, however, with his treatment of Lipscomb's believing that the "poor of this world were the chosen vessels of mercy, the especially honored and blessed of God" or that "they, as a class, constitute his elect." The scriptures, truly, speak of God's "elect," but "the poor of this world" are not it.

Nevertheless, I certainly can agree with his major implication from Lipscomb (in the middle of page 96), that the "common people" were the ones "best fitted to maintain and spread" the Christian religion, saying, that they were more easily reached with the gospel and "generally make the best members when converted." Not having this world's wealth to distract their care and affections, such

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persons “more readily [learn] to depend on God and submit to [his] divine will.

Allen’s emphasis on Lipscomb’s believing, “conversely, that wealth generally corrupted the church,” is exactly right, because, as he points out, “worldly possessions, honors [and] responsibilities above a modest competence steal the time, win the affections, and hinder service to God,” leading people to judge by a “different standard from the Savior.” Churches, he contended, “must seek to maintain an atmosphere where the poor will feel welcome and not alienated.”

Whether or not I can agree entirely with Lipscomb about the necessity for church buildings, certainly his view that the central work of preachers should be among the poor and common people is correct. His astute observation that large salaries turn preachers’ heads in another direction is exactly right. As he said, preachers “who have been fed and kept by the wealthy at their homes of comfort and elegance, whose education and refinement are shocked by the ignorance, the dirt, the coarseness of the poor, and wicked, find it a severe trial to be compelled to go among them.”

PREACHERS’ NEED FOR INDEPENDENCE

Emphasizing preachers’ need to “maintain a measure of independence,” Lipscomb felt that large salaries tend to put a gag in preachers’ mouths. Also, he said, that preachers “putting [themselves] up to the highest bidder, shifting about from place to place, for the sake of a little higher salary, is...a degradation of Christianity.” To this I say a hearty “Amen.”

Lipscomb felt that the “crowning characteristic” of the Christian religion is that “the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matthew 11:5). Hence, the church that fails to make this its most important work, Allen quotes Lipscomb as saying, “could scarcely claim to be a true church of Christ.” I agree.

ALLEN’S VIEWS ON ELDERS INCORRECT

As much as I agree with Allen’s analysis of Lipscomb’s view on other matters in Chapters 13 and 14, the views expressed on elders and the eldership—especially in Chapter 14—are a different story. Whereas his *reasons* for such views are understandable, the fact is that there were/are elders in the Lord’s church made such, *not simply by age, but by qualification and appointment.*

A careful study of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 abundantly bears this out. Truly the Holy Spirit makes such qualified, appointed men elders, and no man has a right to take this office unto himself without qualification and appointment. That God’s elders have authority not enjoyed by others is evident from his making them “*overseers*” (Acts 20:28). And don’t forget Hebrews 13:7 and 17. If we are to *obey* them that “*have the rule*” over us, how do they *achieve* such rule? And if they (not everyone) must “give account,” how is such responsibility imposed?

As for Lipscomb’s arguing that the “elder women” (in I Timothy 5:2) being “just as much officers as the older men are,” the Bible nowhere teaches this. The two passages

I cited (I Timothy 3 and Titus 1) both require the elder (bishop) to be the “husband of one wife,” which cannot be true of women regardless of age.

GENERAL THRUST CORRECT—WITH EXCEPTIONS

I have to agree with Allen’s general thrust in Chapter 15. Under the heading of “The Trouble With Stained Glass,” he cites the growth of cities in the 1860s and 70s. “As the cities grew,” he records, “so did the affluence and power of the church-going middle-class...Streams of people moved from farms and rural areas to the new commercial centers.” As they did so, the Protestant churches catered more and more to middle class folks—and the churches of Christ were not far behind.

Forgetting the common people and the poor, church buildings tended to reflect the churches’ newly-found prosperity, becoming symbols of wealth and prestige. Along with such upgraded features, churches tended to hire more-refined, eloquent and [worldly]-educated preachers, gradually shifting concern for “the poor, the destitute and the day-laborers to the more affluent” middle-class, white-collar workers.” Allen correctly states that as a result of this trend, “the poor and laboring people remained, on the whole, largely untouched—and often unseen—by the urban churches” (page 110).

Though influential church leaders of the time—men such as Benjamin Franklin, F. L. Rowe and others— inveighed against this trend, for the most part churches continued erecting expensive, new buildings and employing refinements to attract “respectable” church-going people, “deepen[ing] their estrangement from the poor.”

Allen cites “one historian” who observed that “very few perceived that the goals of attracting the middle-class and reaching the poor were antagonistic ones.”

DID RESTORATION GROW OUT OF “SOCIAL UNREST”?

Basically, I was in agreement with Chapter 15; however, in Chapter 16 (“The Blessing of Tradition”), once again I found myself diverging from Allen’s agenda.

Rather than the restoration movement growing out of *restudying the word of God*, he has it growing out of the *social unrest of the American people!* I kept thinking, as I read, how would this account for almost identical restoration movements that were ongoing at the same time in Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales contemporary with our own such movement in America!

ARE CHURCHES OF CHRIST “PROTESTANT”?

I noted, too, that he lumps “us” with the Baptists and Methodists as “Protestant” churches, saying that we all attempted to “dismiss tradition entirely and start fresh—right from the beginning,” all of us calling for the restoration of primitive Christianity. I deny that such was the case. What source material could he possibly have been reading to reach such a conclusion?

The Baptists and the Methodists—indeed ALL of the so-called “Protestant” churches—have *fought* our attempt to restore New Testament Christianity from the beginning until now. Any reference they made to “no creed but the Bible”—however little that was—had nothing to do with restoring *anything*. From first to last, it was just so much

lip-service to the Bible, with their human creeds and hierarchical structures lurking in the background.

COULD "HUMAN" DETRITUS BE JETTISONED?

After citing Alexander Campbell's "basic principle" that "one can read the Bible properly and rise above sectarian strife only by approaching scripture 'without a single inclination to any opinion, theory, or system whatever,'" Allen says "this meant that one could jettison as unnecessary the whole library of creeds, confessions, homilies, and commentaries spanning fifteen centuries." To this, I agree; Allen evidently does not.

In fact, Allen demurs from Campbell. He styles this "whole library" of man-made writings as "the Christian tradition." He includes the *Protestant Reformation* as *within* this "Christian tradition." I frankly and simply deny that *Protestant* tradition is any part of "*Christian* tradition." The *only* tradition that can correctly be called Christian is described in II Thessalonians 2:15 and 3:6—and Protestantism was/is no part of that.

Even though Allen does not agree with Campbell, at least he quotes him correctly as saying, "We brought no [traditional] doctrines with us at all into the...proposed Reformation." Allen himself, however, appears to be influenced more by **Burke A. Hinsdale**, a preacher and president of Hiram College, in Ohio. He cites Hinsdale as one of his "distant voices" who, in 1879, "sounded a new note in the movement, suggesting that, though tradition easily weighs down and distorts faith, it could serve an important clarifying and stabilizing function." Allen states that "Hinsdale stood virtually alone in the movement." As well he should!

What was new in Hinsdale's book, Allen says, "was the recognition (1) that the movement itself had laid down its own venerated tradition and (2) that tradition, despite its pitfalls, served an important conserving function." No proof for any of this—just bald, self-justifying assertion. It was *new*, all right; but was it *true*? Why does it seem to recall Matthew 15:9 rather than II Thessalonians 2:15 and 3:6!

PAVING WAY FOR WOMEN PREACHERS?

When he came to his topic of "The New Woman," in Chapter 17, what was Allen trying to do—if not pave the way for women preachers? Citing **Silena Moore Holman**, wife of one of the elders of Fayetteville, Tennessee, and the mother of eight children, he discusses her at length as "boldly challeng[ing] some of the traditional assumptions" concerning women's role in the church.

Basing her arguments on various active and public ministries by women, such as Deborah, the judge of Israel (Judges 4-6), Anna, the prophetess (Luke 2:37-38), Priscilla, who helped teach Apollos—though this was private (Acts 18:26), the women assembled with the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2), and Phillip's four daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8-9), sister Holman thought that all of these Biblical passages provided examples for a public role for women that did not "usurp authority" over men—so Allen states.

While acknowledging that "the man is the head of the woman and should take the lead, most especially in the

family relation," sister Holman denied that "women were thereby completely removed from public leadership roles and confined entirely to the private and domestic sphere."

Allen recounts that Silena Holman, in 1913, two years before her death, "was still addressing 'The Woman Question' in the *Gospel Advocate*, still arguing for a woman's right to teach publicly before 'mixed audiences'." Was sister Holman's another "distant voice" with whom Allen identifies?

EVEN-HANDED DISCUSSION OF "DEACONESSES"

When it comes to "Phoebe's Place" in the church, Allen gives an even-handed discussion of "deaconesses." Whereas such leading brethren as Alexander Campbell, W. K. Pendleton, Robert Milligan, Moses E. Lard and others favored the appointing of deaconesses in the church, others, such as David Lipscomb and E. G. Sewell argued to the contrary.

Lipscomb and Sewell went even farther—arguing that there was NO authoritative "office" in the church, whether elder (bishop), deacon or deaconess. In view of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1, discussed earlier, their view re: elders and deacons, as "offices," gradually gave way to the appointing of those qualified, according to these passages, to serve. Since the scriptures are silent re: the qualifications of "female deacons" or "deaconesses," these have not been considered an "office" in any authoritative sense, but only women servants in a general sense. Allen himself appears to take no position either way.

HARDING AND "SPECIAL PROVIDENCE"

Brethren generally long have known of **James A. Harding's** views re: what he called the "law of special providence." Allen's treatment of these in Chapter 19, headed, "Simple Trusting Faith," is as good as any that I have read.

In addition to presiding for ten years over the Nashville Bible School (now David Lipscomb University), which he and Lipscomb opened in 1891, Harding moved in 1900 to Bowling Green, Kentucky, to open Potter Bible College, serving 11 years as president. Besides evangelizing extensively and defending his convictions in more than 50 public debates, he also was a prolific writer, editing a periodical called *The Way* for many years.

In all those years, Harding entertained views, re: "special providence," not generally shared by his brethren. While not believing in or contending for present-day miracles, he did look upon Matthew 6:33 as a "contract with God," believing that if he fulfilled *his* part of this contract, God (by natural means) would fulfill *his*!

Harding developed such a basic conviction concerning this view at approximately 30 years of age that he lived the last 36 years of his life on this basis. Although many accused him of teaching that Christians did not need to work diligently, he steadfastly denied such a conclusion, saying that "indeed Christians should work—all honest work, however humble, was appropriate [but that] one should use the money *now*—to help the poor, to preach the

gospel, to care for the afflicted. God [would] take care of the future.”

Harding also believed, along with his friend David Lipscomb, that God one day would “triumph over all human kingdoms and establish his kingdom fully on the earth”—that this should happen at Christ’s second coming and that it should last for 1,000 years.

Allen does not say if he agrees with Harding’s “distant voice” or not.

LARIMORE—HARD TO FATHOM

I never have quite figured out what to make of T. B. Larimore’s stance as a gospel preacher. That the man could really preach there can be no doubt.

[Some think that it was I who did the original preaching in Downtown San Francisco. I did begin the congregation that met at 39 Grove Street on the second Lord’s Day of July 1945. However, long before my day, T. B. Larimore had preached in the public park across the street—which is the only time of which I am aware that his and my trails intersected.]

He died in 1929—the same year that A. R. Holton baptized me into Christ at Norman, Oklahoma.

WAS LARIMORE’S VIEW ON “DOCTRINE” CORRECT?

In his Chapter 20, writing on the theme, “How to Deal with Division,” Larimore’s is yet another “distant voice” to which Allen calls our attention. He tells of “An Open Letter to T. B. Larimore” published by one Oscar Spiegel in the *Christian Standard* in July of 1897.

Though full of admiration for Larimore, the letter was an urgent call for him to take a stand on doctrinal matters then dividing the churches and hindering the progress of the cause of Christ. Spiegel asked Larimore to declare himself on *four main issues* then dividing the brotherhood:

- 1) The use of *instrumental music* in worship.
- 2) The creation of *missionary societies* beyond the local congregation.
- 3) Participation in “*cooperative meetings*,” i.e., interdenominational meetings probably.
- 4) *Salary contracts* for preachers.

Just why Larimore refused to declare himself on the *first three* matters, at least, I find incomprehensible—but he did.

The fourth matter could be a question of opinion, but the first three? Hardly. Across the years, while preaching from south to north and from east to west, he had preached where they *used* the organ and where they *did not*, where they *belonged* to missionary societies and where they *did not*.

His response to the Spiegel “Open Letter” was in kind. “Never, publicly or privately, have I expressed opinion or preference relative to any of these ‘matters’ ...over which brethren are wrangling and disputing and dividing the church of Christ—NEVER!” he wrote. His stance was just to preach the word, the gospel of Christ, the power of God unto salvation, and let what he considered “doctrinal” matters alone. Wise and good people stand on both sides, Allen cites him as saying, “I must love my brethren, and

never refuse to fellowship them—ANY OF THEM — simply because we do not always understand all questions exactly alike.”

Such a response may have seemed proper to Larimore; however, thousands of brethren, including David Lipscomb, felt he was shirking his duty. Such a stance was like the man who said, “I have friends on both sides—and I stand with my friends!” Is this how Allen thinks we should “Deal with Division?” From the tenor of this chapter, it would seem so.

NOT K. C. MOSER, TOO!

Of all the “distant voices” I *never* expected to hear from at this late date, that of K. C. Moser probably is the least likely. However, in Allen’s Chapter 21, headed “What Is the Gospel?,” there I see his name—stark and clear.

In 1932—the year that I began preaching the gospel—K. C. Moser was living and preaching in Oklahoma City. I lived 18 miles south, in Norman, Oklahoma. As a “boy preacher,” I often attended events such as the monthly “singings” in or near Oklahoma City. That was the year that Moser published a small book, entitled, *The Way of Salvation*.

I do not remember a great deal about brother Moser, except that he wore his hair long flowing down the back of his neck almost like a hippy 30 years before hippyism came into vogue. He was the first person I ever saw lead a public prayer with his head thrown back, not bowed, his hair draping the back of his neck like a horse’s mane.

So startled was I at this spectacle that I inquired who he was. K.C. Moser, I was told. He was looked upon, in central Oklahoma, as a doctrinal misfit and oddball. Hardly anyone, religiously speaking, had any confidence in his views. Practically none of the preachers, excepting possibly one or two, shared his views or had anything to do with him. Just imagine my amazement, thus to find his name and ideas filling a **WHOLE CHAPTER** in Allen’s book!

When my family and I returned in 1964 from our *second* long-term missionary effort in the Far East, I kept hearing reference to “the man, not the plan.” Try as I did to locate the *original* source of this doctrinal aberration, I could not seem to trace it. Upon reading Allen’s Chapter 21, however, I may have found it—K. C. Moser, formerly of Oklahoma City, later of Lubbock, Texas.

Allen cites a 1934 article, “Can the Gospel Be Obeyed?,” wherein Moser critiqued and rejected that “traditional formulation” of the gospel among churches of Christ (i.e., “facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, and promises to be received”). Then another article in 1937, entitled, “Are We Preaching the Gospel?,” wherein Moser flatly denied that much of the preaching among the churches of Christ then could properly be called “gospel” preaching.

“True gospel preaching,” Moser charged, “had been eclipsed by what he termed the ‘plan theory.’ In this approach Christ’s death became simply a somewhat arbitrary means to an end—the end being the giving of a divine plan of salvation. Christ’s obedience unto death gave him the authority to set forth a ‘plan’ consisting of four basic

stipulations: faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. Preaching thus," according to Moser, "focused on the 'plan'—on what people must do—not on Christ and his role as sin-bearer."

Reading these words, it occurred to me that Moser's problem was that he had a bad case of "either/or." To him, evidently, one could not preach *both* the man *and* the plan. After all, who authorized the *plan*? Was it not the *man*—Jesus Christ—himself? If only Moser had taken a good, strong dose of "both/and" to run out his "either/or," perhaps his—and Allen's—unhappiness with our preaching might have been resolved!

Moser taught that "Christ crucified for sinners is the divine 'plan' of salvation." Even if this is admitted, one still has to get *into Christ*, where salvation is—and this is where the "plan" comes in.

DID BREWER, MOSER SEE EYE-TO-EYE?

I knew G. C. Brewer reasonably well. It is hard for me to accept that this master preacher saw eye-to-eye with Moser, though Allen makes quite a case that he did. Even if so, what an "odd couple" they must have made!—Brewer accepted practically *everywhere*—Moser almost *nowhere*—brotherhood-wide! Talk about ox and ass being yoked together!

Allen lists "four fundamental reasons" why Moser rejected what he called the "plan theory," as follows:

- 1) It removes Christ and the cross from first place and puts central emphasis on the "plan."
- 2) The "plan theory" views the condition of salvation as arbitrarily given by God.
- 3) The "plan theory" makes the "plan" the means of salvation, not Christ crucified.
- 4) The "plan theory" misconceives the meaning of saving faith and obedience to Christ.

It makes no sense at all that Christ authored what Moser styled as "the plan," then made it so as to lead folks *away* from himself! All that we know of Christ we *learn* from his *word*. His word directs us not only *to Christ* and what *he did for us* on the cross, but also *commands* us to *obey him*! We cannot have salvation apart from his teaching.

Moser was just **wrong** on all four points! I kept wondering whose preaching Moser was condemning. Having been born into a Christian family, I, too, have heard my share of gospel preaching. Perhaps on rare occasions his description might be applicable. However, for the most part, not so. Certainly it does not fairly represent *my* preaching, neither those whom I have *taught* to preach for more than six decades. He simply built up a "straw man" to knock down. Reality was quite different from his charges.

WHAT "YOUNG PREACHER" IS HE REFERRING TO?

Allen alludes to "a young preacher" and "Christian college professor," who, in August 1953, "agreed wholeheartedly with Moser's rejection of the "plan theory," thanking Moser for his "insights into the gospel." If not Allen himself, who could that "young preacher" have been?

He laments, as of then, that "all but a pitiful few take the

'plan' approach to the preaching of the 'gospel,'" filling the churches with two types of people: "those who have been justified by a 'plan'" and are "*perfectly confident* that '*we have the truth*,'" and "those who *want Christ*" but are *not being fed the gospel*."

Allen avers that as the years passed, the insistent call to focus on Christ rather than a "plan" gradually found a more receptive audience and that this accounts for some of the "theological shifts" occurring among contemporary churches of Christ. How unfortunate, if so!

The 1950s—exactly when he thinks such "shifts" began taking place—were when churches of Christ experienced their greatest growth in modern times. The more Moser's views came into focus, the swifter our drift into doctrinal error became evident. His voice may have been "distant" back in the '30s, but through Allen and those standing with him—especially at ACU—it is in fashion with all too many now.

"OFFICIAL" HISTORY VERSUS "HIDDEN" HISTORY

Starting on page 171, Allen comes to his final chapter in this tragically misguided book. He refers to what he calls our "official" history as distinguished from our "hidden" history—the part of our story that got "pushed aside, relegated to the margins, and largely forgotten." He charges what he calls "traditionalists" as *not telling* the *whole* story and, "by reflex," tending to "discourage the reopening of questions long thought settled."

Why does Allen do this, if not his patent unbelief of what churches of Christ, in general, believe and teach? He seems to relish in digging up "forgotten stories" of well known leaders who held "aberrant views," particularly of "dissenters who were not powerful enough to gain a dominant place in the tradition." He denigrates respected historians such as J. F. Rowe (*A History of Reformatory Movements Resulting in a Restoration of the Apostolic Church*) and J. W. Shepherd (*The Church, the Falling Away, and the Restoration*)—historians long deemed definitive of our history among churches of Christ. He even questions N. B. Hardeman's series of *Tabernacle Sermons* as giving "simplified versions" of the story.

It never seems to occur to Allen that TRUTH, not some HIDDEN AGENDA, accounts for such brethren's accounts being accepted and venerated while most of those "voices" he wants highlighted remain "distant" and obscure.

Many—perhaps most—of the issues that Allen wants to *reopen* long since were *hammered out* on the anvil of

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public discussion and debate, both oral and written. The principal effect that such books as *Distant Voices* has on the brotherhood is to *unsettle the views of ACU students and Allen's colleagues* causing them to be of none effect in the cause of truth.

[Come to think of it, who *decides* what gets published

by the ACU Press? Or does just any teacher at ACU write something—no matter what—submit it for publication, and out it comes! If anyone at ACU is editing Allen's books for TRUTH, it isn't obvious. Either ACU needs to ensure its publications are according to the gospel—or the name *Christian* should be deleted from Abilene *Christian University!*]

“Except These Abide In The Ship, Ye Cannot Be Saved”

Garry Stanton

When Paul was taken to Rome to appeal his case before Caesar, Paul warned his captors of impending danger (Acts 27:10). Later, when they encountered a storm, Paul told them that the ship would be lost but their lives would be spared. Prior to their shipwreck, the crew prepared to flee the ship leaving its passengers to the mercy of the sea; however, Paul told the soldiers, “**Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved**” (Acts 27:31). The soldiers kept the sailors from escaping; so all remained on the ship. The next day they were shipwrecked, the ship and cargo were lost—but all of the people were saved.

The ark, which Noah built, was a place of safety to the antediluvian world. Except they abode in the ship, they could not be saved.

The same is true for us—except we abide in the place of safety, we cannot be saved.

Let us look at the ark of safety for Noah to see what lessons we can learn. The place of safety was the result of God's planning, not of man's choosing. The ark was God's idea, not Noah's; neither did he try to second-guess God's choice. He did not argue with God's selection, neither did he ridicule it. He accepted it and obeyed God's instructions (Genesis 6:22). Noah did not know why; he just knew God said it and that was enough for him.

But the world would not listen to Noah's preaching. When all was said and done, only eight precious souls were saved. God saved only those who were in the place of safety. God made sure that his will in the matter was not altered.

It was God who shut the door (Genesis 7:15-16). Like it or not, when God

shut the righteous in, he shut the impenitent and unrighteous out! It was too late by the time the ungodly world realized what was happening. No one could cling to safety outside the ark because it would be 382 days before the occupants set foot on dry land (Genesis 7:11; 8:14).

Those in the ark had to remain there until the end. In order for anyone to be saved, he had to be in the ark, for there was no safety outside the ark.

We have an ark of safety today, too. The church is our ark of safety (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47). Jesus died for the church so that those who are a part of it could be saved. Our redemption price, the blood of Christ, was paid for the church (Acts 20:28).

The church is God's choice for saving man (Matthew 16:18-19; Ephesians 3:10-11). Entrance into the place of safety is based solely upon God's conditions. Baptism puts us into the church, the ark of safety; thus baptism enables us to be saved (I Peter 3:21;

Romans 6:3-4, 22-23). We must not (cannot) change God's conditions for entering the ark of safety. As with the ark, God saves only those who are inside the place of safety, which is the church.

Are you in the ark of safety, the church? Have you been scripturally baptized so that you can get into Christ?

Baptism is not scriptural if it is not immersion. Baptism is not scriptural if it is for the wrong reason, like joining some denomination or merely to obey Christ. Baptism is not valid when the one baptized thinks he was already saved.

Having once entered the ark of safety, one must abide therein (Matthew 10:22; Luke 9:62; Revelation 2:10). Why should any of the eight souls in the ark have wanted to leave it early? Why should any soul in the ark of safety today not want to stay until the end?

—The Cullendale Bulletin

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

Having Promoted, Prepared For And Hosted That 'Promise Keepers' Rally In June, Why Are Adcox & Southwest Jonesboro Church Now Denying It!

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

One of the most extraordinary phenomena plaguing churches of Christ in these closing years of the 20th century is how some brethren and churches feel free to compromise with the denominations—then, when their hand is called, try to deny it ever happened! The scriptures have a word for that.

In our issue for July 1996, using letters, bulletins, brochures and notes by **Wil Sadler** (corroborated by **Robert Hubbell**) provided to us by brother **Ken Gossett**, who preaches to the **Downtown Church of Christ**, in Jonesboro, Arkansas, *Contending for the Faith* documented that **Jimmy Adcox** and the **Southwest Church of Christ**, of Jonesboro, had gone to great lengths to *promote, prepare for,* and finally to *host* a big rally of the interdenominational "Promise Keepers" organization, which took place in Southwest's *own building* the evening of June 1, 1996. Just imagine our incredulity upon receiving a photocopy of the following letter written to brother Sadler under date of June 17, 1996, by brother Adcox, attempting to deny all

responsibility for what actually happened. Not since Aaron tried explaining to Moses about that golden calf (Genesis 32) have we seen or heard anything quite like it. But read it for yourself:

June 17, 1996

Dear Wil:

I am listing the discrepancies I see in the notes and remarks you presented to me about the Promise Keepers Meeting. Since your perceptions are so different from mine, I wanted to clarify mine to you.

I did not come up on the stage to lend agreement to salvation by profession of faith alone. Nor was it the intent of Louis Moore to call me to the stage for that purpose. Louis's intent was to give us opportunity to follow up with additional guidance beyond the initial first step of faith these men had professed. I made it clear to Louis and other Promise Keepers' leaders what our position was on baptism. Their intent was to honor that by giving me that opportunity for follow-up. They assured us of their intent to deal with the invitation without emphasis on salvation by faith only. We knew they

might not be able to do so effectively, but were prepared to overlook their incomplete instruction on the salvation issue in hope of having future input on this important subject.

We do not believe completely in the Promise Keepers' Program. Nor were we sponsors for the Promise Keepers' Rally. They came asking to use our building as a place to meet and we agreed, with some stipulations, to allow them to meet in our building. That was not an endorsement of all the teachings of Promise Keepers. We are committed to the Promise Keepers' purpose to help men look to God for direction and guidance in fulfilling their roles in family, and community. We continue to believe what we have consistently taught and practiced about baptism as a part of our faith response in conversion. We do applaud the desire of sincere men to seek God and his will for their lives. We want to encourage that process and have input into it as we have opportunity.

The meeting was not held jointly by Southwest and the Central Baptist
(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith

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Editorial...

HOW IS IT THAT INTELLIGENT BRETHREN SUCH AS RUBEL, MAX AND JIMMY CANNOT DISCERN ERROR?

The writer of Hebrews says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God: and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 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" (Hebrews 5: 12-14).

That such well known brethren as Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, and Jimmy Adcox are intelligent enough goes without saying. However, when men such as these jump the traces and seem no longer able to discern truth from error, what is their problem? No longer demonstrating skill in the word of righteousness, should they go back from strong meat and start using milk all over again?

ALL THREE ARE FOLLOWING "PROMISE KEEPERS" INTO ERROR

The most recent phenomenon seemingly drawing these brethren like moths to a flame into error is an interdenominational anomaly styling itself "Promise Keepers." Truly, looking at this organization through worldly eyes, it has goals in view which some may find commendable—and all three of the above-mentioned brethren are participating.

In our *Contending for the Faith* edition for April 1996, we carried an article by brother Dan Flournoy analyzing "Promise Keepers" and showing that however commendable some things about them may be, the organization nevertheless is filled with denominational error and that those who participate in it have to compromise the truth of God's word in order to do so. In that same issue we documented that both Rubel and Max already had gone into "Promise Keepers"—and, in our issue for July, that Jimmy Adcox seemingly was going into it, too.

IS HE OR ISN'T HE?

Starting on Page 1 of this issue, we are publishing a letter that brother Adcox wrote to brother Wil Sadler, attempting to disengage himself from this doctrinal entanglement without admitting any error. That letter, together with Wil's reply, was supplied to us by brother Sadler himself. He, like we, cannot

understand why Adcox would go ALL OUT to promote something the way he did the Southwest/Jonesboro-Promise Keepers event—and then try to say he didn't do it!

For two or three months, leading up to the event, the Southwest/Jonesboro church bulletin advertised it repeatedly. Jimmy even went on television declaring that when "Promise Keepers" comes to Memphis this fall, both he and his two sons will "be there." And, in his June 20, 1996 response to Adcox's June 17th letter (published herein), brother Wil itemizes again and again evidence of Jimmy's participation all the way through.

WIL SADLER'S COVERING LETTER

In his covering letter of August 8, 1996, wherein he enclosed the documentation we are publishing in this issue, what brother Sadler wrote, as follows:

18957 Greenfield Road
Harrisburg, Arkansas 72432
Telephone (501) 578-2856

August 8, 1996

Dear Brother Rice:

I was surprised (because I didn't submit it) and pleased to find my article on the Promise Keepers in your July issue of *Contending for the Faith*. It is not because I seek any personal recognition, it is because of the dangers I see in this movement. I am amazed at the number of congregations of the Lord's Church that have become involved in the Promise Keepers. In the Mid-South many congregations are preparing to participate in the rally of the Promise Keepers to be held in the Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tennessee, in October of this year. Each man who attends this rally must pay a fee of about \$60.00 and the Liberty Bowl has a seating capacity of over 50,000. Someone is going to make a great deal of money as they have on many occasions in other cities across the nation. Even at the rally I attended at the Southwest Church of Christ building in June, which was nothing more than a promotion for the October event, an attempt to raise money was also made by "Love Offerings" and the selling of T-shirts and key chains and the like.

Isn't it sad that many of our brethren cannot see beyond the smoke and mirrors used to promote the Promise Keepers. I believe this program is going to be disruptive even among

the denominations. It siphons off money, talent, and people from the local work of any organization it invades. With its own massive organization, the Promise Keepers is taking on all the trappings of a "new religion."

I have seen the damage caused by the liberalism from within the Lord's Church. It has caused even more harm in the mission fields of India, where I have done most of my work, than it has in the United States. We don't need to look to the denominations for help in becoming better husbands and fathers. What we need is to take a closer look at God's Holy Word and then fill our hearts with God's wisdom and love. Why is it that today the last one to which some of us want to turn for help is God?

Brother Rice, I am enclosing a letter I received from Jimmy Adcox. I asked him to justify his position with scriptures. His letter in response to that request does not have a single scripture. I will let it speak for itself. I am also enclosing a letter I sent to him in response to this letter of his. As of this date, he has not answered my letter.

In Christian love,

(Signed)
Wil Sadler

Some of us learned long ago that we cannot win folks from denominations by *joining* them. The same goes for this new *interdenominational* denomination deceptively styled "Promise Keepers."

Rubel and Max have taught and demonstrated for several years that they have *no conscience* wherein taking part with man-made denominations is concerned. Evidently their consciences *already* are "seared with a hot iron" (I Timothy 4:2).

IS IT TOO LATE FOR ADCOX AND SOUTHWEST?

Jimmy Adcox and the elders of the Southwest/Jonesboro church may not be that far along; however, if they continue in this direction they soon will be.

Please continue watching these columns as this unfortunate saga continues to unfold. Surely we had enough froward things dividing us even before—and now this! Practicing division in the name of "unity" makes no sense at all!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

Promise Keepers

(Continued from Page 1)

Church. The meeting was held by the Promise Keepers' Organization. They simply met in our building.

The walls to be broken down are not sound doctrine. Obviously, there are doctrinal differences between people within Promise Keepers. They come from many different religious backgrounds. While I am not a spokesman for Promise Keepers, I understand

them to encourage the pursuit of sound doctrine within the lives and churches of the men who participate. However, they do not believe that those differences should be barriers of hostility. Nor do they believe those differences should keep men from acknowledging their common allegiance to Jesus Christ, their need to encourage one another in becoming Godly men, and their desires to build better families and communities. I know of no one else who would con-

clude that standing against denominations would infer standing for racism. The purpose is to help men with faith in Jesus Christ find common ground. Given the deterioration of the family and the moral fabric of our society, it is going to take the joint effort of all who are interested and willing to help to turn our society around. While we still have many differences religiously with these men, we can and should acknowledge the common ground upon which we can

encourage one another and work against a common foe.

The program was not planned, printed, nor prepared by Southwest people. We were simply hosts who provided a place for the meeting.

I was not a speaker. I extended the welcome, made some introductory remarks, and led an opening prayer.

The songs sung together were intended to be worship. These were men who came together with the intention of honoring God and seeking his will. That is what we should encourage all men to do. Not everything done that evening would necessarily have been considered worship in the sense you imply. The videos were intended to be informational about the work of Promise Keepers.

Your comment about the singer "jumping around on stage" and acting like a "rock singer" was from my perspective, and many others I'm sure, an overreaction. The atmosphere of the meeting was undoubtedly more vocal and animated than I'm accustomed to or comfortable with, however, the atmosphere never bordered in my opinion on anything excessive or unbiblical.

Carl Medley is the state representative for Promise Keepers and has been a member of Central Baptist Church. He is in the process of moving to Searcy. He is not on staff at Central Baptist.

I was applauding the spirit of reconciliation and openness implied in Rodney's message. We do not have to treat people of other religious beliefs as enemies. Nor do we need to do so with our brothers and sisters in Christ. There need not be barriers of hostility or distance. We can be friends, encourage each other in our pursuit of God, and contribute as we have opportunity to the religious thought of others. And yes, openly and with discernment, we can learn from others who respect and pursue God's will in scripture, many of them as seriously as do we.

I'm not sure what you intended to imply about Dave Wardell and Bill McCartney's vision of a full stadium. I understood them to be speaking of that vision in the sense of something they could envision as a possibility that could come to fulfillment. I think they also believed that their faith in God and their longing to see good accomplished inspired that vision.

Wil, I do not really expect you and others

from your point of view to agree with what we were and are attempting to do with reference to the larger Jonesboro community of which we are a part. We believe we can work with and encourage the sincere efforts of many good people in Jonesboro without condoning the matters with which we disagree. In fact, we believe that only in doing so will we be a viable influence for God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The conclusions you have drawn are your conclusions. They are not necessarily implied by our actions. Nor do we believe they are the conclusions of the people with whom we were involved. We have already had doors opened to us through our involvement with the people of this community and believe that other doors will be opened for us in the future. Jesus came into the world, became involved with people of the world, and yet maintained a distinct presence from the world. We believe God has called us to do the same. We know that is risky. We know we will be misunderstood and criticized. However, we believe strongly enough in the mission God has given us and care strongly enough about the people we are seeking to reach to take those risks. We intend to be present and active in the world while maintaining our beliefs and convictions firmly.

Our plea is not that you adopt our convictions and strategy of reaching the world around us, but that you be tolerant of judgment decisions made by brothers in the Lord who are trying to carry out God's will as faithfully as possible. We do not need to splinter the body of Christ further through personal attacks and misrepresentations (even if unintentional) about the beliefs and actions of our brothers and sisters. God's will is for us to do everything within our power to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to your thoughts.

Sincerely,
(Signed)
Jimmy Adcox

Upon receipt of the foregoing letter from brother Adcox, Wil Sadler, under date of June 20, 1996, replied to him as follows:

June 20, 1996

Dear Jimmy,

Thank you for your letter of June 17, 1996. I want to assure you that I love

you and your soul and I also love the souls of the people you have influenced through your preaching and teaching. I thank you for taking the time to open a dialog with me on these important issues. I hope we can share our views on the Promise Keepers without anger or malice. I want to discuss some of the remarks you made in your letter. If I am mistaken about any of these matters, please enlighten me.

Point One In Your Letter (Your coming up on stage to face those three men who thought they were saved):

These scriptures tell us what our attitude toward false teachers should be:

I John 4:1	Acts 20:31
Hebrews 13:9	Titus 3:10
II John 1:10-11	I Timothy 6:5
Ephesians 5:11	Titus 1:11, 13

You said you made it clear to Louis Monroe and other Promise Keepers leaders your position on baptism. You might have made it clear to them, but none of us who attended this Promise Keepers rally knew anything about any agreement you might have had with Louis or anyone else. We saw three men come forward and were told they were saved. Next we saw you brought up on stage and embraced by Louis Monroe. He told you these men (who thought they had been saved) would need your help. We saw you nod and smile at those three men (apparently in agreement with what Louis said). What were we to think of your views on faith only salvation. What did those three young men think?

This is an incredible statement of yours about not preaching faith only salvation. "We knew they might not be able to do so effectively, but were prepared to overlook their incomplete instruction on the salvation issue in hope of having future input on this important subject." That's fine for you and your future talks with these denominational men, but what about those three men who think they are saved? What they did that night didn't put them any closer to salvation, in fact, it might have destroyed any chance of teaching them the truth. What have you done to warn these three men of the danger of eternal damnation they are

still facing? Tell me you have gone to those men and told them the truth, because, I fear God will hold you accountable for their lost state. You left the impression you were endorsing the false teaching taught that night in your building and under your watchful eye.

Point Two (Your claim that you were not sponsors of the rally):

You said they asked you for the use of your building (which you provided for free). You said you don't endorse all of the Promise Keepers teachings. Which ones do you endorse? While I think a commitment to marriage, family and community are important, I see no need in sacrificing the Gospel to achieve it.

Point Three (denominationalism and racism):

These scriptures point out the dangers and sinfulness of divisions:

**Ephesians 1:22-23 Ephesians 4:4
Proverbs 17:15 Isaiah 5:20
I Corinthians 12:13 John 17:20-21
I Corinthians 10:10-13**

You said no one but me could conclude the message was that if you are against denominations you stand for racism. Why don't you and I sit down and listen to the tape together. Over and over again, one speaker after another implied (often in the same breath), "Stamp out denominationalism (explained as those who believe denominations are unscriptural) and stamp out racism." What am I to infer from those kinds of statements?

Are we told in the Bible to join ourselves to false teachers? That is what you have done. I don't know how to put it any other way without departing from what I believe your actions represent. I am not alone in this belief, many sound brethren have expressed the same view.

Point Four (planned, printed, nor prepared):

You said, "The program was not planned, printed nor prepared by Southwest people. We simply provided a place for the meeting." This is a quote from your opening remarks at the Promise Keepers Rally:

"There are two or three people I want to express some appreciation to before we begin tonight. One is Scott Walker, a member of this congrega-

tion, who worked very hard today, and not just today, but all the way up leading to this, to kinda make preparations for what happens in this building. Scott, I want to thank you. And I want to thank Carl Medley and Tim Ponder. These are the two men I interfaced with over the last couple of weeks in preparation for tonight."

That sounds like you are saying that "Southwest people" were involved in the preparation and planning of the rally.

Please look at these two papers attached to his letter:

Marked "A": A handout printed by the **Southwest Church of Christ** and addressed to the "Men of Promise Keepers" telling about "Home Improvement" series.

Marked "B": Just one of several of your bulletins that announced the Promise Keepers Rally.

You did, in fact, print this for this rally.

Point Five (the lead singer):

**Ephesians 5:19 Colossians 3:16
Matthew 26:30**

When I referred to the lead singer as jumping around, that is what I saw. He shouted over the top of the other singers, things like, "Come on, sing it out (or louder or something like that)." He patted his chest and shook his head. They made strange sounds that could not have been words by any stretch of anyone's imagination.

Point Six (why you stood and clapped):

(The same scriptures in "Point One" apply here.)

You said you weren't sure what I meant about Dave Wardell and Bill McCartney's vision of a full stadium. What did you mean in your May 22nd bulletin when it said, "God gave" these men a vision! (See item Marked "B".)

If truth is to prevail, we must teach it, preach it, and live it without compromise. We cannot bond ourselves to false teachers or even wish them God speed as you did in your prayer at the rally. (2 John 9-11) Yes, you were right when you said, "Jesus came into the world, became involved with the

people of the world, and yet maintained a distinct presence from the world." The last part of that statement is where you differ from Christ. He never compromised His Father's will to achieve any influence with the world. He, and the men he appointed, exposed the false teachers and hypocrites. He never set an example of "the end justifies the means" attitude in winning the world. He said in **John 14:15** and **John 15:14**: "If you love me, keep my commandments"... "You are my friends if you do whatever I command you."

Of course, we need to love the lost of the world. We need to love them enough to show them the truth. We cannot sacrifice truth for the sake of reconciliation. And what kind of "unity" can we have in the fellowship of false teachers?

It is not my intention to attack you personally. I have not misrepresented what took place at the rally. It is my intention to warn faithful brethren of the dangers of the Promise Keepers. While their goals have merit, we can't join hands with false teachers because "some good" might come from it. There are many organizations that do good works, but the Church still cannot be a part of them. The Promise Keepers is one of those organizations.

I look forward to your reply, Jimmy. I mean that. You are in my prayers daily. It is my hope that you will see the damage you are doing to the Church before it is too late.

In Christian love,
(Signed)
Wil Sadler

Colossians 3:23

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Abounding Rumors

The Bible teaches that, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter" (Proverbs 1:13). Also "A whisperer separateth chief friends" (Proverbs 16:28). Moses wrote: "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" (Leviticus 19:16). Again, "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; therefore company not with him that openeth wide his lips" (Proverbs 20:19). Furthermore, "A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue" (Proverbs 17:4).

A person may know that God exists; that Jesus Christ is Deity and that the Bible is the word of God. Also, the same person may know the truth of the New Testament concerning the plan of salvation. Moreover, he may understand the church, its organization, work, worship, and mission. Furthermore, he may be able to defend the truth against error regarding these aforementioned matters; but, by living and dying a GOSSIP and a TALEBEARER, he will exist forever in a devil's hell.

Gossipy ears look for and encourage gossipy tongues; and vice versa. Rumors are juicy morsels to the bearer of tales. Remember, "Brother Add A Little More" is always an intimate companion of "Sister Don't Breathe A Word Of This." Neither of these infamous friends is in fellowship with the "Right Honorable Brother and Sister Truth."

Once a man found an object that he did not recognize. He gave it a slight bump with the toe of his shoe and he was startled to see the thing grow larger. His curiosity aroused, the man kicked the unidentified object harder. With the second more powerful kick the fellow was amazed to behold the strange object almost double in size. Hurriedly he picked up a stout pole and gave his newly found enigma a double handed and resounding whack! In an instant the object more than tripled its original size. In a last act of desperation the poor man grabbed a large metal bar and, with all his might, he clubbed the monstrous object with a blow that would have killed an elephant. In abject horror the terrorized man stood transfixed as the monstrous thing swelled to a gigantic size. The panic stricken fellow now fled the scene of battle. After some distance had been hastily put between the man and his newly created behemoth, he rushed breathlessly upon an old man who, from a safe distance, had been following the previous confrontation with much interest. Seeing the old man, the fleeing fellow nervously gestured back toward his gigantic antagonist and gasped: "Do you know what that monster is?!" The old man calmly and deliberately answered his querist. "Yes," he said: "**IT IS CALLED A RUMOR.**"

When I was in the eighth grade I obtained a compound fracture of my nose when the horse I was riding reared up and fell backwards on me. After spending a few days in the hospital I returned to school to find that it was being rumored that both of my legs had also been severely broken in my "horse wreck." That poor little eighth grader never did feel compelled to verbally rebut the falsehood—**BEFORE THE WHOLE SCHOOL HE JUST KEPT RIGHT ON WALKING!**

Concerning stopping a rumor the following pithy saying is very appropriate: "One can as well stop a rumor as he can un-ring a bell." Many years ago a broken-nosed eighth grader learned what the Roman, Cato, meant when he said: "We cannot control the evil tongues of others; but a good life enables us to disregard them."

Yes, I know that all "talking about" people is not gossip. Faithful elders, parents, preachers, and such must discuss character, personality, and qualifications of persons regarding their involvement in various activities. One of the chief reasons the church is in the mess it is in today is because not enough proper evaluation of persons has been done before placing them in key positions of influence and responsibility in the church. The same may be said of parent's regarding their children. Hence, we may deduce that all "talking about people" does not constitute gossip.

One gossips when he or she routinely reveals personal facts to the detriment of the person talked about. Hence, there is a vile motive involved. Usually the gossip is not overly concerned with the accuracy of the information that he or she scatters from "Dan to Beerseha."

Some time ago I was given an audio tape filled with all manner of wicked accusations against a certain person. Matters dealt with on the tape stretched back over forty years. There was no way to verify whether the "witnesses" were credible or that the evidence was "adequate." However, these things made no difference to the people spreading it around. Moreover, they did not care whether these matters were true or, if true, whether they had been scripturally corrected or not. They thought it served their purpose, so they did it.

Though the tape has existed for around eight years, the subject of the gossip did not know the tape even existed until, in the presence of said person, it was played. The least these talebearers could have done was to have made the tape available to the subject of the gossip. Did they not know of the "Golden Rule?" Did they not desire to hear the other side? They sought one thing and one thing only—the destruction of a character and a reputation. Such persons may not go to hell for a host of things, but their eternal destiny is as certain as the fornicator and idolater if they do not repent of their gossip.

This is not the first time that I have received such trash from certain ones who work overtime at being "spiritual idiots" while thinking of themselves as stalwarts of the faith. I am sure that human nature being what it is I will receive other such garbage. Over a third of a century of preaching has placed a number of such talebearing efforts in my hands. There is nothing Christian about any of them. By design they are malicious; their sole purpose is to villify and defame men.

Brethren, the Bible teaches us how to expose false doctrine and wicked brethren. No precept regarding such efforts involves gossip and talebearing. The honest, sincere, faithful Christian will not engage in sin to attempt to expose sin.

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor
25403 Lancewood, Spring, Texas 77373

Why Do I Get So Little Out Of Worship?

W. N. (Bill) Jackson
[Deceased]

My cousin, returning from World War II, stopped off to visit with us and attended worship with us. He had come from a non-religious background, and it is doubtful that he ever attended the services held by the chaplains, weak as they were.

I have seen few people so miserable in my life as was that cousin when we were in worship. Hardly any verse could be mentioned or read that he had even heard of; he knew nothing of the New Testament church or the proper divisions of the Bible, had no idea as to the items of New Testament worship, or that Christianity was a life to be lived outside the services. He indicated he obtained nothing from the Bible study and worship. Of course, he put nothing into it, either!

Well, in his ignorance of all things pertaining to the Bible, it is understandable that he "got nothing from the worship." Of much more concern are those in the kingdom, some for years, who still would state, "I get so little out of worship!" I firmly believe the same point is true that relates to that cousin of mine: We get something out when we put something in! There is no excuse for a child of God to come to worship and study *with nothing, putting in nothing, and then expecting something!*

Just think of these points, as I approach worship and study as a child of God:

1) Every song sung can remind me of Biblical truths and my need to feel more appreciation for God and his efforts

for me.

2) Every Bible verse given in classes and worship has a lesson for me, and should remind me of similar verses, and especially of my own need to know more of the Bible.

3) Everything expressed in prayer should remind me of my own blessings, and of my own praying and how I can improve it.

4) Every point made in song, prayer, and remarks at the Lord's table should cause me to be more thankful for the sacrifice of the Christ, and make me more appreciative of his death and shed blood.

5) Participation in giving to the Lord's cause should awaken in me greater appreciation and love for the kingdom, its work, and for the part I can have in it.

Even in the announcements made, I can see opportunities for service in seeing to the sick, shut-ins, and bereaved, to say nothing of opportunities to greet and welcome visitors and newcomers.

Getting nothing out of services? For shame! The fact is, I get something when and if I put in something! If I come to worship with an empty bucket, want nothing in it, and by lack of interest block anything that starts to enter it, I will leave with an an empty bucket! Keep it up, and the bottom will rust out completely.

—*The Edifier*
Denton, Texas

The Wordless Sermon

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the minister decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The minister found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his minister's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace, and waited. The minister made himself comfortable but said absolutely nothing. In grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes he took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember, and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead. Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.

Just before the minister was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle

of the fire, and immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the preacher reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon—I shall be back in church next Sunday."

—*Curry Street Bulletin*
West Plains, Missouri

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Longtime Minister Plans to Stay B

By Carolyn Jenkins
World Religion Editor

It's difficult for Marvin Phillips to think positive about leaving his job after "26 years, one month and six days."

As minister of the Garnett Road Church of Christ, he's been speaking about positive things since his first sermon there in May 1970. Widely known, he has shared podiums with Art Linkletter, Paul Harvey, Zig Ziglar and Norman Vincent Peale at seminars around the world.

In church, his congregation hears him preach positive attitudes about religion and life.

Despite all his positiveness, however, Phillips briefly expressed sadness about his nearly empty office and said it will be harder when he finishes moving out by Wednesday.

But in the next breath, he exuberantly reeled off his schedule for the next few months.

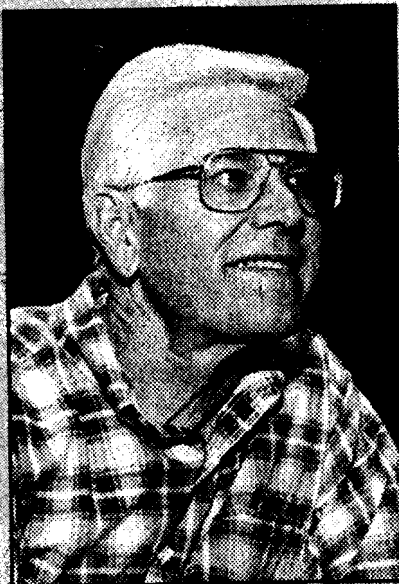
He is not retiring, he declared. He will leave in a few days for Seattle, and then go to Indianapolis for some seminars, then to Australia and then to . . . who knows where.

His life, Phillips said, will revolve around five circles: Australia, South Africa, his local work, seminars and his "Peak of the Week" TV ministry.

Phillips and his wife, Dot, will be honored Sunday for their 26 years with the Tulsa church, 12900 E. 31st St., which was established in 1969 with 91 members and met at East Central High School. The congregation now numbers more than 1,200.

Phillips will preach his final sermon as senior minister at 11:15 a.m. Sunday. At noon, lunch will be served, with a reception afterwards. Members from several other churches in the Tulsa area are expected to attend.

Phillips will remain on staff at the Garnett church with the title



Marvin Phillips
Retiring, Not Quitting

of evangelist. He also will continue to conduct his seminars with the help of Keith Lancaster of Paris, Tenn., leader of the music group Acappella. His TV show also will continue to be seen weekly on KWHE, Cable Channel 7.

Phillips said the Garnett church, from the beginning, has been more innovative than the "average Church of Christ, with a message of love, grace and joy, not law, not rules and regulations."

"The emphasis is on the author of the Book, not the Book of the author. I used to endure my Christianity, now I enjoy it," he said.

Phillips said the Garnett church has always wanted to be "the best friend this community ever had." In two of such chances in the past three years, the church served as the site for funerals for slain police officers Gus Spanos and, more recently, Dick Hobson.

"There were 2,500 here for Dick Hobson's funeral," Phillips

said.

The church sanctuary, which can seat 3,500, is "one of the largest and best situated for such events," he said. "I'm sorry for the events but glad we were available."

Phillips said he believes in having and being friends.

"I think many ministers, maybe most of them, are lonely people. They don't have a lot of close friends."

His best friend — no one ever asked him about that before, he said — is Ben Traylor, a member of the church.

The Traylor, Ben and his wife, Pearl, have been best friends of the Phillipses for more than 10

years, Phillips said.

"We're a lot alike. I'm very supportive. We have the same values of family. He's my confidante, and we've been joined together. I know he's always been there for me. He always will be there."

Phillips said he was not a new minister but does not see a new man coming in his shadow.

"I'll be his best friend. I will serve this church and I want to be a product here."

Replacing the pastor has not been an easy search committee has been viewing applications and viewing potential

living. However, God also supplies us with several others who, with equal vividness, illustrate how Christians are not to act.

Such is the case of Hymenaeus and Alexander. Hymenaeus and Alexander lived lives so anti-Christ that not only did Paul, with apostolic authority, speak out against them, he even delivered them to Satan (I Timothy 1:20). His justification for this drastic action was due to their blasphemy; however, the specific misdeed Paul mentions was their having made "shipwreck" concerning faith.

EMULATION TODAY

Brethren, I claim no special insight into the workings of the brotherhood, but it does not take much insight to realize that the actions of Hymenaeus and Alexander are being emulated by some of our own men today. Even casual observation shows that some among us are attempting to shipwreck their own faith and that of others. The pure and simple truth is, in some cases, slipping through our brethren's fingers like soap in a morning shower.

"Therefore" as our brother Paul says, "we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of

THE TIME HAS COME

Shan Jackson

In the Bible God supplies us with many wonderful examples of faith, dedication, and love. With these as illustration we find it easy to see what

God desires of us. When we read how Dorcas, Stephen, Mary Magdalene, and others conducted their lives, we see a vivid example of acceptable Chris-

Busy in Retirement

they've been share the y and stuff; we've trav- they have us and al- ts to help a ot "want a under my tend, and I until I die. I ve member er minister y task. A s been re- and inter- candidates

since January. The field has been narrowed to six, and those names have been submitted to the church's elders. They will make the final selection and likely will have a new minister in place by early fall, said Ron Jackson, chairman of the search group.

Jackson said the committee has had to trust God to deliver the right man to them.

"We're looking at this man as a

gift from God," he said.

Jackson said Phillips had been an "unusual experience for us and I hope we have been for him. He's been the quarterback at times, and the water boy at others."

"We sure don't want to forget his wife," Jackson added. "Dot has been an integral part of this team from the beginning. She has shared him with us. Without her, it wouldn't have been the same."

[NOTE: The above article by Carolyn Jenkins, World Religion Editor, which first appeared in the Tulsa World for June 29, 1996, is reprinted herewith by permission of the Tulsa World. We appreciate Ms. Jenkins for her fascinating article and the Tulsa World for permitting us to reproduce it. We should have enjoyed the article even more but for the announcement that Marvin Phillips plans to "stay busy in retirement." He has been so busy undermining sound doctrine and faithful churches of Christ these past 20 or 25 years that we had hoped his retirement might be the end of all that. Maybe it will be. We shall see.—The Editor]

reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Hebrews 2:1-3).

I also claim no desire to pen such articles as this, however, we are seeing

many among us who appear to be selling out to the ways of the world. We are seeing a steady drift into a more denominational line of thinking and more divine truths being compromised. As Paul again says, some are "overthrowing the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:18). They are accomplishing this by

leading the simple astray and by becoming a stumbling block to others.

TODAY'S PRICE:

POPULARITY, FAME AND PRESTIGE

In the 1st Century the selling price was 30 pieces of silver; however, today, the selling price seems to be popularity, fame, and prestige. The warning of Peter needs to be heeded, we must not "follow their pernicious ways" (II Peter 2:2).

Yet, some are quick to say, "But we must revive our dwindling numbers!" Brethren, our numbers are dwindling and the "seven thousand" who refused to "bow their knees to Baal" (I Kings 19:18) appears more literal every day; but God's will must be done and his word must be kept.

Paul's admonition to Timothy is again most accurate, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Timothy 4:3-4). May the Lord strengthen and help us during these difficult times.

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A Critique of the Richard T. Hughes Book...

Reviving the Ancient Faith:

The Story of the Churches of Christ in America

J. E. Choate

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Though the following critique was written originally especially for the Firm Foundation, inasmuch as Richard T. Hughes collaborated with C. Leonard Allen in writing DISCOVERING OUR ROOTS: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ, critiqued in the November/1995 edition of Contending for the Faith, it seems fitting that brother J.E. Choate's insightful article should appear on our pages, also. It is reprinted here with his permission.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

The highly touted book of Richard T. Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, is available. The historical significance of the book for conservative churches of Christ falls in two categories.

First, the 'study is a full length mirror reflecting the theology and philosophy of our liberal brethren who dis-

honor the biblical traditions of the conservative churches of Christ.

Second, this article will document the fact that Dr. Hughes fabricates a case that the churches of Christ began as a sect in the early years of the 19th century. Dr. Hughes does not in even one place consider that the Bible is the

inerrant inspired word of God. He may be somewhat of a historian, but he draws a blank as a theologian.

What little value that the book may have is to be found in the anecdotal information about the people, circumstances, and facts of the major and minor players in churches of Christ in this century. Otherwise, the study is an odd mixture of fact, fiction, propaganda, and sheer nonsense.

VYING FOR THE OBVIOUS

That Hughes is vying for the honor to become the definitive historian of the churches of Christ is obvious. The definitive Restoration histories that he seeks to emulate are **W. E. Garrison** and **A. T. Degroot**, *The Disciples of Christ: A History*; **William E. Tucker** and **Lester G. McAllister**, *A Journey in Faith: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. **James DeForest Murch** of the Christian Church wrote *Christians Only*. These are histories of the Disciples of Christ, and Independent Christian Church.

The books written by **Earl I. West** titled *The Search for the Ancient Order* reflect honor on the churches of Christ. His credentials as a *bona fide* historian are impeccable. He believes that the church of Christ was born from the baptismal waters on Pentecost as a direct act of God.

We are frank and blunt to say that we are filled with disgust for the likes of **Rubel Shelly**, **Douglas Foster**, and **Richard Hughes** who profess love for the churches of Christ but seek to reduce the church to just another Protes-

tant denomination with a sectarian beginning that they claim started as a sect in the early 19th century.

Outside of the glowing promotions of the book by **Douglas Foster** in the *Restoration Quarterly* and the *Christian Chronicle*, the book is reviewed by other historians who award little historical worth to the study.

SCHOLARLY RECOGNITION SOUGHT AT THE CHURCH'S EXPENSE

Dr. Hughes' research in the files of the *Gospel Advocate* and the *Christian Standard* reflects the famous line of Pope—"A little learning is a dangerous thing." He feels secure in the academic citadel of imposing and gleaming buildings with gardens bright and manicured grounds which reach down to a majestic ocean. It is reprehensible that Dr. Hughes should seek scholarly recognition at the expense of the churches of Christ.

He has flunked the test to receive even an honorable mention to join the ranks of credible historians in Restoration history. This is proved by the fact that he has fabricated blocks of Restoration history through his own imagination. Dr. Hughes has tried to make his case with misinformation, disinformation, and a distorted use of historical facts.

HUGHES "BLIND-SIDES" HISTORICAL INFORMATION

These are serious charges indeed. We are not questioning the integrity of Dr. Hughes, just his reliability as a

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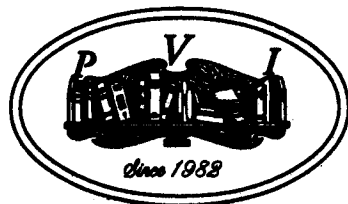
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Restoration historian. However, we do accuse him for "blind-siding" obvious historical information.

This fact is sharply focused in his failure to understand that Isaac Errett, not Stone or Campbell, is the chief architect of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ as they exist today. Likewise, Hughes does not understand that David Lipscomb is the chief architect who reads clearly the blueprint of the apostolic church. His understanding of Lipscomb is acutely limited and "wrong headed."

UNFRIENDLY CRITIC OF MAINLINE CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Dr. Hughes becomes a major target for scrutiny when he identifies himself as an unfriendly critic of the mainline churches of Christ. To paraphrase a line of Omar Kayyam, he cannot cancel or wash out a single word with a river of tears what he has said in recent years in denigrating the conservative churches of Christ.

Dr. Hughes has established himself profusely in local circles of liberal brethren. However, it is inexcusable that he can make points in academic ranking and advancement by launching scurrilous attacks against the churches of Christ. Nevertheless, he expresses the great pain and anguish that he felt when he left the churches of Christ to help construct the "jerrybuilt" denomination—"Church of Christ."

Why Dr. Hughes continues to identify himself with the churches of Christ is a puzzle. Dr. Hughes is one of five members of the Editorial Committee at the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. Dr. Douglas A. Foster is a member of the Editorial Committee of the DCHS. The words are not too harsh that they show unmitigated contempt for the churches of Christ which have made them what they are.

ANALOGY: BABBLERS IN THE MARKET PLACE

Athens, Greece, was the cultural center of the ancient Mediterranean world. There the great philosophers of the age came to tell and hear some new thing. There were also the vacuous "babblers." They were named after the little scavenger birds who fed from the scraps in the market place.

When Paul was awaiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy he disputed daily with men of the synagogue and with certain philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics. They perceived Paul to be a worthy disputant.

It does not seem likely that Dr. Hughes will earn a like honored place in the ranks of Restoration historians as DeGroot, Murch, Tucker, McAllister, and Earl I. West. A bargain struck with Mephistopheles to achieve academic recognition by giving up one's spiritual birthright is a high price to pay!

We readily acknowledge that Dr. Hughes commands the usual skills of research scholarship and the principles of

historiography. He picked up advanced knowledge of American church history at the University of Iowa. However, he lacks the perceptive, intuitive, and imaginative gifts of a creative thinker.

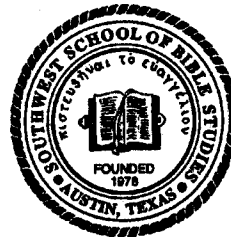
THE MAJOR THESES OF REVIVING THE ANCIENT FAITH

Dr. Hughes falters and falls on the very first page of his *Reviving the Ancient Faith* wherein he states that the white mainstream of churches of Christ traces its American heritage to Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell. Even a poorly informed Restoration historian would know enough to recognize that this distinction goes to Tolbert Fanning and David Lipscomb who believed in the beginning of the church on Pentecost.

Dr. Hughes contends that four major themes have shaped the character of the traditions of the churches of Christ from its 19th century beginnings.

First, he contends that the defining characteristic throughout the 19th and well into the 20th century was the notion of the Restoration of primitive Christianity. He states that a number of religious movements in the 19th century, including the Mormon Church, dedicated themselves to recovering primitive Christianity.

Second, Dr. Hughes is confident that he is a "safe haven" in a tenured position inside the whited towers of academia. But the impact of his words will eventually



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settle in on his brethren: "Churches of Christ began as a sect in the early nineteenth century and evolved into a denomination during the course of the twentieth century."

Dr. Hughes says many fear that to acknowledge any important leader from their past "would make them a denomination with a human founder rather than the true church founded by Christ."

Third, Dr. Hughes argues that Churches of Christ drew from two first-generation leaders—Campbell and Stone. He argues that the influence of Stone in shaping the traditions of the Churches of Christ was equal to that of Campbell.

Fourth, Dr. Hughes bases the entire foundation of his book on two *millennial* doctrines. Campbell is pictured as

holding a *postmillennial* view which thought of that time when Christian faith would reign triumphantly in a golden age of peace.

On the other hand, he contends that Stone held a pessimistic understanding that not until the "Second Coming" and the millennial rule of Christ will the "golden age" of peace become a reality. Dr. Hughes builds his entire book around this absurd contention. No other Restoration historian even makes mention of this.

POSTSCRIPT:

We promise to prove our case in times ahead that Dr. Hughes has failed even to *state* a case, much less *make* one.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

Nudging of the Holy Spirit (?)

Brock M. Hartwigsen

At a recent evangelism workshop, one of the classes used the story of Ananias and Saul (Acts 9:10-17) as its text. The teacher said that the Lord had to "nudge" Ananias to go to Saul. He went on and taught that the Holy Spirit sometimes has to "nudge" us to do what we should do.

He recounted how he once was getting into his car to go home and saw a woman standing by a van. She appeared to be lost or at least that she needed help. He was tired and wanted just to ignore the situation but something "nudged" him to go over and offer assistance. It turned out she was a Japanese college student attending a local university. Her younger brother had come to visit her and he had no place to stay since he couldn't stay with her in the dorm. It also turned out that her brother was a member of the Lord's church. They took him home and gave him a place to stay. He went on and said that if the Holy Spirit hadn't "nudged" him he would not have offered assistance. He used this as a proof case that the Holy Spirit "nudges" people today as the Lord "nudged" Ananias.

A few members of the class asked if he believed that this Holy Spirit's "nudging" is done separate and apart from the word. He said, "Yes." They then politely challenged him to support biblically this belief. He cited Romans 8:26-27. It was pointed out to him that his proof text does not in any way support his idea that the Holy Spirit "nudges" separate and apart from the word.

If you go back to the original text for the class, Ananias was not "nudged" by the Lord. The Lord came right out and *told* him to go. If Ananias had any "nudging," it was not to go because of Saul's reputation. He listened to this "nudging" and tried to argue with the Lord. The Lord in essence told him to ignore this "nudging" and go.

I would like to give the teacher the benefit of the doubt. He was "nudged." He was, in fact, "nudged" in two different directions. He was "nudged" to do the wrong thing, to ignore a person in need and he was "nudged" to do the right thing, to help a person in need. To his credit his knowledge

of God's will and his Christian learning took over and he gave in to the right "nudging." Sadly, he mistook this for the false Pentecostal notion that the Holy Spirit works directly on Christians today. Christians are "nudged" by the Holy Spirit when their consciences compel them to act upon the things they have learned from him through the holy scriptures. He does not "nudge" anyone separate and apart of the word.

Another sad thing for me was that the class was full of Christians who were interested enough in evangelism to give up a weekend to attend an evangelism seminar. Yet most of them agreed with the teacher's false teaching concerning Holy Spirit "nudging" people. It is a sad commentary on the church when the members interested enough in evangelism to learn how to do it better are also the brethren who hold false views about the working of the Holy Spirit. What will they be converting people to? Maybe we need some evangelism workshop on how to convert the members of the church to the truth!

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JUBILEE IN DISGUISE

Jon Gary Williams

Since the '96 Jubilee was not all that successful, supporters are planning well ahead for '97. They are, of all things, paralleling the '97 Jubilee to the '62 Collins meeting in the Nashville Municipal Auditorium. What a shame and disgrace!

There is no parallel whatever, which ought to be an embarrassment to brother Collins. The '62 meeting was just that—a gospel meeting. But the Jubilee event is nothing more than a platform for liberal men to promote their “change” agenda.

MANY HAVE DROPPED OUT

Many congregations which have previously supported Jubilee dropped out in '96 after they saw the direction it was headed. Some men who have previously spoken at Jubilee have either not been invited back (because of their conservative stand) or have decided not to return.

No doubt, their advertisement is being sent to congregations for the purpose of putting Jubilee in a favorable light and is an effort to deceive brethren. However, the list of speakers shows that, as before, the '97 Jubilee will be **top-heavy with liberal men**, some of whom have long since rejected the distinctive nature of the Lord's church and look on it as just a part of the denominational world. They accept such things as instrumental music in worship, women serving in leadership roles, charismatic-type worship, denominational baptisms and fellowship with denominations. Some even question whether the age of miracles has ceased.

BRETHREN NEED TO BE FOREWARNED

Brethren everywhere need to be forewarned about this new tactic. Do not be fooled into thinking that Jubilee advocates have the same objective as efforts of the past, such as the '62 Collins meeting.

To the contrary, their objective is to see that the church leaves the old paths and gives up the restoration. Their purpose is to slowly lead brethren away from sound doctrine and practice. Typical of their approach is seen in the following statement taken from Rubel Shelly's *Wineskins* publication, April, 1993:

“Strategy one: **Weave!** Teach new ideas for a while, **stretching your church out beyond comfort zones**. But when you feel your church approaching the limits of **tolerance, back off!** Talk about familiar and safe things for a while. Then, **move back out to the cutting edge again. Weave in and out**, first, with new ideas, then as you actually implement new practices.”

Brethren, don't be misled. Perilous times are here and precious souls are in danger of being beguiled. (Colossians 2:4)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial “scalded dog” from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to “who's who” and “what's what.”

Regarding issues, a comment from the late **N. B. Hardeman** is often cited. While president of the old **Freed-Hardeman College** brother Hardeman said, “We can state the position of **Freed-Hardeman College** on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, ‘How is your aunt Susie?’.”

**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

NOTES & QUOTES

Harold & Sarah Smith, Lynchburg, Tennessee: "Let us continue the good work of telling others that some from among us are in error. We're thankful for men...who work so hard to contend for the faith. We will help support as we can.

The Church in Baltimore, Maryland, in renewing its subscription added an extra \$90.00, saying, "Use extra to God's glory."

Brenda Bailey, of Rogersville, Texas, enclosed \$5.00, saying, "God bless your work. I hope you continue to serve God by helping bring the gospel to the Far East. My prayers are with you."

DIVERS DISEASES

The old preacher stood up to preach. He read his text: "They brought unto him (Jesus) all sick people that were taken with divers diseases" (Matthew 4:24).

The preacher said: "Now the doctors scrutinize you, analyze you, and sometimes cure your ills; but when you have a divers disease, then only the Lord can be sure. And, brethren, there is a regular epidemic of divers disease among us!"

"Some DIVE for the door after Bible study is over. Some DIVE for the television set during the evening services. Some DIVE into a bag of excuses about the work that needs to be done for Jesus. Some DIVE for the car and take a week-end trip. Some DIVE for a county fair, forsaking the assembling and teaching assignment."

"Yes, brethren, it takes the Lord and love of the church to cure divers diseases."

—Westvue News & Vues
Lewisburg, Tennessee 37091

Daleville Church of Christ, Daleville, Indiana: "After receiving and reading the Far East Newsletter, we were happy to hear of the gospel going into different parts of the world."

"We were wondering if you still have need of money for Bibles or the printing and distribution of them."

"We are a small congregation of about a dozen, struggling amidst larger liberal congregations. We are trying to reach out to the communities around us with the gospel. We would also like to have some part (albeit small) in sending the gospel out to foreign countries."

"Please inform us as to whether there is still a need for Bibles or for the expense of having them printed."

INOTE: "You asked if we needed money for Bibles or the printing and distribution of them," I replied in part. "We certainly do. We have been working with the Dorsey Traws distributing Bibles particularly among the hill tribes of Thailand. Many have been won to Christ through this effort."

"We also send great numbers of Bibles into Russia in the Russian language."

"Brother Goebel Music, right now, is asking our help in printing 23,000 Bibles for distribution in several countries in the

Southeast Asian area."

"So, whatever you can do to help, we will see that it is directed where it will accomplish the greatest good..."

Those wishing to have a part in this great work, please make your checks payable to Bellview Church of Christ, clearly earmarked for "Bibles for the World Fund," and address them to 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526. IYR Jr.]

Rhonda Kuykendall, Richmond, Texas: "Please send me the NIV packet. There is much I need to study, but I must first understand what is said about the version I currently use. I only wish to follow the Lord and maybe your articles can lead me to the scriptures I need to study. Thanks."

Harold Heath, Casa Grande, Arizona: "I enjoy so much The Defender, The Beacon, and Contending for the Faith. I stand with you in your fight against error and for the truth. May God continue to smile on your efforts to do good. Use the contribution to God's glory and the preaching of the gospel wherever." [NOTE: \$70.00 enclosed. IYR Jr.]

Reg Rogers, Tulsa, Oklahoma: "Brother Lyon, on In Search of the Lord's Way, told of a school boy that bowed and offered thanks for his food in the cafeteria. He was ridiculed by fellow students for his devotion. I know you cannot put an old head on a young body, but as we mature, we will learn that it is a blessing to be persecuted; let us read together,

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven..." You have just read Matthew 5:11,12.

"The congregation of the Lord, the church, in the beginning, Acts 2, began to be opposed fiercely by the Jews, then by the worldly governments. Saints were persecuted for refusing emperor worship, and for about everything they did. When the path of the church was cleared of opposition, they fell away. In great opposition we are to rejoice and be glad; it is a token of the tormentor." Let us read:

"And in nothing be afrighted by the adversaries: which is for them an evident token of perdition, but of your salvation, and that from God" (Philippians 1:28).

—Wait A Minute

In some circles of so-called higher learning it is considered a mark of inferior ability and attainment to read the Bible. Yet among the readers of the Bible, in all ages, have been some of the ablest leaders and most brilliant minds. Witness the following:

GEORGE WASHINGTON: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible...He is worse than an

infidel who does not read his Bible and acknowledge his obligation to God."

JOHN ADAMS: "The Bible is the best Book in the world."

THOMAS JEFFERSON: "I have always said and always will say that the studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make better citizens, better fathers, better husbands...The Bible makes the best people in the world."

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS: "My custom is to read four or five chapters of the Bible every morning immediately after rising...It seems to me the most suitable manner of beginning the day...It is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue."

THEODORE ROOSEVELT: "To every man who faces life with real desire to do his part in everything, I appeal for a study of the Bible."

WOODROW WILSON: "I have a very simple thing to ask of you. I ask every man and woman in this audience that from this day on they will realize that part of the destiny of America lies in their daily perusal of this great Book."

MARTIN LUTHER: "Holy Scripture is a sweet-scented herb, and the more you rub it, the more it emits its fragrance."

JOHN WESLEY: "O give me that Book! At any price, give me that Book of God. Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one Book."

SIR ISAAC NEWTON: "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatever."

WILLIAM PENN: "The Scriptures contain a declaration of the mind and will of God...They ought also to be read, believed, and fulfilled in our day. We accept them as the words of God himself."

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE: "Let no religious book take its place. People do not read the Bible enough."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: "Cultivate an acquaintance with and a firm belief in the Holy Scriptures. This is your certain interest."

DANIEL WEBSTER: "From the time that, at my mother's feet or on my father's knee, I first learned to lisp the verses from the sacred writings, they have been my daily study and vigilant contemplation."

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE: "I have known 95 great men of the world in my time, and of these 87 were all followers of the Bible."

JOHN WANAMAKER: "I cannot too greatly emphasize the importance and value of Bible study—more important than ever before in these days of uncertainties, when men and women are apt to decide questions from the standpoint of expediency rather than upon the eternal principles laid down by God himself."

—Gospel Advocate

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Bob Berard, Spring, Texas: "Enjoyed being with you in the Far East and glad to hear of your safe return home. Wish you good success in your upcoming travels and in your every good work."

Name Withheld (though signed), Nashville, Tennessee: "Your paper arrived Saturday and it was excellent. No one will be able to find fault with your editorial. It was factual but kind...It seems that you and your paper are the only hope we have. I will let you know if I hear any of the results...Enclosed is a check for the subscriptions plus however else you see fit to use it. I will be sending more subscriptions soon." [NOTE: She enclosed six subscriptions with her check for \$500.00! IYR Jr.]

Loy L. Ogleby, Swainsboro, Georgia: "I happened by one of your publications at the Memphis School of Preaching. I am attending the lectureship...at the Knight Arnold Church of Christ. I came early so I could personally meet the staff—Director, teachers, preachers of the word. I hope to be here for the entire week."

"I pray that your fine, excellent teachers of the word might possibly put in some type of a free appeal to our many brothers and sisters in Christ so that they will not forget to contribute and always put their support behind this excellent school for the glory of God."

"I know of no other better way to give of our earthly means than to support a school of excellence that promotes and trains our young men so that we can continue, generation after generation, in the teaching of the word, the gospel of God..."

"I pray that you will continue in your fine publication—another way of serving our Maker: God!"

Walter W. Smith, Taonia, Colorado: "We appreciate your work."

Donna R. Gardner, Nashville, Tennessee: "Please immediately remove my name from your mailing list to receive 'Contending for the Faith.' As a member of the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ the article by J. E. Choate on Dr. Rubel Shelly was very offensive to me. Isn't it great that God's grace is able to save everyone, even an insensitive, mean-spirited person like Mr. Choate. He needs to make sure his facts are correct before espousing his opinion. I'll pray for him. Your publication is nothing more than a forum for criticism."

[NOTE: If brother Shelly were as careful with his facts as brother Choate, sister Gardner would soon realize that her offense should be directed toward Shelly rather than Choate. Brother Choate goes to extreme lengths to be certain of his facts before publication. IYR Jr.]

DYING WORDS OF UNBELIEVERS

CHARTERS: "I would gladly give 30,000 pounds to have proved there is no hell."

ALTAMONT: "Hell is a refuge if it hides me from thy frown."

MIRABEAU: "Give me more laudanum that I may not think of eternity and what is to come."

HOBBS: "I say again, if I had the whole world at my disposal, I would give it to

live one day. I am about to take a leap into the dark." (1769)

GAMBETTA: "I am lost and there is no use to deny it!" (1112)

CHURCHILL: "What a fool I have been!" (1764)

GIBBONS: "All is now lost, finally, irrevocably lost. All is dark and doubtful." (1794)

VOLTAIRE: "I am abandoned by God and man; I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months of life. (This was said to Dr. Fachin, who told him it could not be done.) Then I shall die and go to hell!" (1778)

[NOTE: Voltaire had said, "In less than 100 years the Bible will be discarded and Christianity swept from the earth." Yet his old printing press has been used to print Bibles and his house has been used as a depot by an international Bible society!]

SIR THOMAS SCOTT: "Until this mo-

ment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."

CAESAR BORGIA: "While I lived, I provided for everything but death; now I must die and am unprovided to die."

SIR FRANCIS NEWPORT: "Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! Oh, eternity forever and forever!"

THOMAS PAYNE: "Stay with me for God's sake; I cannot bear to be left alone. (Thus he cried as he died drunk and swearing.) O Lord, help me, O God, what have I done to suffer so much? What will become of me hereafter?"

[NOTE: Thomas Payne was the man who wrote "The Age of Reason" and prophesied that it would supplant the Bible. Yet the same presses that were used to print "The Age of Reason" were used later to print Bibles, the world's best seller today!]

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Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Alabama—

Holly Pond—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, Tel. (205) 796-6802, 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherly, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

.....

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.: 7:30 p.m.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

.....

Memphis—Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Rd., Memphis, TN 38118. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:30 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, minister, (901) 366-0617.

.....

Nashville area—Villages Church of Christ, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sun.: 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) 758-7406.

—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 BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET

Foy L. Smith
[Deceased]

One of the most dynamic passages in the word of God is found in Romans 10:14. It simply and powerfully says: "...and how shall they hear without a preacher?" And in the very next sentence it says: "And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" This is a sadly neglected passage today. Preaching is degraded, even made the object of ridicule in some of our more modern circles.

Young preachers are being taught to do just about everything but preach. The operator of a large bookstore said recently that the young preachers in the college nearby buy up everything he can stock on counseling, psychology and philosophy.

Preaching! THE thing God declared to be necessary to the saving of the world is the very thing being ridiculed and relegated to the background of these "dime-a-dozen-intellectuals." People are constantly asking what is wrong with today's pulpit. Those vested with the responsibility of training preachers are failing miserably. Those who stand in the classrooms and teach young men must face the consequences of their teaching. The truth is, many teachers don't want to cross anyone or anything. They stand for nothing and teach their students exactly the same things! And we wonder why churches are not being fed the doctrine of Christ!

Some time ago I took my pen and jotted down the titles of many books in a young preacher's library. I have seen the very same books in office after office over the brotherhood. I did not jot down just the titles that promote the trends of today and leave good books off my list. Everything was in the current vein—in the vein of this so-called

intellectual freedom. I want to give you some titles. You be the judge as to what is wrong today. Here are some of them: "A History of Enlightenment;" "A History of Philosophy;" "The Age of Reason;" "The Age of Belief;" "From Religion to Philosophy;" "Existentialism;" "The New Group Therapy;" a variety of books on religious experiences; books on protest and on and on and on!

Now do you still wonder what is wrong with today's preaching? I am for good young preachers who love the Word and preach it. Oh, God, give us faithful men who will preach! Then the church will surge forward with renewed strength and vigor to face the task of winning those who are lost. Preachers, don't be ashamed to be seen. Don't be ashamed to be heard for God and righteousness! Get right up there in front where you belong. Thousands upon thousands are just waiting for someone who has nerve enough, fortitude enough, love enough, spirit enough, and (excuse please) guts enough to stand where a man who poses as a gospel preacher must stand!

And when such a man steps out, may God have mercy on any bunch of so-called elders who are too spineless to hold up his hands and firmly stand behind him!

—via *Fourstate Gospel News*

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Contending FOR THE Faith

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

If I Had Just One More Sermon To Preach

A sermon presented by Gordon H. Turner, Minister of the Lawrence Avenue Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee, at the Hobson Memorial Methodist Church in Nashville, on Tuesday evening, August 27, 1946, as one in a series of meetings being sponsored by the Methodist body and at the invitation of its Pastor, Woodward Adams. General theme of the studies: "If I Had Just One More Sermon To Preach."

Members of the Hobson Memorial Methodist Church, my own brethren who are present, Ladies, Gentlemen, and Friends:

I express my sincere appreciation for having been invited by your Pastor to have a part in these meetings. No more important subject can engage the attention of man than the one assigned to us who are speaking. A number of members of the Churches of Christ are present but I suppose that most of the audience is made up of members of the Methodist Church and those whose religious preferences lean that way, since this particular Methodist body has arranged for these services. My being here as a minister of the Church of Christ is most unusual, and I am grateful for having been asked to come and to preach to you just as I think the Bible as God's Word would have me to do. I thank you too, for having your mechanical musical instrument silent on this night, out of respect to me; for inviting one of our song leaders, **Bob Neil**, to direct us as we sing these great songs of the Church, and for the privilege of my co-worker, **Larimore Austin**, leading us in prayer. Further, I am glad that I have the privilege of extending the invitation at the close of my discourse to any and all to obey the gospel. Friends, surely our Father is smiling upon this

gathering and we pray that only good may come from it. God said "Come now, and let us reason together...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow..." (Isaiah 1:18). Let us do our part of that tonight in the spirit of mutual respect and love. Peter said, "...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear..." (I Peter 3:15). This study should help us all to more nearly meet the inspired apostle's standard. And I, as your guest speaker tonight, feel that you have said to me what Moses said to Hobab, his brother-in-law, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good" (Numbers 10:29), and I know that this association will be helpful to me.

In some respects this meeting resembles that of the apostle Peter and his few Jewish brethren with Gentile Cornelius and his great company of kinsmen and friends, described in Acts 10. Like Peter, I was asked to come and tell you what you ought to do (vs. 6); you have asked to hear words of me (vs. 22)—"**...words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved**" (Acts 11:14). I have come by the grace of God trying to represent in a humble way our Master, Jesus Christ. And, some of my brethren have

(Continued on Page 3)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVII, No. 10

October/1996

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 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., 2998 Alshire, Memphis, Tennessee 38118. Telephone: (901) 363-6498.

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.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly by Bible Resource Publications, P. O. Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383-2273 (Telephone: (713) 350-5518).

Editorial...

A TALE OF TWO SERMONS (By Gordon Turner & Rubel Shelly) ALMOST FIVE DECADES APART

It is astonishing the difference five decades can make in how *genuine* gospel preachers viewed and treated humanly devised denominations back then and how some who *think* they are gospel preachers view and treat those same denominations today.

One of the finest gospel preachers ever to grace the pulpit of the Lawrence Avenue Church of Christ, in Nashville, Tennessee, was **Gordon H. Turner**.

Fifty years ago, back in 1946, brother Turner—along with preachers from various denominations in Nashville—was invited to address the Hobson Memorial Methodist Church, in Nashville, on the general theme, “If I Had Just One More Sermon to Preach.”

SERMON REPRODUCED IN FULL

Brother Turner’s gracious, beautiful, true-to-the-Bible sermon, starting on Page 1 of this issue of *Contending for the Faith*, is reproduced herewith 50 years later, word for word.

It still rings with the same gospel truth and conviction it evoked in his Methodist hearers when he delivered it that Tuesday night of August 27, 1946 at the Hobson Memorial Methodist Church, half a century ago!

When you have read and weighed what brother Turner preached to the Methodists that night, ask yourself if this is not the kind of sermon **Rubel Shelly** *should* have been preaching to those interdenominational audiences he has been addressing in Nashville?

WHAT A DIFFERENCE!

Now go back to our issue of *Contending for the Faith* for July/1994 and read the kind of presentations that Rubel had been making before the Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Pentecostals, and other denominationalists in Nashville, wherein he not only failed to preach the truth but held his own brethren and the churches of Christ up to ridicule and derision!

The *Nashville Banner* correctly described his and others’ “**Jubilee Celebration**” as making the “**Churches of Christ a house divided.**” He and his cohorts could just as easily be following the same exemplary course as that brother Turner chose 50 years ago. But they didn’t!

How long will it take for churches of Christ in general to wake up to the fact that Rubel Shelly and

those standing with him have *left the truth* of the gospel and *are no more worthy* to be called either *Christians* or *churches of Christ!*

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

LUTHERAN PASTOR'S "STEPHEN MINISTRIES" INFILTRATE MICHIGAN CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Just when it seemed that Satan could think of nothing more with which to infiltrate error into modern-day churches of Christ, once again we are reminded that "the price of truth is eternal vigilance."

During the summer, brother **Joe Yarbrough**, preacher/elder of the Riverview Church of Christ, of Riverview, Michigan, "got on" us a little bit wondering when we were going to expose the Lutheran-oriented, so-called "*Stephen Ministries*" now infiltrating the unwary in Michigan.

Although he had mentioned this in his local Riverview church bulletins, we had not seen the bulletins.

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED

Actually, his telephone conversation was the first we had even *heard* of this latest attempt to undermine the churches of Christ.

As hard as we try to keep posted on what is happening among the churches, we are not (and make no claim to be) omniscient.

If brethren see something happening that you consider a threat to the restoration plea, please call it to our attention; otherwise we may not find out about it until it already is too late to head it off. These so-called "Stephen Ministries" could be a case in point.

MICHIGAN CHURCHES FORMERLY SOUND

Time was when almost all (though not quite all) of the churches of Christ in Michigan were faithful to the Book. Back in the days of such men as **Bude H. Little**—back in the '60s, that is—I personally had no difficulty mixing and mingling with the brethren and congregations in that state.

There were only some 80 congregations among "us" in the State of Michigan back then.

Brother Little and other fellow Michiganders were deeply involved in our Far East evangelism in those days; and when I sought his and their help lining up speaking appointments on this behalf, they succeeded in arranging 43 such appointments for me to speak just in the State of Michigan alone!

So strong were most of the Michigan churches, doctrinally speaking—then—who would have dreamed that Liberalism in all its virulent forms now would practically have taken over many of them just 3 1/2 decades later!

INDEBTED TO BROTHER YARBROUGH

When brother Yarbrough telephoned, I asked him to collect what material he could lay his hands on and get it to me as soon as possible.

Under date of September 8, 1996; he sent me a whole packet of "stuff"—which is what it is, STUFF! I now have found time to winnow through it all, selecting the items appearing to be the most germane.

After you have finished reading our lead article by Gordon H. Turner in this issue, please turn to Page 8 and see if you agree with the latest falseness infiltrating the churches of Christ in the State of Michigan.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Just One More Sermon...

(Continued from Page 1)

accompanied me. Like Cornelius, you have called together your kinsmen and friends (vs. 24), and here we are under most favorable circumstances, to sing, pray, and study together. The friendly atmosphere here seems to breathe the circumstances of our assembly just as Cornelius announced to his strange visitors on that memorable occasion, "**Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God,**" and at least like Peter in one other respect, I shall state, "**...that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him**" (vs. 33-35). And if you study Acts 10 and 11 you will wonder who profited most from this Jew-Gentile meeting, the skeptical, narrow-minded, conceited Jews who had not until this occasion fully realized that salvation was for all men, but thereafter preached the gospel in its fullness to all men, likely thus saving themselves, or Cornelius and his friends, than

whom the Book describes no better people—keepers of the law as they know it and models of morality, but who, on that occasion learned more fully about Christ and first became entirely consecrated to him by being baptized in his name (Acts 10, 11). Thus surely, "**...it is good for us to be here...**" (Matthew 17:4), and you will help me. My prayer is that you can honestly say as much, when we shall have gone.

Of course we all know that the beliefs and practices of our many different churches vary much. These widely divergent views through the years gave rise to the religious bodies of today. Surely we deplore these divisions and the disputes and confusion which they have caused notwithstanding the fact that deeply rooted in our very being is the common belief that every man has the right to think for himself, weigh evidence, come to personal convictions, and serve God or not serve him just as he chooses. We are likely in complete accord in believing in the freedom of religion and in the separation of church and state. Too, we stand united on more very important common ground. We worship the same God; we accept Jesus Christ as the Savior

of all man-kind; and we look upon the Bible as the inspired and thus infallible Word of God which should govern our whole lives here and so fix our eternal bliss hereafter. And not only is almost any American audience like this in complete accord on those general religious matters; the different churches all about us, or groups of them, have much in common in their teachings, worship, and daily living. Most of us claim to believe in Bible study; surely we believe that all should pray; nearly everyone accepts Faith as an essential of salvation; what is called Baptism is usually required for church membership; and certainly every person we know, regardless of his church affiliations, believes in the necessity of such great Christian principles as Truth, Honesty, Justice, Purity, Love and Goodness (Philippians 4:8).

But in other respects religious bodies are divided either individually or by groups. For example Baptists, Mormons, most Adventists, Greek Catholics, Disciples, my own brethren, and others teach and practice immersion only as scriptural baptism, while most Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, and others accept, teach, and practice pouring and sprinkling also as baptism. We are still further divided on baptism by such questions as who should be baptized and the purpose of baptism. And while most of the churches accept the Lord's Supper as a scriptural item of worship, we are widely divided on the time and frequency of its observance, who shall partake of it, its purpose, and, strange to say, even on the names by which it is called and its elements or component parts. Further any non-Jewish audience like this would in its entirety accept the name Christian for a religious title. And while many wear, and are known to the world by the name Christian only, yet many more people have adopted other names and used them in addition to, and often almost to the exclusion of, the scriptural name, Christian, thus beclouding its real beauty, significance, and glory (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:27; I Peter 4:16). The names of the different churches and for their members were adopted, of course, to identify each one and distinguish them one from another—usually springing from the founder or from some belief or practice especially peculiar to each one, thus emphasizing and proclaiming to the world, intentionally or not, divisions, discord, and perhaps actual prejudice and strife. The name Baptist came not only from John the Baptist, but it denoted that body's special stress on the importance of baptism, or as they practice it, immersion. The name Lutheran was adopted by the great following of people who looked to Martin Luther as a great reformer. The name Methodist was applied originally, as you well know, to that small group of English students, who, by their piety, devotion, and *methodical* ways, did so much to bring spirituality back to religion, and who, headed by the great John Wesley, became the beginning nucleus of Methodist bodies since. The name Adventist was self applied by those whose special message has centered in what they believe to be the imminent coming (advent) of Christ, and the names Episcopalian and Presbyterian were chosen to indicate their special type of church government, the root forms of these words signifying Bishops, Presbyters, or

Elders. And the name Campbellite has been applied by some to others, in derision or ignorantly, because they thought them too dependent, in matters of religion, on Alexander Campbell. It may have been well applied historically, in some instances, though like all other party and sectarian names, it is wrong and sinful. It is neither right to depend on Campbell for religious guidance nor to wear his name in the church. And finally, as an example of that which divides church people, we mention Music. So far as I know, all believe that it is scriptural to worship God simply by speaking to ourselves **"in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody"** in our hearts to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19), without the use of mechanical instruments. Still many people think that they may add such instruments to the singing without being displeasing to God. Thus on and on we go, and today in America alone we stand divided so much that some 300 different churches have set out on their own, no two of which teach and practice exactly the same things.

Surely, friends, even though we believe alike in many respects, and stand together on much common ground, we cannot, as we are, take the world for Christ. I for one am seriously concerned over our divided state. Christ so much desired a united church that he died to reconcile all of us **"in one body by the cross"** (Ephesians 2:16). On his betrayal night he ardently prayed that his followers might be one: **"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, That they may all 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). This prayer has been unheeded probably because the price of unity has been thought too high. Even so the Master has been stood up and the world today thus does not believe in him—it still stands in the misery of its sins. Myriads of other great voices of the past have seen the inconsistency of a disunited church and have advocated unity under the name of Christ and upon the authority of his word. Paul said: **"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. For it hath been declared unto me of you...that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"** (I Corinthians 1:10-13). Martin Luther, founder of the great church that bears his name, said: "I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves 'Lutherans', but 'Christians.' Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul would not permit that any should call themselves of Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How, then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; let us call ourselves only 'Christians' after him from whom our doctrine comes" (*Stork's Life of Martin*

Luther, page 289). That stalwart Baptist preacher, Charles H. Spurgeon, made this amazing statement: "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the 'Baptist' name will soon perish, but let Christ's last forever" (*Spurgeon Memorial Library*, Volume I Page 168). Albert Barnes, the learned Presbyterian commentator writes: "Christians have contended long enough. It is time that they should hear the parting admonitions of their Redeemer, and go unitedly against the common foe. The world still lives in wickedness, and the friends of Jesus, bound by the cords of eternal love, should advance together against the common enemy, and spread the triumphs of the gospel around the globe. All that is needful now, under the blessing of God, to convince the world that God sent the Lord Jesus, is that very union among all Christians for which he prayed" (Barnes; *Notes on the Gospels*, page 339). And last, to show how great leaders of the past deplored Christendom's divided state and pled for us all to get together, I quote from your own eminent missionary and writer, E. Stanley Jones, and the forerunner of your great Methodist church, the venerable John Wesley. Dr. Jones says, "Since we belong to Christ, why don't we belong to the one world-wide church of Christ? I revere the names of Luther, Wesley, Calvin and other spiritual leaders, but I bow my knee to one and to one only, Jesus Christ, the Son of God." And Mr. Wesley strongly condemned sectarianism when he said: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgotten; and that we might all agree to sit down together as humble loving disciples at the foot of a common Master, to hear his word, imbibe his Spirit, and transcribe his life in our own" (Preface, *Wesley's Notes on the New Testament*, page 7).

Any plan for Christian unity is simple to state but an immense task to accomplish—one that requires much study, patience, and often sacrifice of vested power and pride. And if our Savior's dying prayer is ever answered, millions will have to abandon some parts of their creeds and practices and/or accept others if they work and worship in harmony as brethren. There will then be no gulfs between them, for all will be simply *Christians*; members, as Dr. Stanley Jones says, of the Church of Christ. Mormons may never become Lutherans; neither will the average Presbyterian become a Baptist; but if all would learn and practice the same doctrine, the plain New Testament, all would be Christians only.

But after all, this thing of obeying the gospel and embracing Christianity as a way of life has surely become with many people a matter of authority rather than one of interpreting or understanding. It seems difficult to understand why God would provide a way of salvation which the average person cannot understand. The gospel was intended for everybody (Matthew 28:19, 10; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 10:34, 35). Certainly all agree that far. And it seems reasonable that God would thus make the way clear for those who would know his will (Isaiah 35:8). So with many who know what to do to become saved, it would appear, if they do not do it, that they simply doubt the

authority of the Holy Scriptures. Then we do not so much *misunderstand* as we *question the authority* of his sayings. None of us discounts the importance of many points in connection with salvation, but we cannot cover them all here. So, we pass up such great studies as the New Testament Church with its simple organization, government, and worship, and the virtue of our living godly lives. But let us devote a short time to the plan of becoming a Christian, to show how unmistakably plain the New Testament is on the subject, how very far religious bodies have departed from it, but how easy all could accept and unite on its positive commands and simple examples.

First, that Faith is necessary for salvation, most of us agree, but only in a vague sense. We are far apart on what Faith really embraces; just what we believe; and even how Faith comes. There are those who say that Faith—mere assent of mind that God exists and that Jesus is his Son—saves completely; that nothing more is required on the part of one seeking salvation; that Faith *alone* saves. Such is a very comforting doctrine but not a most wholesome one by the New Testament. For Jesus said, "**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). Peter said, "**...God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable with him**" (Acts 10:34, 35). John said, "**Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city**" (Revelation 22:14). The writer of Hebrews (perhaps Paul) added, "**...he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him**" (Hebrews 5:9). And in the one single place in the entire Bible where the expression *faith only* is used, we are told that "works" and *not* "faith only" justifies one (James 2:24). In the light of these plain statements and in the total absence of teaching to the contrary, do you see how anyone can believe that the New Testament teaches that the mere believer is saved? For those who rely on faith alone then, surely salvation becomes a question of authority and not of the plain teaching of the Bible. But further about Faith—how does it come? Many say that it comes by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit—miraculously. Yet Paul said, "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God**" (Romans 10:17).

Faithful men are commanded to teach/preach the gospel/God's word (Matthew 28:19, 20; I Corinthians 1:21; II Timothy 2:2). People should humbly hear, study—yea, search it (Matthew 17:5; II Timothy 2:15; John 5:39; Acts 17:11). Such a course alone produces Bible Faith (John 20:30-31). Then when one *believes* he should *do* his further duty both to become and to remain a Christian (Matthew 7:21-27; 13:23; Luke 11:28; I Corinthians 15:58; II Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 6:9; II Peter 1:4-10). It is one thing to *become* a Christian but quite another thing to *remain* one. But not until one hears, believes, and obeys the gospel and continues to live faithfully, is ultimate and eternal salvation promised. Yet there is nothing strange or unreasonable about the whole thing. No miracles are required

now. In fact, in modern speech, the whole thing is a matter of education: teaching, learning, believing, and doing. So, it is impossible for men to unite in religion even on Faith unless they unite on just what the New Testament says. Most of us know that; if we do not do it that way we simply question the authority of God's word. We understand it but we do not do it. Not only does such a course lead to no end of religious contentions; personally, I think it a very dangerous course for anyone to pursue.

Then take the subject of Repentance. Many never include that as a step in salvation. Not so Jesus, for he said, "**Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish**" (Luke 13:3). Not so Paul, for he said, "**And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent**" (Acts 17:30). Not so Peter, for he said, "**Repent...everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**" (Acts 2:38), and that the Lord is "**not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance**" (II Peter 3:9). In the light of such teaching, dare we leave Repentance out of the plan of salvation which we embrace? Yet think of the millions who have done so, and who now so teach—surely a question of authority and not of plain New Testament direction.

And have you Confessed your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God? If not, you have failed to do another thing which the New Testament plainly teaches is a part of salvation. Paul says about it, "**...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,...thou shalt be saved. For...with the mouth confession is made unto salvation**" (Romans 10:9, 10). And lest we misunderstand the importance of the good confession, let us remember that the inspired evangelist Philip would baptize the eunuch only on his confession, "**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**" (Acts 8:36-39). The New Testament teaches not that one is saved by making such confession only, but it does teach that such confession is one of the means of salvation. It is a link in the chain. Dare we today believe, say, and do as much?

Last, by way of example, to show how men have varied in their practices from the New Testament, let us give a word to the peace disturbing question of Baptism. It has been said that if religious bodies could unite on the question of Baptism, others could be easily settled, and all could be as one. Would to God that all lovers of the Truth could! But here seemingly is the paramount example of just how far apart people can get in their views on a major New Testament subject. Yet I think the whole confusion results not because all misunderstand God's teaching on Baptism; I think, rather, that men question the authority of his Word. In fact it seems to me that it would be very difficult for any person who studies, to misunderstand the teachings on Baptism. But look at us! There are those who say that baptism is not an essential of salvation. Yet Jesus authorized it when he said, "**Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost**" (Matthew 28:19), and "**Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall**

be saved" (Mark 16:15, 16). Peter named it as part of what men and women should do when he said, "**...be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**" (Acts 2:38), and he commanded Cornelius and his household to be baptized as a part of that which they must do to be saved (Acts 10:6, 22, 33, 47; 11:14). Philip preached and baptized (Acts 8:12). Paul was commanded to be baptized to "wash away" his sins (Acts 22:16), and doubtless as an example for us, and at God's command, Jesus was himself baptized (Matthew 3:13-16). The eunuch desired baptism and was baptized in keeping with the great lesson on Jesus (Acts 8:26-38), and lest there be any misunderstanding about baptism as an essential of salvation, God's Book positively states that "**...even baptism doth also now save us**" (I Peter 3:21). In fact the great example book for us, Acts of Apostles, in detailing the operation of the plan of salvation, in every case recorded, relates that baptism is the consummating step in one's becoming a Christian—there is not one exception (The Pentecostians, Acts 2:41; the Samaritans, 8:12; the eunuch, 8:38; Saul of Tarsus, 9:6; 22:16; Cornelius and his household, 10:48; Lydia and her household, 16:14, 15; the Philippian jailer, 16:33; the Corinthians, 18:8; Aquilla and Priscilla, 19: 1-5). Then can we believe that the New Testament does not teach baptism as a step in one's salvation?

But now take the *action* of baptism; just what is Baptism; New Testament Baptism—not what men may *call* or *practice* as Baptism? Folks surely cannot misunderstand what God's word *says*. Surely most of us interpret/understand the New Testament alike on this, and if we do not do it that way, we must think that its authority is not supreme. In other words, we understand it but evidently think we have the right not to do it as God says. So many have been taught, and actually think that sprinkling and pouring are Bible Baptism. Yet Bible Baptism required a *going* to the water (Matthew 3: 5, 6); *much* water (John 3:23); *going down into* the water (Acts 8:38); the likeness of a *burial* or *planting* (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2: 12); and a *resurrection* (Romans 6:4, 5; Colossians 2:12; 3:1). There is not so much as a hint in all the New Testament that any action other than *immersion* is baptism. Martin Luther understood that baptism is immersion, for he said, "The term baptism is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by *mersio*; when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered with water...they ought to be wholly immersed and immediately drawn out again" (Opera, Tom. I., page 72). John Calvin was in no doubt about the meaning of baptism. He said, "It is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive church" (Institutes, Vol. III., page 344). The great founder of Methodism, John Wesley, was in no doubt about the meaning of Bible Baptism for he wrote in his famous Notes on the New Testament about Romans 6:4 this comment: "*We are buried with him*—alluding; to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Yes, it is very difficult to misunderstand the scriptural teaching on the purpose or act of baptism. Religious peoples could, if they would even follow their founders, agree and unite wholly

on this item. But if men have the right to interpret and alter plain Bible teachings as they please or to please others, then our division and discord must continue. Anything thus goes in religion and nothing matters much. Christianity becomes a sort of serve yourself proposition, a spiritual free-for-all! Not only do we have little respect for each other; we thus throw fire on the general funeral pyre of Christian unity and make it impossible for the world to believe that Jesus Christ is in reality the Son of God and its Savior.

This is sufficient, friends, to indicate present conditions in the religious world. We could continue but time forbids. We ought to know that if we are to be saved eternally, that we are faced with an immediate, huge, and continuing job. For it is one thing to *become first* saved and quite another thing to *keep* saved. Not only are not all the contradictory teachings extant in the world today about salvation *not* true; but even if they were, there is every indication that churches in general are lagging and slipping. Church attendance, an almost universal ignorance of the Bible, and the deterioration of the home, not to suggest immorality and crime of all kinds—all point to the fast waning of religious concepts and standards among us. We do not respect each other in matters of conscience; how can the great outside mass of bewildered, sinful and dying humanity respect us? Think of the age in which we live. Material standards are at an all time high, but religion is at a pitifully low level. Presidents, Judges, Educators, Industrialists, and Editors attest as much but they are quick to say that the world's problems must be solved through the church if they are to be solved. General McArthur recently said "Military alliance, balances of power, the League of Nations, all in turn failed.... We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem is basically theological, and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advance in science, art, literature and all cultural, and material developments of the past 2000 years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh." Amen, Douglas McArthur, even though you are a military leader telling that to us religious leaders! But let us hope that we may still have another chance. While there is life there is hope even though we may be near a spiritual blackout. Friends, let's all do better. Most of us in one way or another, are pot or kettle. Neither can call the other black. Yea, all should come to repentance! Let's learn all of our duty toward God and do all of it—no more; no less. It is no worse to wear the name Mormon than it is not to pray. The weekly observance of the Lord's Supper through life is of no avail if its keeper hates his neighbor, steals his money, or rapes his wife. Immersion alone will not save, though many may seem to have given undue emphasis to it. These are among salvation's essentials but just as important too are love, humility, and righteous living. Who of us are not almost but altogether *Christian*? May God help each one of us who may not be, fully, so to become and remain. We can do it only by hearing and doing the sayings of our Lord (Matthew 7:21-27). If I can help you then, please come forward while we stand together and sing.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."

Regarding issues, a comment from the late **N. B. Hardeman** is often cited. While president of the old **Freed-Hardeman College** brother Hardeman said, "**We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'**"

**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

"STEPHEN MINISTRIES"

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Since first learning of the so called "Stephen Ministries" now infiltrating the churches of Christ in the State of Michigan, I have asked numbers of faithful brethren if they ever heard of the "Stephen Ministries." They usually exclaim, "Stephen WHO!?"

It was brother Joe Yarbrough, elder/minister of the Riverview church of Christ, of Riverview, Michigan, who first brought these so-called "Stephen Ministries" to our attention. Since then, we have tried finding out about them all we can. We are indebted to Connie Farrow, a writer for the Associated Press, for much of what we have found about them, per se.

In an article that appeared in the RELIGION section of the Monroe, Michigan Evening News for Sunday, July 21, 1996, Ms. Farrow reported, as follows:

TRAINING LAITY TO COMFORT

Stephen Ministries is an international outreach program that trains lay people to give support to those in personal crisis.

ST. LOUIS — Nancy Toole has always been one of those people friends go to when they have a problem or just want someone to listen.

So when the pastor of Webster Groves Presbyterian Church announced plans to start a ministry in which people would work one on one with others to help ease the difficulties of daily life, Toole stepped forward.

"Often times I felt frustrated and helpless because I knew people were hurting, and I didn't know what I could do to help them," said Toole, who lives in the St. Louis suburb of Webster Groves.

She found the answer in Stephen Ministries, an international outreach program based in St. Louis that trains lay people to give support to those in personal crisis.

"What we do is listen," Toole said. "We are not counselors. We do not offer advice or move them toward certain decisions, and that's key."

The program has two parts. First, a church sends a small group of representatives to a seven-day leadership training seminar. They learn how to set up, administer and maintain the ministry.

These people then select and train people from their respective churches to become the Stephen Ministers, the people who provide the one-to-one care. They get 50 hours of training, learning everything from listening skills to what to expect when visiting the sick.

"An important part of it is learning to accept someone else's feelings," said Joe Bretscher, a spokesman for Stephen Ministries headquarters. "They don't fix problems. They learn how to help the person reach a solution to their problem on their own."

Stephen Ministers are then linked with those in need, called "care receivers." The

two meet every week, or as needed. Care receivers are never identified, and everything said to a Stephen Minister is confidential.

Kenneth Haugk, a Lutheran pastor in St. Louis who also is a clinical psychologist, developed the program. It is named after St. Stephen, one of seven people commissioned by the Apostles to comfort and care for Christians.

Haugk realized early there was no way he could provide ongoing support to all those in need.

"I grew up in the 1960s, during the community mental health movement," Haugk said. "The idea was not only to do therapy, but to train others to give therapy."

That notion and his belief in Christian theology's dictate to comfort those in need were the building blocks for Stephen Ministries, he said.

Haugk estimates 150,000 Stephen Ministers are active in 5,000 congregations representing more than 75 denominations in the United States, Canada and 17 other countries.

DENOMINATIONAL ERROR IS AUTOMATIC

As genuine Christians and churches of Christ all know, any religious concept filtered through the mind of any denominational preacher *ipso facto* has to have something wrong with it.

Why should any supposed-to-be church of Christ look to any denominational preacher or organization for instructions!

Does not the Bible teach—and have we not always taught—that God has given unto us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us" (II Peter 1:3)? Since we already have "all things" so pertaining by what

God himself has given us, why must we turn to some denominational, false teacher to teach us something more through some "seminar"? Rather than such glorifying God or his Son Jesus Christ, whatever more is taught almost has to glorify Lutheran Pastor Kenneth Haugk, the originator of this man-made program—and so it does!

MAN-NAMING & RESPECT OF PERSONS

One of the odd characteristics of this so-called "program" is its NAME. Haugk does something in naming his program so typical of denominational thinking: he names it after a man—ONE man—Stephen. If it is supposed to glorify Jesus Christ, why name it after any man!

"Respect of persons" is clearly condemned in James 2:1. Lutheran Pastor Haugk knows full well there were "SEVEN men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" whom the apostles appointed "over this business" (Acts 6:3). ALL SEVEN are named in verse 5: Stephen, Phillip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas.

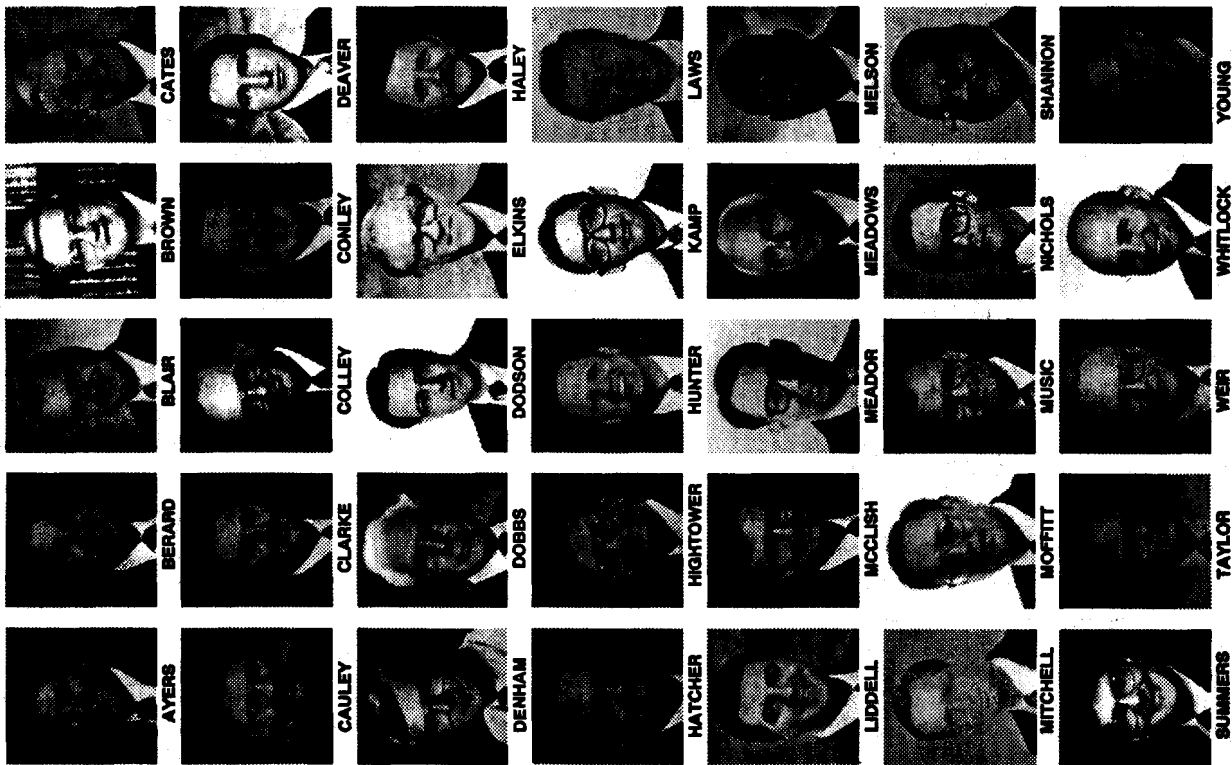
Since ALL SEVEN were appointed to the SAME MINISTRY, is not calling this program Stephen Ministries, showing respect for Stephen's person over the persons of the other six? If not, why not?

WHAT "LAITY" IS BEING TRAINED?

Please note, in the article cited, that "Stephen Ministries" is "an interna-

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Sunday Greetings and a Primal Psalm (10:1-27)

Paul's Evangelistic Passion

Answering False Doctrines: Does the Holy Spirit bear witness to Christians (8:16)? Does the Holy Spirit bear witness to Christians when he preys (8:26)? Did God unconditionally foreordain and elect the very individuals who would be saved (8:28, et al)? Are babies in the re-urrection of Christ and conversion of Him as Lord all one need do to be saved (10:9-10)?

Difficult Passages: In what sense are Christians "not under law" (8:14-15)? Is Paul describing his struggle with sin before or after he was converted (7:15-24)? Identify "the law of the Spirit of life," "the law of sin and death," "the law," "the obligation of the law" (8:2-4). To what "resurrection" does Paul refer (8:11)?

Blessings and Responsibilities of Being in Christ (8:1-17)

Instructions Concerning Optional Matters (14:1-23)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Answering False Doctrines: Is eternal life an unconditional free gift from God, requiring no human effort whatsoever (8:28)? Is man so inherently evil that he cannot keep from sinning (7:15-24)? And should therefore not be blamed for his sin (7:15-24)? Since there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, can the Christian miss Heaven (8:13-39)? Does the Holy Spirit "lead us by immediate means" to addition to His Word (8:14)?

Saving Faith Comes Through Hearing the Word of Christ (10:1-5)

Difficult Passages: Identify "the creation," "the whole creation," and "the first fruits of the Spirit" (8:16-23). Does the promise of "all things" working together for our good include such tragedies as the death of a child, divorce, terminal illness, crippling accidents, and such ills (8:28)? Can Christians carry arms in the military or police forces of their countries (13:1-7)? Why was Paul speaking of "submitting the law" several years after its annulment (13:8-10; cf. 4:1-5)?

Sunday Encouragements to the Elect (8:16-39)

What Must One Know About Baptism for It To Be Valid?

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

The Power of the Gospel and the Sins of the Gentiles (1:1-6)

Abramam, an Example of Justification by Faith (4:1-29)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Difficult Passages: What is the meaning of "from faith unto faith" (8:15)? What is "the work of the law written in their hearts" (8:15)? In what sense were sins "passed over" by God in previous times (8:26)? What is the meaning of "by faith, through faith" (8:30)?

Answering False Doctrines: Is man totally and inherently evil from birth, having inherited Adam's sin (3:10-18; 8:18-21)?

18: 7:14-18, 19-23)? Is the personal righteousness of Christ reckoned ("imputed," KJV) to us when we become Christians (3:8, 22-24)? Are grace and law mutually exclusive (8:14-18)? Are believers not obligated to keep the law of Christ since they are "free in regard of righteousness" (8:20; 8:27)?

All Are Under Sin and Can Only Be Saved by Faith (8:1-31)

The Pattern of Our Justification by Faith in Christ (8:1-25)

Are Grace and Works Mutually Exclusive?

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

God's Judgment Upon the Jews (2:1-29)

Why God Rejected Israel and Accepted the Gentiles (11:1-36)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

Answering False Doctrines: Is salvation by faith alone on man's part (1:16; 3:22, 28, 30; 4:3-4, 16, 23; 5:1; et al)? Are "non-covenant" people not amenable to the law of Christ, but only to a "law" written in their hearts" (2:15)? As long as we keep the "spirit" of God's law, do we have to be concerned about the "letter" (i. e., the details) (2:27-28; 7:9)? Is all judging of our fellow men forbidden (2:1-3; 14:4, 10, 13)? Miscellaneous Exhortations and a Preview of Paul's Plans (15:1-32)

The Duration and Function of the Law of Moses (7:1-25)

Paul's Appeal for Holy Living (12:1-21)

Does the Grace of God Guarantee Our Final Salvation?

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

How the Holy Spirit Dwells in the Christian: He Does So Representatively Through the Word of God Alone

How the Holy Spirit Dwells in the Christian: He Does So Literally and Personally

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

Answering False Doctrines: Does one need only ask the Lord to save him to be saved (10:13)? Is salvation by grace alone, thus excluding all works of every kind men may do (11:9)? Will all of freshly saved men someday return to God, be converted to Christ, and be saved (11:26)? Will Pharaoh be "unlike" disobedience at Canaan, thus establishing the precedent for having such in the church today (16:1)?

The Blessings of Justification by Faith (8:1-21)

Difficult Passages: In what sense are Christians "not under law" (8:14-15)? Is Paul describing his struggle with sin before or after he became a Christian (7:15-24)? Identify the "law" of "the Spirit of life" and "the law of the letter" (8:2-4). To what "resurrection" does Paul refer (8:14, et al, et al) (8:11)?

Is Uncharitable To Label and Name False Teachers?

Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic

Duties Toward Civil Authorities and the Debt of Love (13:1-14)

The Book of Romans—A Summary

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tional outreach program based in St. Louis that trains *lay people* to give support to those in personal crisis." As laudable an objective as to give such support may be, since Bible-based churches of Christ have *neither* clergy *nor* laity, the question is, as far as "we" are concerned, WHAT "LAITY" IS BEING TRAINED?

In the first twelve verses of Matthew 23, Jesus Christ himself rejected such clergy/laity distinctions. He taught both the multitude as well as his disciples to be NOT like "the scribes and the Pharisees," who loved to be called of men, "Rabbi, Rabbi."

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ" (Matthew 23:8-10).

Since, in the churches of Christ, "ALL YE ARE BRETHREN," Lutheran Pastor Haugk's program for training "lay people" cannot be made to fit brethren restricting themselves to calling themselves by Bible names and doing Bible things in Bible ways.

ONE CONGREGATION CITED

Although brother Yarbrough has learned of several more congregations who are toying with this interdenominational phenomenon in the Michigan area, he documented at least ONE—the church at Trenton, Michigan.

Perhaps we should not be overly surprised by the church at Trenton. Looking at their big ad on the church page in

their local newspaper, *The News-Herald*, for April 5, 1995, they have **Mark & Cheryl Frost** listed for "Pulpit Ministry." Do any of our readers think that is all right? How can sister Cheryl harmonize her "Pulpit Ministry" with 1 Timothy 2:12?

This passage says, **"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man..."**

If a woman can neither *teach* nor *usurp authority* over the man, how is it even *possible* for Cheryl Frost to be any part of a "Pulpit Ministry"?

Evidently, the Trenton church has been Stephen-Ministering for quite a long time. An accompanying newspaper article, together with a photo of 27 members they had at the time, was enclosed. It reads as follows:

Trenton Church Commissions Caregivers

The Trenton Church of Christ recently became an even more caring Christian community.

By commissioning eight additional caregivers March 17, the church has swelled its ranks of Stephen Ministers to 27.

"We want to do more than just talk about Jesus," said Mark Frost, the pulpit minister. "Our mission is to involve ourselves in the real-life hurts and needs of our community, just as Jesus would."

The new trained caregivers will move the congregation a giant step closer to the goal, he added.

Stephen Ministers are trained to offer care and support to people who are experiencing life's difficulties—death and grief, a job crisis, spiritual struggle, separation or divorce, care of a newborn, adoption, sadness or loneliness, an illness or a disability.

The ministry is confidential. "Those receiving care can be assured their identity and what goes on in the caring relationship will remain private," Frost said.

Stephen Ministers at the Trenton Church of Christ receive many hours of specialized training in caregiver skills. They learn effective listening techniques and how to provide support to those undergoing life crises.

Along with the initial training, the caregivers attend twice monthly sessions where they receive ongoing education and support for their efforts.

To date, more than 3,000 churches throughout the United States, Canada and several foreign countries have implemented the Stephen Ministry Series. They represent 60 different denominations. [Evidently the Trenton church considers itself to be "just another denomination," contrary to I Corinthians 1:10. IYR Jr.]

The Trenton congregation adopted the caregiving program in 1994, after a group of lay leaders took part in an intensive 12-day training session in St. Louis, Mo.

More information about the program is available by calling the church office at 676-1797.—Doris Ludtke

The caption underneath the photo of Trenton's 27 members taking part in this interdenominational program reads as follows:

Stephen Ministers at the Trenton Church of Christ include Sylvia Naysmith (front row, left) Janet King, Linda Ratliff, Betty Kinser, Mary Lou Mickiewicz, Carol Payne, Patti McClelland and Jenine Gronda. In the middle row are Karen Lange (left), Teresa Ingram, Sue Pine, Cecil Menges, Todd Raymond, Renetta Proffitt, Norma Baker and Robin Thrift. Standing in

the back are Jack Naysmith (left), Mike Proffitt, Ernesto Ruiz II, John McClelland, Gordon Payne, Mary Ann Jackson and Brian Thrift. Not pictured are Mary Ann Carter, Barb Elsenheimer, Faye Porter and Bess Summers.

In his local church bulletin for August 11, 1996, brother Yarbrough said, in part,

"...There are too many elders (or should I say men who call themselves elders) that let everything go on in the Lord's church that should not be going on. There are three (I am told there are six) congregations that have fallen for this denominational 'STEPHEN MINISTRY' in this area! They teach women to be 'MINISTERS,' how to wait on the 'LORD'S TABLE,' how to lead public prayer, lead singing, etc., don't even return on Lord's Day evening for services, but meet in small groups in homes (how can any elder know what is going on there? Acts 20:28).

"I am really surprised that none of the papers in the brotherhood have written any articles on this as yet!! This so-called 'STEPHEN MINISTRY' is just a NEW name for 'CROSSROADS' from what I have studied of it. Families have divided over this (men and their wives); congregations have divided over this; elders have resigned over this; the brotherhood in this area is divided over this; brethren are saying that I just cannot take any more of this and leaving! Elders are saying that this is the way it is and if you don't like it you can just go somewhere else! Pulpits are being draped with a BIG WOODEN CROSS draped with a robe; preachers are going out buying \$3,500.00 worth of equipment and having it charged to the church to show their false video tapes and their false doctrine!!! Since I am not supposed to call names, I'll just say MR. AND MRS. WOOLF! That is what we are doing; we are turning the congregations over to a BUNCH OF WOLVES!! [Signed] Joe Yarbrough, Riverview Church of Christ, 15865 Pennsylvania Road, Riverview, Michigan 48192.

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Joseph D. Meador, Director

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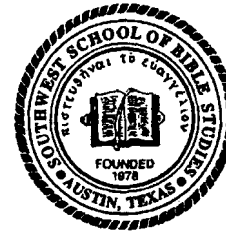
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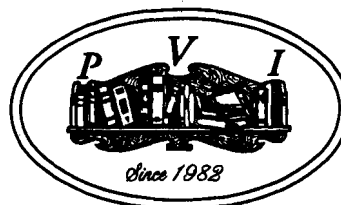
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Trouble Brewing on the Horizon

Wayne Price

As if we did not have enough problems already with people's attitude toward the Bible, wait until you "sink your teeth into this." A panel of biblical scholars, headed by none other than **Robert Funk**, have come up with a new canon or listing of Bible books (*U.S. News & World Report*, Nov. 8, 1993, p. 75). With all the trouble caused by a proliferation of modern versions of the same canon, we need this new canon like we need another "hole in the head."

About 70 liberal scholars have already come up with a new canon for the New Testament, and it is likely that some of the 27 books of the New Testament will be thrown out. This Jesus Seminar panel plans to give much scrutiny to the book of Revelation, with it likely to receive the "old heave-ho," along with other books which some deem controversial: including perhaps II Peter, James, et. al. The book of Revelation was widely accepted in the 2nd century, but since a 16th century Martin Luther criticized it as "neither apostolic nor prophetic," it must go! The same Luther called the book of James a right "strawy" epistle, hence watch for that book to be discarded as well.

In addition to the removing of some of these *inspired* books from the canon, it appears they also plan to incorporate some *non-inspired works* into their canon, such as the Gospel of Thomas, a first-century collection of Jesus' sayings found at Nag Hammadi, plus other works, as well.

Funk comments: "The Christian movement hasn't seriously examined the question of canon since the 15th century...It's time for academic scholars to raise the issue."

A redefining of the Bible can certainly bring disastrous results to those wishing to believe in the Bible as the word of God, yet finding it increasingly difficult to do so because of the ridicule and derision heaped upon them by the likes of **Steve Allen**, **Phil Donahue**, and other liberals in the media. For example, how many Christians know anything about the words "text and canon" of the Bible, let alone under-

stand the meaning behind those concepts? It appears that this topic ought to be addressed in our Bible classes and sermons, so fellow Christians can recognize this frontal assault upon the Bible and know how to deal with it. The integrity and credibility of the Bible is at stake.

Canonicity is determined by God, not by the church, nor by any group of biblical scholars. A book is not inspired because men made it canonical, but rather it is canonical because God inspired the work (see II Timothy 3:16). Only inspiration determines canonicity, so where does that leave the Jesus Seminar?

We urge our readers to get a copy of *Biblical Inerrancy*, ordering it from the

Church of Christ, Post Office Box 1275, Portland, Texas 78374.

Since the word "canon" has to do with a listing of books accepted as authoritative and sacred, we can easily determine what the diabolical goal of this Jesus Seminar happens to be. Surely most of us have heard of other books not found in the Bible, such as the *Apocrypha*, *Pseudepigrapha*, in addition to the early church "fathers," have we not? Why aren't these included in the Bible? We need to be ready to deal with these issues in the future, it would appear. The Bible continues to be under attack! Remember I Peter 3:15!

—Post Office Box 760
McLoud, Oklahoma 74851

INTERNET CAN BE REVEALING

So much goes on "behind the scenes" these days that it is almost impossible to keep abreast. For example, the first we knew of **Rubel Shelly's** to speak on the *World Convention of Churches of Christ* brother **John Shafer**, of Kearney, Nebraska, took it off the *Internet* and forwarded it to us. Dated on the Internet, 29 July 1995, it read as follows:

The World Convention of our global church family, viz., Christian Churches, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Churches of Christ (instrumental and a cappella), will hold its 14th World Convention next year in Calgary, Canada. The dates are July 30-August 4, 1996. There are already more than 800 registrations in hand, and the organisers (international English spelling!) are very excited by the interest being shown.

As a new event during the Convention, we are holding a special gathering of faculty and Board Members of Christian Churches ('Independents' and Disciples) and Churches of Christ Colleges and Seminaries from throughout the world. This is being co-hosted by people from Alberta Bible College, Western Canada Christian College, Phillips Graduate Seminary, and Emmanuel School of Religion. We are excited by the interest being shown in this gathering—the first of its kind on this scale.

And we are also working with **David McWhirter**, Librarian of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, on having a special gathering for Campbell-Stone librarians/archivists/historians. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for those interested in the preservation of our global Christian

Churches/Churches of Christ 'church family' history, and the networking of people with this interest and resources to share. We're talking about anyone from the local congregation's collector of bulletins, minutes and memorabilia, through to folk such as University Librarians and Archivists who have responsibility for important collections of resources, and enhancing availability and useage of these resources, and those who use these resources for analysis of our past, present and future as a movement.

(Signed) **Lyndsay and Lorraine Jacobs**
World Convention of Churches
of Christ
1101 19th Ave S
Nashville, TN 37212-2196, USA

Then, later on, under date of 17 August 1995, having heard from someone named **Doug Jantz**, **Lorraine Jacobs** put the following on the Internet:
Forwarded message:

Subj: World Convention speaker **Rubel Shelly**
Date: 95-08-16 13:33:54 EDT
From: **WORLD CONV**
To: **DJantz 3560**

Hi Doug—Good to hear from you. Yes,

Rubel Shelly is a featured speaker at the World Convention of Churches of Christ next summer in Calgary. If you would send me your mailing address I'll be glad to send you information about the Calgary schedule, tapes will be available at the Convention, and also by mailorder from our office. There is already a good number of church of Christ people registered, and also Christian Church members. What is your own background and present position? (The World Convention office is small, a total paid staff of 2—General Secretaries Lynne and Lorraine Jacobs, a married couple from New Zealand. We are working from an office in the Disciples of Christ Historical Society Library and Archival building in Nashville Tennessee, which like the World Convention seeks to serve the whole Restoration Movement. Both the Historical Society and the World Convention have Board Members from all 3 main streams of the Campbell Stone churches in the USA, and the World Convention has

Board Members from other countries as well.)

As soon as we receive your mailing address we'll bundle up a package for you. Keep in touch! (Signed) Lorraine Jacobs

[NOTE: As foreign as all of the foregoing sounds to those of us who are members of the church in the New Testament, brethren, there it is. By this time, Rubel has already been to Calgary and spoken. The event took place 30 July - August 4, 1996. He may have thought he was "representing" the churches of Christ; but, believe you me, brethren, he was not representing anyone but himself! Genuine churches of Christ have had no fellowship with Rubel since he left us, re: his Centerville, Tennessee speech, back in 1983. We shall have more on his Calgary presentation anon. 1YR Jr.]

William Schwegler, of Grand Blanc, Michigan, renewed, saying, "I have all 25 years and use them as reference material for a number of things at various times. Sometimes we're able to influence folks in some small way. The sale of two cases of brother Music's latest book, 'Easy to Read,' has resulted in the 'Eastern European Mission' advertising and newsletter being removed from circulation in our congregation."

"Preaching the truth in love does not mean not preaching the truth."—Daniel Denham, Bellview Lectures, Pensacola, Florida.

Leon & Hazel Martin, of Florence, Alabama, enclosed a clipping from the *Times Daily*, of their city, saying, "Joe Van Dyke is at it again—also another preacher from another large congregation here in Florence."

"Some of the country congregations have disfellowshipped Joe, but as far as

Notes & Quotes...

I'd rather be a builder

With hammer, saw and square
Than tear down things others have built,
Whether good name or mansion fair.
Because if I work on a wrecking crew here,
I'm building no home up there.

So Lord make me a builder

In your kingdom, strong and true,
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newed for five years; so did Jack & Cindy Barber, of Russellville, Arkansas; so did Kenneth Broyles, of Sparta, Tennessee; so did Wayne S. Holmes, of San Antonio, Texas; so did Harold Krape, of St. Charles, Missouri; H. A. Martin, of Bagdad, Florida, renewed for three years, sent three new.

Nola Stephenson, of Longview, Washington, renewed for five years, saying, "I have learned so much from your paper and do appreciate all that you do for the church."

Clyde E. Lewis, of Agra, Oklahoma, renewed for another year, saying, Ira Y. Rice, Sr., baptised my wife in the Cimarron River, near Cushing, Oklahoma, in the fall of 1948.

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1995 & 1996 Houston College of the Bible Lectures

we know none of the large congregations have."

The clipping reported, in part, "A prayer conference of Christ Chapel, 301 Heathrow Drive, Florence, Sunday through Friday, would feature ministers from difference churches, the Rev. E. M. Shell, pastor, said. Services would start at 6 p.m. Sunday and at 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Speakers would include James McCaney, Victory Christian Fellowship, Sunday; Sid Fulford, Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ, Monday; Eddie Jenkins, First Cumberland Presbyterian, Tuesday; David Nelson, Muscle Shoals First Assembly of God, Wednesday; Joe Van Dyke, Magnolia Church of Christ, Thursday, and Sammy Gilbreath, Highland Baptist Church, Friday."

[NOTE: Ephesians 5:11 STILL teaches us to "have NO FELLOWSHIP with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather PROVE them." And II John 10-11 STILL says, "If there come ANY unto you, and BRING NOT THIS DOCTRINE, receive him NOT...NEITHER bid him GODSPEED: for he that biddeth him Godspeer is PARTAKER of his evil deeds." Those denominational preachers bring a DIFFERENT doctrine. Come to think of it, Sid Fulford and Joe Van Dyke evidently do, too! IYR.Jr.]

"DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES" is a new book by Jerry Moffitt. It contains short series of brief Biblical argumentation articles. It is easy to read for the new convert, or any Christian, but it exhorts and pleads with the outsider, too. It can be read straight through or used as a reference book. The main comments we hear is that "it is so readable, as if one is speaking to someone entirely unfamiliar with the doctrine."

It contains material about doctrine itself, inspiration, inerrancy, the plan of salvation, the scheme to save man, faith only, eternal security, baptism, grace and law, the church, Calvinism, the Holy Spirit, Pentecostalism, Premillennialism, Catholicism, instrumental music, fellowship, Jehovah's Witness doctrine, Mormonism, the Sabbath, is the church a denomination? It deals in a kind way with, "If I'm not a member of the churches of Christ, will I go to hell?" and undenominational Christianity. 653 pages, hardback, \$19.00 (including postage and handling). Address orders to Barbara Moffitt, 213 Sabine, Portland, Texas 78374.

Bell Long, Harrisburg, Arkansas: "I'm glad you sent the March issue even if my time had lapsed. I enjoyed it so very much as I always do. March issue was special to me."

Paul & Sharon Hackworth, Falls Church, Virginia, enclosed \$100.00, saying, "[We] have wanted to contribute for some time but couldn't afford to earlier. However, we have been blessed by God and want to share our blessings with you for your wonderful and much needed efforts in Singapore..."

William A. Collins, Memphis, Tennessee: "I like the paper very much. I don't like the purpose for which we have to have it, but it looks like some brethren are out to rule or ruin..."

Albert & June Shroades, Newell, West

Virginia: "A few years back it would have been almost impossible for us mortals to imagine what God can and will do to open up the many opportunities for teaching the gospel in China and Russia."

"We are grateful that you, the Memphis church and school and others are trying to make use of these open doors of opportunity, and pray that our Lord will bless every faithful effort to share the truth with those who have been in darkness for so long."

"Our minds are sobered and hearts made sad, as we consider our own nation turning away from the source of manifold blessings, and for the weakness and spirit of compromise in the church in so many places. [It] would almost cause the angels to weep...Press on in the work of the Lord in so many areas."

W. O. Blakeney, Stinnett, Texas: "Keep up the good work of contending

earnestly for the truth of God's holy word."

David & Katherine Moore, Desert Hot Springs, California: "Please send us a subscription to your fine publication, 'Contending for the Faith.' We are currently in a struggle against the doctrinal errors now being advanced by Rubel Shelly, Lynn Anderson, and many others; and we can use all the ammunition which is available..."

Reg Rogers, Tulsa, Oklahoma: "Ira, you warned against this cult-oriented movement — Crossroads — years and years ago, but you were scorned. Doubtters made pilgrimages to Crossroads and came back saying, 'We saw nothing to warrant suspicion.' Of course they didn't. The graceful rattlesnake doesn't crawl around showing his fangs; you wouldn't know he had any except he bites you."

"West Monroe, Reuel and God knows

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Directory

For advertising in this section, See Masthead, Page 2.

—Alabama—

Holly Pond—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, Tel. (205) 796-6802, 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherly, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

.....

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.: 7:30 p.m.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

—North Carolina—

Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556, Jack Tittle, minister.

—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

.....

Memphis—Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Rd., Memphis, TN 38118. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:30 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, minister, (901) 366-0617.

.....

Nashville area—Villages Church of Christ, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sun.: 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) 758-7406.

—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 many others went to bat for Crossroads. It spawned and spread like a campfire in the forest, sparks carried the blaze all over the woods..."

Ed Dyche, Carlisle, Pennsylvania: "Thanks for the good (but many ways sad) work. We are with you."

Maymie Rigney, Morrison, Tennessee: "I hadn't seen a copy of the Gospel Advocate for a long time. Recently I subscribed for it. What a disappointment!...The first page was filled up with the 'Nashville Jubilee.' Lots and lots of the magazine was used for ads. And most of the writers used N.I.V. or other modern versions in their Bible quotations. Guess what! I just wrote and told them to refund my money. I get more good reading the Bible (and specified King James Version) than reading their magazine...It made me appreciate 'Contending for the Faith' a lot more after comparing the two papers. Your writers don't use modern versions and stand for the truth."

"Some preachers, if you wanted to know what the word of God teaches, you would not ask them; they don't know."—Curtis Cates, Director, Memphis School of Preaching, July 17, 1996, at Knight Arnold midweek service.

Larry L. Hamm, St. John, Kansas: "I send a renewal to two of the publications I receive today. 'Contending for the Faith' and 'Image Magazine.' I feel they are the two ends of the spectrum, and some place between the extremes of both publications is the truth of what God wants for man. I must say that I feel that 'Image' is much closer than Contending for the Faith.

"I have subscribed to 'Contending for the Faith' on and off since 1972. When I started, I really felt that it was close to truth. After much Bible study, I have come to the conclusion that your publication should be called 'Contentious for the Faith,' and that its main thrust is to spread a sectarian spirit.

"You are giving aid and comfort to the enemy, the Devil. You are focusing on the proper 'hermeneutic,' instrumental music, the role of women in the church, and denominationalism, and you are forgetting the weightier matters of the law. By focusing the brotherhood on divisive things you are defeating the Word of God.

"It would be much better to focus on Christian morality. I know elders in the Lord's church that cheat on their income tax, but they have read 'Behold the Pattern' and have the proper hermeneutic. I know elders in the Lord's church that [go] through bankruptcy court are not men of their word. But they hold the proper position on denominations, instrumental music, and all conservative positions.

"By their fruits you shall know them."

[NOTE: We could not agree more that it is wrong to "pay tithes of mint, anise and cummin," while omitting the "weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith." As Jesus said in Matthew 23:23, "these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

On the other hand, brother Hamm needs to make up his mind what TRUTH is. James 1:8 teaches, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." IYR Jr.]

Arlene Martin, DeQueen, Arkansas: "Please send 'free bundle' of back issues of 'Contending for the Faith.' I will try to get new subscriptions."

FLOATERS

Tommy Kelton

In my years of preaching, as I have watched the parade of people through various congregations, I wonder why so many do not commit themselves to a local body of Christians in a significant way. Many sit and soak and do little else, and they flee at the first sign of trouble. They fail to become involved or to give. They criticize all that is wrong with the local congregation.

Underneath this restlessness lies a root of non-commitment uncharacteristic of the early church.

The American passion for excitement has invaded the church. A generation raised on thrilling movies, dynamic television programs, and professional sports, becomes bored with an "ordinary" congregation. The demand for entertainment, exciting programming and preaching is far removed from those small bands of early Christians, who sacrificed so much to gather to worship on the first day of the week and live for Christ during the week.

Today there is a sickness in the church that might be called "the fickleness of the floaters." These are the people who go where the action is or where the problems aren't. They back out when the preacher preaches the truth or the elders stand against sin. They live on the fringes, hurling criticism when difficulties arise.

We need to accept the challenge of committing ourselves to responsible membership in the local congregation. Our attitude must be that God will use it, and use us in its midst.

We need to be a part of a local con-

gregation, not bystanders. We need to be there and not forsake the assembly of the saints.

When we criticize the local congregation, we criticize ourselves. The one who has the right to criticize is the one who works. Be loyal to the preacher and elders. If they are wrong, go to them directly. Do not sow seeds of discontent or become a trouble maker. Don't run when trouble and difficulties develop. Be part of a solution.

—The Cullendale Harvester

Maurice Brown, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada: "Just to let you know how much I enjoy Contending for the Faith. I always look forward to the next issue coming, and when it does, I read it all the same day! I appreciate your stand for the truth and your willingness to speak out against false teaching and those who refuse to hold fast the form of sound words..."

Nancy Reed, Sayre, Oklahoma: "Please find enclosed a copy of The Worldly University—The Apostasy of ACU. As a one-time visitor to the campus and an 'ex-Baptist,' their apostasy is evident to me. I appreciate strong, well-learned men who are not afraid to call 'a spade' 'a spade.'

"Two friends, brothers in Christ, refuse to read Mr. Rice's paper due to the truth he is giving about ACU. They 'throw it in the trash.' One...is a graduate of ACU...Thank you again for 'Contending for the Faith'."

Bruce Ligon, Plain Dealing, Louisiana: "I deeply appreciate the needed work that is being done in Contending for the Faith. Each issue provides those striving for 'the old paths' with beneficial information."

"The dictionary says that unity is the absence of diversity. Therefore there can be no 'unity in diversity'."—Roy Deaver

"Ask those departed souls that were destroyed in the flood, 'Is there salvation outside the ark?'"—Jerry Martin, Bellview Lectures, Pensacola, Florida

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THE POLITICS OF NASHVILLE/CHRISTIAN JUBILEE 1997: A Preview Of Planned Events

J. E. Choate

The brokers for Jubilee '97 are crafting plans for the annual July spectacular. The '97 Jubilee will be hosted in the new gleaming sports-dome of glass and polished steel in the new Nashville Arena. Theirs is a grandiose vision for this to be the "mother of all Jubilees."

The designers of the *Nashville/Christian Jubilee, Inc.*, 1997 look into their crystal ball, and they see buses and vans loaded with church members from all over Middle Tennessee filling the Jubilee halls nightly. My guess is that church historians will record 1997 as the time when the liberal "Churches of Christ" emerged as a full-fledged denomination much like the Disciples of Christ. I have no crystal ball.

The Disciples of Christ, according to church pollsters, is a failed denomination with the largest member loss of all churches of 42%. The liberal "Churches of Christ" are unwittingly following in the same old deep theological ruts plowed out by the digressives for over 100 years.

The spring issue (1996) of *Wineskins* raises anew this very question with these words on the front cover—"The Church's Quest for Identity." This is written in spite of the fact that the conservative churches of Christ have a clear biblical identity.

The liberal element in the "Church of Christ" no longer conceals its contempt for the churches of Christ. **Mike Cope** modifies what **Lynn Anderson**, a former *Highland/Abilene* preacher, said—that the Church of Christ is a "big sick denomination." As the *present* Highland preacher, Cope takes himself seriously for reasons unknown, but puts it differently in his *Wineskins* article:

I sense that we're admitting that God has many other faithful children than those in our small "brotherhood." We are returning to our wonderful roots: "Christians only, not the only Christians."

The major strategies of the "makers and shakers" of Jubilee are shaping up on the drawing board. We are now "looking through the glass darkly" seeing only in part because only a limited amount of verifiable information is available. The liberal element share in one common denominator which is to destroy the identity of the conservative churches of Christ.

Two men were hanged during crucifixion week—Jesus Christ on the cross, and Judas in the valley of Hinnom. All his shame and remorse lives on in infamy. Socrates is the most celebrated martyr of the ancient world. In his *Apologia* he told his young accusers that he was not afraid of them, but of their elders and fathers who had taught them that Socrates is a bad man who corrupts the morals of young men.

In harmony with this statement, we are not afraid of the young "upstarts" in positions of power and leadership in the church, and certainly not the sophistication of their knowledge. We do fear their mentors who are school heads, paper editors, and charismatic preachers who taught them. They will be satisfied with nothing less than to hang the conservative churches of Christ in the public square.

POSITIONS OF STRENGTH AND OPENNESS

The leaders in the conservative churches of Christ are working from positions of strength and openness. They are committed to the principle of inerrant Scripture. They

(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVII, No. 11

November/1996

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. Telephone: (901) 363-6498.

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...

Restoration Betrayer Lucado To Be Chief Featured Speaker For '97 Nashville 'Jubilee'

Starting on Page 1, our lead article for this issue of *Contending for the Faith*, written by J. E. Choate, is entitled, "THE POLITICS OF NASHVILLE/CHRISTIAN JUBILEE 1997: A PREVIEW OF PLANNED EVENTS."

Because it is now clear that the *sponsors* of the '97 "Jubilee" are determined to deliver the Restoration Movement into the hands of its enemies, we propose to obey Romans 16:17-18, which teaches us to "Mark" (focus our attention upon) "them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine" that *faithful* brethren and churches may be able to "avoid them."

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to explain, "For they that are such SERVE NOT OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their OWN BELLY; and by GOOD WORDS and FAIR SPEECHES they DECEIVE the hearts of the simple."

"DARLING OF THE DENOMINATIONS"

When you come to it, in brother Choate's article, please note his reference to Max Lucado, whom the Donelson church has chosen to be the "chief keynote speaker," as the "darling" of the denominations.

And why should he *not* be their "darling," since he betrays the cause of truth into their hands at every turn, just as Judas betrayed Jesus Christ with a kiss!

Over the past several years, *Contending for the Faith* has documented abundantly Lucado's compromise with the denominations, calling Catholic priests "Father," Presbyterian preachers "Reverend," and both applauding and singing right along with their instrumental music.

TEXAS BAPTISTS AWARD LUCADO

Now please turn to our centerfold right in this very issue and note the newspaper article reproduced from the September 17, 1996 edition of the *San Antonio Express-News*. Entitled, "TEXAS BAPTISTS EXTEND AWARD TO S.A. PASTOR-AUTHOR LUCADO," this article documents irrefutably the INTERDENOMINATIONALISM of Max Lucado.

Not only does he look to denominationalists both to *publish* as well as to *market* his "best selling" books, but he and Buckner Fanning, pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church, of San Antonio, have been exchanging pulpits over the past two years!

If Lucado had to depend on *faithful* brethren of the churches of Christ to market his books, instead of

them being “best sellers,” he would do well even to get his money back. As it is, the denominationalists patronize his books by the millions—so much so, in fact, that he NO LONGER DEPENDS on his home *Oak Hills/San Antonio* congregation for financial support—the *denominations* support him quite nicely, thank you, through the sale and purchase of his books!

LISTENING TO HIS TAPES

As to his exchanging pulpits with Baptist Pastor Fanning, even as I write these words I am listening to tape recordings of their exchanges on April 2, 1995 and also on April 9, 1995. My Bible-taught heart sickens as I hear him confirming to the Baptists that they are on the SAME SHIP bound for the SAME DESTINY as we—heaven—simply occupying *different cabins!*

Denigrating some who think they are “the only ones on the ship”—evidently referring to Christian brethren and the churches of Christ—while denying that we must abandon our “convictions,” he insists that we must be “united,” no matter what “cabin” (church) we may be in!

Charging some (evidently “us”) with being “stubborn, hard-headed Christians who refuse to get along,” Lucado says that “disunity (with the denominations) discredits God’s church.”

ARE ALL IN ONE CHURCH?

Lucado, in his tape-recorded sermon to those Baptists, is telling them that we all have the “SAME PARENTAGE” with the “SAME BIRTH EXPERIENCE,” and that most of our problems are not of “doctrinal disagreements” but of “territorial squabbling.”

Ridiculing those who refuse fellowship with the denominations because they are “NOT OF OUR GROUP,” Lucado goes into quite a litany of denominational preachers from whom he says he has learned.

Saying, “I grew up in a small, west Texas town... Andrews, Texas,” he credits the Andrews Church of Christ with being where he learned about Jesus, and for that reason, he says, “I have a deep appreciation for my heritage, as should we all.”

Notwithstanding all that, he continues, “There is an *Anglican* by the name of **C. S. Lewis** whose books put muscle in my faith...a *Presbyterian*, of all people, by the name of **Stephen Brown**, formerly of Key Biscayne, Florida. Somehow I got on his tape mailing list, and he helped me understand the sovereignty of God...another *Presbyterian*, by the name of **Fredrick Beekner**, who writes books somewhere in Vermont, helped me see the passion of Christ...a former *Catholic priest*, named **Brennan Manning**, convinced me that Jesus is relentlessly tender...a *Nazarene* by the

name of **Jim Dobson** helped my family skills...a *Baptist* in Miami taught me about grace...a *Pentecostal* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, helped me understand prayer...

RADIO PREACHER TO THE RESCUE

“Someday, when we all get to heaven, I am finally going to learn the name of some **radio preacher**, who was on the air in 1978. I was home working in an oil field job wanting some extra money. My faith was very fragile. I had more questions than I had answers, and I was literally at a crossroads as to whether or not I was going to believe.

“For making deliveries for an oil field company in a pickup truck, I can only pick up one radio station. I don’t know if that’s because of west Texas, or because of the truck, or both. But that one radio station had a radio preacher; and in 15 minutes he put the heart and soul of the faith in a little sermon on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; and all of a sudden I realized it wasn’t *what* I knew, it was *who* I knew; and I pulled over to the side of the road and rededicated my faith. It may have been a *Quaker*, *Methodist*, *Baptist*, or an *angel*—or *all four*.”

“DON’T STOP HIM!”

“But what do you do when somebody does good things and they are not in your group? Am I alone in those experiences? Haven’t you had somebody from another group, another heritage, help your faith take another step? Have you asked John’s question, ‘We saw this man doing good works, casting out demons,’ which, by the way, is the very thing the apostles tried to do in Mark 9:20, the same chapter, but they couldn’t do it.

“No wonder John wanted to know. They had tried to cast a demon out of a young boy, and they couldn’t do it, and here they see this guy doing it, and he didn’t even go to the right seminary! So what do we do with him?...

“I want you to notice what Jesus *didn’t* say and then I want you to notice what Jesus *did* say. ‘Don’t stop him,’ Jesus says, in verse 39...

“ALL OF SAME FAMILY?”

“Years later, the same John who asked the question about the man, he would say this: ‘**Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God has God living in him.**’

“You mean he doesn’t have to be in my group? No. He doesn’t have to be out of my heritage? No. He doesn’t have to agree with me? Does anyone? Do all of you agree on everything? No, honestly, I am kind of visiting here today; do all of you agree on every single thing? Do you? Never have any discussions. Never have any, you know, urgent conversations?...

“Aren’t you all of the same family. You see it is not that we agree on EVERY thing, it’s that we agree on the MAIN thing—that we agree that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Where I see somebody who calls God Father, and Jesus brother, I see a family member...”

SHALL WE FOLLOW LUCADO?

In I Corinthians 11:1, the apostle Paul admonishes us to *follow him AS HE FOLLOWS CHRIST*. Can the same thing be said of **Max Lucado**? According to his own words, he follows an *Anglican C. S. Lewis*, *Presbyterians Stephen Brown* and *Frederick Beekner*, former *Catholic Priest Brennan Manning*, *Nazarene Jim Dobson*, a *Miami Baptist*, and a *Brazilian Pentecostal*. As for that *radio preacher*, who firmed up his “faith” on that west Texas road, it mattered not to him if he was a *Quaker*, a *Methodist*, a *Baptist*, an *angel*—or *all four!*

Max Lucado needs to read and study again what Paul said to the Galatians: **“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. 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. 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” (Galatians 1:6-10).

The “gospel” that Lucado preaches clearly *pleases men*, evinced by the millions of *denominationalists* who now buy his books. But that he preaches the *same gospel* as Paul or John preached, I flatly deny. He can preach that all we need do is to confess that Jesus is the Son of God in order to have God living in us; however, those aware of the **WHOLE COUNSEL** of God (Acts 20:27) know better.

Those who plan to *support* and/or *take part* in Donelson’s “Nashville/Christian Jubilee—1997,” please bear all this in mind. If you are determined to follow such men as Max Lucado into the error that he has embraced for lo these many years, so be it; however, know in advance that you cannot do this and continue to enjoy the fellowship of those still committed to “speak where the Bible speaks and to remain silent where the Bible is silent.”

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Nashville/Christian Jubilee 1997...

(Continued from Page 1)

honor the biblical tradition that Peter’s Pentecostal sermon, 33 A. D., is the birthday of the churches of Christ. On the other hand, the liberal element date their denomination, the “Church of Christ,” no earlier than the early 19th century.

They must indeed be salivating over the prospect of capturing numerous churches numbering into the hundreds, and seizing church properties worth multiple millions. At the turn of the century, it was often said that the “digressives stole our churches.” Today it could be said that the “Church of Christ” liberals are destroying their churches which have nurtured them since the cradle. The liberals do not establish churches. The “change agents” plot to take them over with sweet, sanctimonious, pious rhetoric.

CANNIBALIZING THEIR OWN KIND

The liberals are already in control of most of the schools identified with churches of Christ, and a growing number of large urban churches and even into the countryside. They know the churches now fuel the schools with their money and children. They are now fabricating an odd denomination, the “Church of Christ,” which will support their postmodern agendas after the conservative churches of Christ become aware of their deceptions and drop them.

I am amazed that such astute university presidents as **Royce Money** and **Harold Hazelip** think that the liberals

can create a new “Church of Christ” denomination that will flood schools identified with churches of Christ with unlimited supplies of students and cash. There cannot be intellectual honesty in places mired in the darkness of subterfuges and calculated misinformation.

It is now obvious to informed church historians that much of the recent growth of the liberal churches is due to their cannibalistic practices of devouring their own kind. This will no doubt be a pattern repeated when their still wiser children shove them from their positions of leadership.

WHAT WE ACTUALLY KNOW TO DATE ABOUT JUBILEE '97

The information that we now have has slowly surfaced in bits and parts from the most reliable sources. **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** exposed almost single-handedly the Gainesville and Boston movements several years back. He has a growing and formidable support this time around exposing a new virulent strain of enemies of the conservative churches of Christ.

B. C. Goodpasture supported Ira Rice, and commended the paper to me when an article of mine was printed in a 1973 issue in the paper. I was then a GA staff writer under B. C. Goodpasture. Were he alive today I am confident that this article would be printed in the *Gospel Advocate*.

THE PRESENT KNOWN FACTS OF JUBILEE PLANNING

The first fact is that the names of the major players who

will "keynote" Jubilee '97 are now published. **Max Lucado**, the "darling" of the denominations, is the chief keynote speaker. He is joined by the equally flashy spell-binder, **Jeff Walling**.

The DLU administrators and its liberal Bible faculty will be out in force to support Jubilee led by Harold Hazelip and **Carl McKelvey**. It is now crystal clear that the retiring president of DLU came to the college having already abandoned the traditions of the school that David Lipscomb founded, and gave to it his life and savings.

Mike Moss, the Chairman of the DLU Bible Department, and **Gary Holloway**, Director of Graduate Bible, are now ensconced in places where David Lipscomb, and Leo Boles, and the elder Batsell Baxter once sat. Their positions in "liberal theology" are clearly set forth in their published writings.

We are particularly interested in one 1997 Jubilee speaker who is **Dr. Bill Banowsky**. By the rarest strokes of good fortune, he found himself at the highest pinnacles of education and public service where the demands for perfection of intuitive insights, managerial skills, and scholarship are stern and unyielding. That Dr. Banowsky has returned from those regions lately guarantees him little more, other than a curious Jubilee audience interested in what he says.

Have Jubilee and *Wineskins* devotees such as Mike Cope, **Joe Van Dyke**, **Ken Durham**, and **John York** so mesmerized themselves so as to believe that they enjoy a special dispensation of immunity from public scrutiny?

THE THEME FOR JUBILEE 1997 AND OTHER MATTERS

The information had filtered in even before Jubilee '95 that the new Nashville Arena would be the site for the 1997 Jubilee. The information surfaced then that Jubilee '97 would be inclusive in that denominational churches would be invited to co-host Jubilee '97 with the Woodmont Hills Family of God. Do not think even for a moment that because the Donelson Church of Christ will host Jubilee '97 that the Madison and Woodmont Hills churches are out of the picture. The strategists of Jubilee '97 plan an initial "ballyhoo" spectacular during the opening exercises. They envision the spanking brand new arena filled upwards with 20,000 people showing a great spirit of unity of 100s of area churches. They hope to repeat the vast outpouring of unity and support like the 1968 Municipal Auditorium meeting conducted by **Willard Collins**.

The Jubilee organizers are pulling out all the stops to entice Willard Collins to make a guest appearance during the opening ceremonies to accept a plaque honoring his lifetime of service to churches of Christ. Their obvious purpose for this is to *lend credibility to Jubilee*.

Brother Collins' condemnation of the Nashville/Christian Jubilee, and his disapproval of **Rubel Shelly** in a sermon he preached to the churches in South Atlanta has been widely circulated. In a recent sermon at the Granny White church, he rejected again the whole concept of Jubilee. He repeated that he would not go against what he had believed and preached all his life. Do not for a moment

think the Jubilee promoters will cease badgering Willard Collins because they will return after a season.

Many of us remember B. C. Goodpasture who was given to saying that "one can't run with the fox, and hold with the hounds." In the meantime, we will be vigilant as we monitor Jubilee plans over the next several months. This is an unfolding story that has to be told in installments.

POSTSCRIPT

We have just touched the tip of this iceberg lurking beneath the promotion schemes of the Jubilee promoters. I challenge no one. Prove my facts wrong, and I will make corrections in this paper without hesitation.

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Can "We" Understand the Hermeneutic Hassle?

Graham Cain

The ordinary member of the Lord's church can be easily intimidated today by reading some of the articles in brotherhood journals, reports from seminars, conferences and open forums.

Emanating from such sources is a jargon of "intellectual" proportions that is almost overwhelming. Is God's word actually so complex and difficult that "we," the "little people" of his family cannot understand it? I think not!

THE PROBLEM EXAMINED

Hermeneutics can be broadly defined as the science of interpretation—and how to interpret the Bible is where the trouble arises. To "interpret" is "to explain or tell the meaning of."

God expects us to do this with the message he has given. He also requires a confirmation of our understanding in simple obedience.

Since God made us he is most certainly able to give us instructions that we can understand and follow.

God communicates with man through the use of words. It is a verbal process and when a series of words is connected or associated together to form meaning, a communicable procedure known as "language" is the result.

A language is comprised of "the words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them used and understood by a considerable community. A systematic method of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures or marks having understood meanings" (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 646).

Since this is the way—and the *only* way—that God reveals his will to man, it is obvious that the expression "considerable community" in the above definition would encompass a segment far beyond the relative few who set themselves up to be THE intellectuals among us.

THE PROBLEM DETERMINED

It is obvious that this perplexity grows out of the sad fact that Christ's church is being increasingly plagued by an element of men who can only be accurately defined as EGG-HEADS!

These are "intellectual highbrows" and the dictionary defines a highbrow as "a person who possesses, or has pretensions to superior learning or culture." Even if such a person actually "possesses" such "learning and culture," when he uses it to confuse or abuse God's Book, he is doing a thing that is purely wicked.

A "Christian Scholars Conference" was held at Pepperdine University. The major purpose was dealing with the "New Hermeneutic," a theory that is being firmly foisted upon the church.

In the June, 1990 issue of *The Christian Chronicle*, announcement was made that the same thing was being done again the following year at Abilene Christian University. Again, "Hermeneutics" was to be the major theme; and again the array of speakers to be headed by Tom Olbricht who is generally considered to be the granddaddy of this particular movement against the truth and authority of God's revealed word. The wheels and drive-shaft which propel this vehicle of error are the thrust of schizophrenic intellectualism.

THE PROBLEM DEBUNKED

If "we" refuse to allow the scary-sounding, confusing words—terms and phrases they use to deter us—we can survive the attack.

They refer to the "Rational/Inductive School" of understanding. They resent the restrictions of "contextual restraints." They ridicule the church's "traditional interpretive approach" to Bible study and charge that "our people" have been let down by such methods. They say that the Bible provides a "springboard" which allows each person to look out and "subjectively apply" truth. Much concern is expressed relative to "the transcendent nature of God" and that the "sovereignty of God and the love of God" is being debased by using the "command, example and inference" system of attempting to learn Bible truth.

The "Neo-Orthodox" evaluation of the Bible is that it *contains* the word of God but is not identical to *being* the word of God. This leaves room for *part*

of it NOT to be the word of God and this automatically does away with the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Many of the peddlers of this "advanced theology" have advanced in their learning to the point that enables them to announce that there is absolutely *nothing* that anyone can KNOW for certain. And, they claim to have *certain knowledge* that this is indeed a fact. Well, the further it goes the sillier it gets. Jesus said, "**Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free**" (John 8:32).

When all the clutter and debris has been swept away it is comforting to see that God's ways and words continue to stand as firm as ever.

REASONING AND COMMON SENSE

We must use the powers given to us by God. He expects it and requires it. The clear charge given in I Thessalonians 5:21 is to "**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**"

These new interpreters claim that only the "explicit" statements of the Bible are binding. This divine injunction is explicit—but *demand*s the utilization of the human power of reasoning, checking, comparing, examining and *deciding* what is good and what is not good. In reaching those conclusions it becomes necessary to examine approved Bible examples and infer certain facts that come from truth that is implied by God.

When Paul went into the synagogues of Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus on his second evangelistic tour it was for the express purpose of *reasoning* with them (Acts, chapters 17, 18, 19). This took the form of disputing and debating. It was the way of challenging them to use their God-given ability to think, reason, consider and come to a conclusion based solely upon the evidence at hand and just ordinary, everyday common sense. Paul spent more than two years doing this in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10). The totality of the gospel of Christ is directed to the intellect and acceptance of the ordinary human mind.

"We" do not have to master the finer techniques of logic. "We" do not have

to know how to put together the parts necessary to a valid syllogism. We are grateful for such brethren as **Thomas B. Warren, Roy and Mac Deaver** and others who can rout the false teachers in this fashion. Such skills are not required of all, though, and we can understand the Bible, obey it and go to heaven with just normal abilities which are sincerely dedicated and used in his service.

THE PROBLEM IS SELF

The crux of this whole matter swirls around the eternal problem of "self." It caused the fall of Satan and his angels. It brought about the death of Adam and Eve. It has a strong hold on the Lord's church today and is dragging it into the throes of apostasy.

Once the theory that the "felt needs" of the individual is a condition that the church is obligated to address, all that follows is a necessary conclusion of pure selfishness and pride. With "self"

securely placed center-stage, the "new hermeneutic" becomes automatic.

The plain, simple definition of this method of interpreting Scripture is in Roy Deaver's *Biblical Notes*, Jan.-Feb., 1990 issue, p. 3. Please read it carefully: "The evidence will show that the New Hermeneutic is a system of Bible study designed to emphasize the concept that it is impossible for the human being to really know what God's will for him or her really is, and that the study of the Bible is, and must ever be purely subjective."

Once deceived into accepting this subjective view of the Bible it becomes a simplistic procedure of reading any passage of Scripture with no goal other than to decide what it means to and for *me*. Of course, this enables you to examine the very same passage with the privilege of seeing what it means to and for *you*. The two conclusions could be poles apart, yet both be correct and

acceptable according to this philosophy.

THE PROBLEM NOT "NEW"

At this point the conclusion does not look good. A form of *Humanism* is being enthroned in the lives of many of God's weak, wayward children.

The expression of "Theistic Humanism" has not been heard yet, but that may be close to the fruit which this New Hermeneutic will produce. This system of making "self" decisions and assigning alternative values closely parallels these words of long ago: "**In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes**" (Judges 17:6).

The adjective "New" is a misnomer. This tragic method of interpreting God's will dates all the way back to the garden of Eden.

—2244 Mountain View Drive
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Should I Be Baptized—Again?

Wayne Price

Periodically there are those who question their previous baptism. At times, the basis for questioning whether they knew enough when they were baptized is based on their present knowledge of God's word. They realize they know so much more now than they did when they first became Christians, and thus they now may doubt whether they knew enough when they were baptized earlier.

This situation, probably more typical than unusual, is caused by an increased knowledge of the Scriptures. The Bible informs Christians that they are to "**grow in grace, and in knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**" (II Peter 3:18). When that growth takes place, as it ought, then we will know a lot more later on than we did when we were first ushered into God's kingdom by means of the new birth.

A child is expected to grow in the physical world, and he also is expected to grow in the spiritual world. In fact, every Christian should one day grow enough to be a teacher (Hebrews 5:12). Just because a person knows so much more today about God's word than he/she did when obeying the gospel, does not mean one's baptism was ineffective. If a person was aware that baptism is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21) and "for remission of sins" (Acts 2:38; 22:16), then there is no need for him to be baptized again.

A QUESTION OF UNDERSTANDING

On the other hand, there are many people today who

have good reason to investigate this matter further. In the denominational world, there are thousands who should be asking themselves the question: "Was I baptized for the right reason?" A prevalent idea in religious circles today is well expressed in the question: "Just as long as I was baptized, what difference does it make whether I knew what I was doing or not?"

On one occasion, a young man approached a Christian and asked: "Now why was it that I was baptized?" A parent, concerned about one of his children, asked: "How old should my child be before being baptized?" It is not a question of "years" but rather a question of "understanding."

The basic principle back of obedience is this matter of understanding. "**Understandest thou what thou readest?**" Philip asked the eunuch (Acts 8:30). Paul urged

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Texas Baptists extend award to S.A. pastor-author Lucado

Oak Hills minister honored for success of best-selling

By J. MICHAEL PARKER
EXPRESS-NEWS RELIGION WRITER

A San Antonio pastor whose 14 best-selling Christian books have brought inspiration to millions throughout the world was honored Monday by the 2 million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Max Lucado, pulpit minister of the Church of Christ at Oak Hills, received the 1996 Texas Baptist Communications Award at a luncheon with about 75 guests at the Hilton Palacio del Rio Hotel.

A spokeswoman for his publisher, Word Inc. of Dallas, said Lucado's books have sold more copies in his first 10 years as an author than the Rev. Billy Graham's books sold in Graham's first 20.

Lucado's latest book, "In The Grip of Grace," has just been published by Word Inc. and is to be reviewed Saturday in the San Antonio Express-News.

The Rev. Buckner Fanning, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, said he and the honoree have exchanged pulpits for two years.

" He's (Max Lucado) helped make this century and the next century spiritual so the message of Jesus Christ will transform people's lives and bring hope to individuals. "

■ THE REV. BUCKNER FANNING,
pastor of Trinity Baptist Church

The audience howled with laughter when he recalled returning to Trinity after Lucado had preached.

"A deacon asked me, 'Buckner, why don't you and Max exchange pulpits every weekend?'"

Fanning brought down the house when he told Lucado:

"Max, I'm happy that you've written all these tremendous books, but I wish they'd been exclusively for pastors. If you hadn't

made them so easy, we pastors could find common material from them.

But he turned so Lucado's books are in

"Max Lucado, as you know — through his ministry, his writing and his preaching, he ministered to all of us."

"He's helped make the next century spiritual. Jesus Christ will transform and bring hope to individuals."

The honoree said he was accepting an award for doing the most.

"Giving an award like giving a burning bush which carried a donkey that carried a man," Lucado said.

"They were different messages of the same message. We were chosen because we were in the right place at the right time," he said.

The minister quoted

the Ephesians to not be "unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17).

THREE IMPORTANT TRUTHS

Regarding this necessity of understanding, we want to set forth three very important truths:

- (1) We must do what the Lord said *do*.
- (2) We must do what the Lord said do in the *way* (or *manner*) he said to do it.
- (3) We must do what the Lord said do in the way he said to do it, and for the *reason* he said to do it.

If any one of these be omitted, it renders the other two ineffective. For example, if the Lord told you to go *east*, and you go *west*, you have disobeyed him (remember Jonah?). Again, if the Lord told you to go east and *work in a field*, and you do go east, but you *work in a factory*, you have disobeyed him. Finally, if the Lord told you to go east, and work in a field to earn money to *purchase a house*, and you do the first two, but instead of buying a house, you *buy a new car*, you have disobeyed, because what you did was done for the wrong purpose.

Naaman, the leper (II Kings 5), would be a good case study illustrating this principle of obedience. Would Naaman have been healed of his leprosy if he had gone to another river besides the one designated (Jordan)? Would he have been healed if he had just "sprinkled" some of Jordan's water on his leprous sores? Had Naaman had no faith in doing what was commanded, that is, if he complied with the instructions only because he wanted to please his servants, would he have been healed? Again, notice that mankind is to DO what the Lord said do, in the WAY he said to do it, and for the REASON he said to do it.

APPLYING POINTS TO BAPTISM

How are these points applicable to the study of "baptism?" There is a popular teaching today that as long as one is baptized "to obey God", then that is all that one really needs to know. Some maintain that "the purpose is not a part of the command," but if true, then one could obey the command, never knowing the purpose, and still be all right.

Is there a single case, just one, in all of the New Testament, where a person was baptized and did not know the

ward ado books

for lay people to read, have gotten lots of sermons." Fanning said. "I'm serious to explain why it's important. As much as any person I know, his life, his work, his wit, his preaching — has made this century and the next so the message of transformation people's lives individually," he added. "I felt awkward "accepting what I love to

for communication is an award to the one who spoke to Moses or the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem. The vehicles transport the kingdom, and they are there just happened at the right time," said John Wesley, the



KIN MAN HUI / Staff

Pastor and author Max Lucado shares a laugh with Martha Athison (center) and Denalyn Lucado during his Monday address accepting the 1996 communications award from the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

founder of Methodism, as defining preaching as "setting yourself on fire and letting others enjoy watching you burn." He said the reasons that compelled him to accept Christian faith and to "set him-

self on fire" are still compelling to him because he's "never found a single day that God has been unfaithful to me, but I can show you a calendar of days when I've been unfaithful."

reason why he was baptized? The jailer (Acts 16:30) asked the question: "What must I do to be saved?" Did the jailer have a purpose in asking this question? If so, what was it? On the day of Pentecost, those guilty of killing Jesus (Acts 2:23) inquired: "...what shall we do?" (v. 37). Is there not a relationship between what was being done and their purpose in that action?

WHAT ABOUT LORD'S SUPPER?

It is true that all sincere people do what they do in religion with a general motive of obeying God. Is there a purpose involved in partaking of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week? Is the only purpose here that of "obeying" God? Luke 22:19 tells us the Lord said: "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Obviously, "purpose" is a part of the command.

Why do we DO this? This you do "in remembrance of me" said the Master. As the bread, or fruit of the vine, is passed to a Christian, if he/she is not thinking about Christ and his sacrifice on Calvary, but instead on plans for the

afternoon, or date for that night, one has not obeyed the command. Oh, yes, by force of habit we can perform either action, and yet not be aware of what we are doing. This "do", Jesus said, but a part of the command was to "do it IN REMEMBRANCE of" the Lord. The purpose is not to be separated from the action.

In I Corinthians 11:27, Paul said "Whoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Paul speaks specifically about the purpose behind the action of partaking of the Lord's Supper. It is not just an act that is under contemplation, but rather the doing of that act in the right manner. More than the right act is needed to constitute a valid observance.

ONE'S BELIEF AND OBEDIENCE

In Acts 22:16, Saul was told to "arise, be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Here was something he was to do. Saul knew what he was to do, and why. Today, no one can obey this command who believes that his sins have already been taken away. Many today, before being baptized, hear

the preacher say to them: "Do you believe that God, for Christ's sake, *has pardoned* your sins?" The usual response is "Yes, I do" (which is to say, "I believe that God has already taken my sins away)."

Again, we need to realize that no one can obey the command of Acts 2:38 (or Acts 22:16 or I Peter 3:21) who believes that his sins have *already* been taken away! One is to be baptized *in order that* his sins might be taken away, *not* because he believes they *already have been*. This is a crucial, pivotal point!

A lady once said that she was saved in a back classroom of a church building in Wyoming (in October of a certain year), and that she was baptized in August of the next year, some ten months later! This lady could not have been baptized in order to be saved, if she thought she was already saved ten months prior to her baptism.

To contend that one can be saved before he/she is baptized, and then be baptized later, is to argue that what a man does and what he believes have no inter-relationship whatsoever.

KNOWLEDGE, A KEY FACTOR

"Well, wait a minute," one argues, "if a person is satisfied with his baptism, I don't believe we have any right to question him about it. Paul, the inspired apostle, did not feel that way.

When he came to Ephesus, he questioned some about their baptism. These had been immersed (the right action), yet when they heard what Paul said about the matter, they were baptized.

Why were these people (about twelve) baptized (immersed) a second time? If it was the right action (and it was), why go through it again? Luke 7:30 shows that John's baptism was from God, so evidently these twelve (in Acts 19) were baptized "to obey God." Why should they be baptized again?

Evidently more was involved here than just the action of immersion—knowledge was a key factor.

One cannot obey God accidentally, regardless of whatever action is being contemplated. Were those Ephesians of Acts 19 satisfied with their baptism? Probably, at least until Paul raised a question about it, they were.

Today, when visiting with someone who is satisfied with his baptism, should I say to him: "Well, as long as you

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

One of the sad commentaries regarding some religious schools (and not a few elders and preachers) is their concerted efforts to dodge definitive answers to certain controversial questions. They may answer some such questions in a given manner if they know their answer(s) are acceptable to influential preachers, their benefactors or sister institutions. However, they run like the proverbial "scalded dog" from those issues they think may cost them financial support or students or bring to them criticism hurtful to their reputation. In such schools, truth takes second billing to "who's who" and "what's what."

Regarding issues, a comment from the late N. B. Hardeman is often cited. While president of the old Freed-Hardeman College brother Hardeman said, "We can state the position of Freed-Hardeman College on the back of a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'"

**THE PENNY POST CARD IS GONE,
BUT THE OBLIGATION TO
OBEY 1 PETER 3:15 REMAINS.**

are satisfied, that's all that really matters" or should I, like Paul, ask a few more questions?

There are thousands of people today who were baptized, but also have a faulty understanding as to what it was all about.

If one need not know what baptism is for, then why not accept the baptism of infants?

Many years ago, two elderly sisters were involved in Bible study. One obeyed the gospel, the other did not. The one that refused was *sprinkled* when she was a babe, and she thought that was sufficient. Her sister, who had later been immersed in a farm pond, saw the significance of knowing the purpose of baptism, and asked to be baptized—but this time for the right reason. Was the teacher wrong in pointing out what the Bible teaches regarding the *purpose* of baptism?

WHAT MAKES WORSHIP VAIN?

In John 8:32, Jesus declared: "**Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**" Now listen to the following popular teaching: "...a lot of people in this religious world who've submitted to baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus, based on their faith, accomplished remission of sins, whether they realized it or not. That there was a 'misunderstanding' as to whether they were saved before or afterwards does NOT negate or invalidate the whole process."

Does that sound like something the apostle Paul would say? Does Jesus (in John 8:32) really mean: "You may

believe error, but in doing so, as long as your purpose is to obey God, then your error will make you free anyway"?

In Matthew 15:9, Jesus says that men's doctrines make worshipping the Lord to be in vain. But if what one believes is not important, then there could be no such thing as vain religion. Many in the denominational world believe the latter!

DRAPER'S DIVERGENT VIEWS

The following discussion of views about the purpose of baptism shows the vast divergence in views held by sincere people on this vital topic. **Dr. James T. Draper, Jr.** was the President of the Southern Baptist Convention for two one-year terms (from June 1982 - June 1984). Dr. Draper had the title of "Pastor" of the First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas.

In an interesting interview conducted by Tommy J. Hicks, a gospel preacher, these divergent views were well set forth:

Hicks: Do you believe baptism was commanded by Jesus Christ?

Draper: Yes.

Hicks: Do you believe that baptism (immersion) is for the remission of sins?

Draper: I do not. I believe it is an expression of the remission of sins. In other words, it is a result of being forgiven.

Hicks: Do you believe baptism is necessary for an entrance into Christ?

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Draper: No.

Hicks: Let us say you baptized Mr. "A" 20 years ago and he became a member of your church. Next Sunday, he comes to me stating that he wants to become a member of the church of Christ. I tell him that he must be baptized for the remission of sins. He replies: "James Draper baptized me for the remission of sins." If I sent him back to you, what would you tell him?

Draper: Well, I would tell him that was not the case. I would tell him that we practice baptism as a symbol representing our faith, not the remission of sins.

Hicks: Do Baptist preachers ever baptize people for the remission of sins?

Draper: I do not know of any Baptist who would baptize for the remission of sins.

Hicks: You do not know of any?

Draper: No. I do not know of any.

Hicks: Before you, or any other Baptist preacher you know, will baptize a man, must he convince you that he has already been saved?

Draper: That is right.

Hicks: If he believed that baptism was for the remission of sins, but in order to get you to baptize him, he claimed that he was saved prior to baptism, he told you a lie?

Draper: That is correct.

Hicks: Knowing what you do about the church of Christ, if someone came to us wanting to be admitted with his Baptist baptism—honestly thinking he had been baptized for the remission of sins—what do you think we should do?

Draper: I think you ought to baptize him.

Hicks: You would expect us to baptize him?

Draper: Surely.

Man argues that baptism does not save anybody, but the Bible says in I Peter 3:21 that it does! Man says one thing, the Bible says the other. What do you say? Read again Matthew 15:9, and then hear the question again, "What do you say?"

—Post Office Box 760
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Is A New Day About To Dawn For Chinese Evangelism?

The name of **Cheung Kwok Yiu**, also known as **Howard Cheung**, is not unfamiliar to readers of *Contending for the Faith*. When he came to this country less than a dozen years ago from his native Hong Kong, he never had even *heard* of the *gospel*, much less of the *churches of Christ*. Probably the farthest thought from his mind was to leave the Buddhism of his father and mother and to become a Christian.

It was while working as a Chinese chef and part-time waiter in the Guelin Restaurant in Las Vegas, Nevada, that he became acquainted with **Joseph A. Meador**, then the Director of a school of preaching in that western city. Through his employer, a Chinese man whom the latter had befriended, he learned that brother Meador was a gospel preacher.

DESIRE TO BECOME A PREACHER

Since coming to the States in 1986, Kwok Yiu had been associating himself with an evangelical group in Las Vegas. He told brother Meador of his desire to study the Bible in a Bible college somewhere that he might somehow, some day become a gospel preacher himself—but he had no money.

Brother Meador told him of the preacher-training school he had started in Las Vegas and invited him to start attending there—free of charge. Kwok Yiu did so—soon recognizing the difference between Meador's teaching and evangelicalism.

Pulling loose from the Evangelicals, he obeyed the truth, and completed one whole quarter of study with the school in Las Vegas.



MOVES WITH MEADOR TO AUSTIN

When brother Meador was invited to move to Austin, Texas, to direct the *Southwest School of Bible Studies* there, so impressed was he with brother Cheung that he invited Kwok Yiu to come with him to Austin in order to continue his biblical studies there. This was precisely what the then-recently-converted preacher-trainee wanted to do.

Once they arrived together in Austin, Texas, Howard Cheung (as he was becoming known) immediately enrolled, completing both the basic *two*-year course and also the *third*-year course that Southwest has to offer.

At the end of his second year, however, having learned that a Chinese family named **Ho**, friends of his parents, had moved from Hong Kong to Boston, Massachusetts, and that they had a daughter **Carrie** attending the University of Massachusetts, Howard made a journey to Boston, met, converted and married Carrie, bringing her back to Austin to live while he finished his third-year course.

PLANTING CHINESE CHURCH IN AUSTIN

Noting the *thousands* of Chinese now living in Austin, Texas—and the *additional* thousands that are attending the University of Texas—it seemed good to the elders of the Southwest Church of Christ to sponsor Howard and Carrie in establishing a Chinese congregation in Austin. Later on the elders of the Eastern Hills Church of Christ, in Marshall, Texas, accepted their principal sponsorship.

Under date of September 9, 1996, brother Cheung wrote, in part, saying, "...Recently, I have finished writing all of the 30 lessons (both Chinese and English) of *A Guide to Biblical Truth*, and am doing some proof-reading and editing work. I will soon submit them to brother Taylor, an elder at Southwest, who has promised to publish them for me (1,000 booklets probably). He said he would try to finish them before my missionary trip, in order that I might introduce them to the overseas brethren..."

BRIEF HOMELAND RETURN ENVISIONED

While continuing to evangelize among Chinese residents and University students in Austin, their overseeing elders agreed that it could be helpful at this point for Kwok Yiu and Carrie to return to their homeland and the China area for a few weeks both to encourage the work there and to have a better idea what his work should be in years to come.

"...Lately, I've been preparing lessons for my missionary trip to Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan," his letter continued. "I am scheduled to preach and to teach on the Lord's days at the Wah Fu congregation for six weeks in Hong Kong. During this period, I plan to go to China on some weekdays, in order to visit some underground churches of Christ, hoping to offer them encouragement and some Bible lessons. Afterward, I will fly to Taiwan for two Gospel meetings at the Taichung and Hui Lien congregations. I am scheduled to preach about 12-13 times there. Please keep our efforts in your prayers!"

BIBLICAL GUIDE BOOK COMPLETED

Another month passed; then, under date of October 7,

1996, this zealous young Chinese preacher enclosed a gift copy of his new, 30-lesson booklet, entitled *A Guide To Biblical Truth*, together with the following letter:

October 7th, 1996

Dear brother Rice:

Greetings! Thank you very much for your past support of me! My purpose of writing is to request your help for my missionary efforts for the Chinese people in Asia.

If the Lord is willing, I will go for a missionary trip to Hong Kong (my home country), main land China and Taiwan this November for two months (November 13th to January 13th). I will first go to Hong Kong, and plan to stay there for six weeks. I will consecutively preach for six weeks at the Wah Fu congregation, which has no full-time preacher. I also will hold a gospel meeting for two days there. There are four congregations of God's people in Hong Kong, about 150 Christians among her 6,000,000 population. The saints there are under big stress, for Communist China will take over Hong Kong in 1997. Their religious freedom might be deprived by China government. I therefore hope to encourage the brethren there by preaching the gospel and by visiting them. Also, I would like to evangelize souls to Christ by the saving Gospel.

During these weeks, I will also go to main land China to visit some underground churches. Christianity is not allowed to be freely practiced in China. There are many so-called "Governmental churches" existing. People have to submit to the regulations made by the government, in order to meet together for religious practices. However, there are many un-

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derground churches meeting in people's homes. Through the brethren in Hong Kong, I know there are at least two churches of Christ existing in Shen Zhen, which is near the border of China and Hong Kong. I plan to visit them and offer them Bible lessons as much as possible.

Since three months ago, I had begun writing 30 lessons of fundamental Christianity. I finished these bilingual (Chinese and English) lessons recently. Their topics are: Baptism, Biblical Faith, the church of Christ, etc. (I submit a copy to you with this letter). I will introduce these lessons to the brethren in China and Hong Kong, hoping that they might use them for evangelism of lost souls, edification of the saints.

After these six weeks, I will fly to Taiwan and stay there for ten days for another missionary effort. By the invitation of brother Joseph Ruiz, a missionary in Taiwan for 16 years, I will hold two Gospel meetings for the Tai Chung and Hui Lien congregations. I am scheduled to preach about 11 times. The theme of the meetings is "the church of Christ." Of course, I will introduce my bilingual lessons to them.

The missionary trip to Asia will help the brethren there. I could confirm their faith through preaching the Gospel, and encourage them by visiting them. Moreover, I have decided to write an article in Chinese every two weeks, which will contain Bible lessons and Chinese translation of Restoration Literature. I plan to send these lessons to them regularly.

I have not returned to Asia for ten years, and I was converted to New Testament Christianity in America about 4 1/2 years ago. I therefore need to contact the brethren in Hong Kong, main land China and Taiwan, and to see their spiritual needs, before I could send them Bible lessons and articles regularly. My prayer to God is that my missionary efforts would help the work of evangelism in Asia for the Chinese.

I have booked air tickets for me and my wife, and the total is \$1,800. I estimate our two months expenses for food, custom fees, transportation is \$3,000 (\$50 per day for both of us). The reasons why I take my wife with me for this trip are: (1) We can work together as a team for the cause of Gospel; (2) I can not leave her in America for two months, for I would fail my duty as the husband; (3) the trip will be beneficial for her spiritual growth. Therefore, I have decided to take her with me for this missionary trip. The total expense of our two months mission trip is \$4,800 including \$1,800 for air tickets and \$3,000 for necessary expenses.

So far, I have raised \$800, and come short of \$4,000 of my missionary budget. Any suggestion and help from you is greatly appreciated! Thank you very much for your love and time!

For His name and glory,
[Signed]
Kwok Yiu (Howard) Cheung

IS NEW DAY DAWNING?

Having personally devoted most of the last 50 years to gospel work for and among Chinese people, as I studied Kwok Yiu's foregoing two letters together with the new *Guide to Biblical Truth* that he had authored and sent to me, I asked myself: IS A NEW DAY ABOUT TO DAWN FOR CHINESE EVANGELISM?

Under date of October 12, 1996, I responded to brother Cheung as follows:

Kwok Yiu (Howard) Cheung
2309 Berkeley Avenue #2007
Austin, Texas 78745

Dear brother Kwok Yiu,

Your good letters of September 9th and October 7th, together with your *Guide to Biblical Truth*, of which you personally are the author, are in hand. I should have replied to you earlier; however, I have been on the go so much these several weeks it proved impossible for me to keep abreast of correspondence.

Congratulations on having written this book of 30 lessons both in Chinese as well as in English. I feel certain that Don and Pien Thornton will want some of these books in connection with their work both in Hong Kong as well as in China proper. Be sure to take as many as possible with you when you go to Hong Kong.

My wife Vada and I leave the U.S. November 18th for the Far East. She plans to be with me in Singapore, Malaysia and Chiangmai, Thailand. She and I both speak on the *12th Annual Asian Bible Lectureship*, December 1-4, in Chiangmai. She returns home on December 5, whereas Bob Berard and I go to the Philippines for five days of preaching. On the 10th, then, he and I both go to Hong Kong, continuing into Beijing and Tientsin on the 12th. After five days in north China, we return to Hong Kong, continuing on to India on the 19th. We'll be in India and Nepal for a total of two weeks before returning to the U.S. From the schedule you mentioned, we'll probably see you in Hong Kong. Don and Pien will know where we are and how to get in touch with us.

In your earlier letter you mentioned having six Chinese studying with you regularly. How has this been working out? It may be that you will want to bring some of my *Basic Bible Course* back with you when you return from Hong Kong. It is fully translated into Chinese and is stored where Don preaches. Also, we have lots of Chinese-English New Testaments stored there. You are welcome to as many of these as you can use in your evangelistic work, whether in Hong Kong, China, Austin or wherever. Brother Ruiz has many of my BBC stored in Taiwan, if you need more:

Yes, I am well aware of the nervousness of many Chinese in Hong Kong re: the take-over by China from the British government next July. The Lord alone knows what will happen then.

I note the amount needed for your forthcoming journey to Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and back. Vada and I wish to have a part with you on this. Please find our check enclosed for \$100.00. I plan mentioning your need to others in this regard. You probably will have to contact many personally as well as by letter to raise the full amount. There is no better way than in person.

Wishing you the best,

[Signed]

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

[NOTE: I had intended to invite readers of *Contending for the Faith* to contribute to this need. However, about the middle of October, brother Cheung telephoned, saying, that the entire amount already had been made up, cash in hand. I look forward to being with him and Carrie both in Hong Kong as well as in the China mainland during December, Lord willing. IYR Jr.]

Notes & Quotes...

"Life with Christ is an endless hope. Life without Christ is a hopeless end."—**Gideon C. Rodriguez**, on the mini-lectureship, December 15, 1995, at Manila, Philippines.

Brother **Virgil Bowen**, longtime supporter of our work both at home and abroad, is growing older now. However, he wants to carry on in Oklahoma City just as long as he can.

He writes, saying, "I have lived here longer than anywhere else in my life, have more friends and more appointments to teach the Bible here, and more able to help you in your great work..."

[NOTE: We pray for brother Bowen that God may grant him many more years to labor together with us in his service. IYR Jr.]

David W. Hester, Tuscumbia, Alabama: "There are some signs of encouragement. I hear that the elders at Sherrod Avenue are now trying to 'rein in' Sid Fulford and the teaching that is going on there...May God continue to bless you in your work."

[NOTE: "As for the Sherrod Avenue elders trying to 'rein in' Sid Fulford and the teaching that is going on there, while this is commendable on their part, it probably won't work unless they fire him and start over with a new man," I replied, in part. "Thanks for letting me know anyway!" IYR Jr.]

A first step is better than a stumble.

The 15th Annual Denton Lectures, November 10-14, 1996, will be entitled, "Studies in Romans." A special feature will be daily discussion forums on controversial subjects. Presented by the Church of Christ, 312 Pearl Street, in Denton, Texas, **Dub McClish**, as always, will serve as the Director.

Maurice Brown, from Rockford, Illinois, writes: "Keep up the good work in standing for the truth. Love your paper. Keep it coming!"

Robert Doak, Pennsboro, West Virginia: "I enjoy reading the paper very much. I've been taking it for 20-some years. I think much good is accomplished through this paper for all that are concerned for the truth."

Eastern Hills church of Christ, of Marshall, Texas, was the venue of the first East Texas Lectureship, March 15-17, 1996. The overall theme of the lectureship had to do with miracles.

Specific topics covered included Defi-

nition of the Miraculous, Old Testament Miracles, New Testament Miracles, Purpose of Miracles, Cessation of the Miraculous, Demon Possession of the First Century, and Occult Miracles.

Speakers included **Mac Deaver**, **Stephen Wiggins**, **Tim Ayers**, **Mike Wyatt**, **Joe Meador**, **Dub McClish**, **Jim Dobbs**, **Buster Dobbs**, **Joe Gilmore** and **Bill Lockwood**.

When, 25 and 30 years ago, students from our colleges would go home and tell what was being taught, parents and elders refused to believe it. Now it is too late.

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—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherly, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m.

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.: 7:30 p.m.

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Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

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Rocky Mount—Church of Christ, 1040 Hill St., Rocky Mount, NC 27801, Tel. (919) 977-7556. Jack Tittle, minister.

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Memphis—Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Rd., Memphis, TN 38118. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:30 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, minister, (901) 366-0617.

Nashville area—Villages Church of Christ, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sun.: 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) 758-7406.

—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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Bobby Liddell

A generous response from our beloved brethren has brought us near enough our goal to see the light at the end of the tunnel. In November, 1995, Memphis School of Preaching, a work of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, set a goal of raising \$900,000 to build a new School building. God has greatly blessed us, and through your prayers and support, we now have just over \$800,000 in hand. That means we lack *less than \$100,000* in reaching our goal.

Now, we simply need to add the finishing touch to bring this effort to a close.

We are happy to extend our sincere appreciation to all who have helped in what we trust is a needed work, and worthy of the support of faithful brethren. Many have given to this cause by denying themselves, because of their love for the Lord and His church. God will surely reward you with far better than our expression of gratitude. Simply put, without your active interest, and your putting your money where your heart is, we could not be as near the finish line as we are today. Thanks so much, brethren!

Possibly, some have not given all they planned to give, and are ready to do so before the year ends. We look forward to hearing from you. Others, who have already helped, may be willing to go the second mile, and contribute again. Now is the time, brethren. You will have the great satisfaction of contributing toward the training of men who will traverse the globe with the Gospel of Christ. In addition, your help will, if this world stands, continue to

benefit the brotherhood for decades to come, as the School continues to train men to be "Men of the Book."

While we know this is not a primary concern, we do understand the need, and the benefit to you, of a receipt for your contribution. We respond to each one who helps with a letter of thanks and a receipt acceptable to the IRS. Your financial support is tax deductible.

With your help, brethren, we can reach our goal before the year ends. How great that would be to put our fundraising efforts behind us, and to go forward with the completion of the new School building.

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[NOTE: So impressed was I, when the Memphis School of Preaching sought to raise the \$900,000 needed to relocate the school, that I wrote a personal letter to every reader of *Contending for the Faith* asking each of you, insofar as possible, to have a part. One congregation sold a house and sent the whole \$50,000—and great numbers went their length to help all they could.

Those who feel that you have gone your limit, we are not asking for anything more. Nevertheless, whatever you can do to help make up that final \$100,000, between now and December 31, 1996—God bless you as you help. [YR Jr.]

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

A SEMINAR ON THE WILLOW CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH PARADIGM

J. E. Choate

A primary objective of this article is to awaken our brethren to the stern reality that formidable foes are stalking the conservative churches of Christ. They clearly identify themselves with their proposals to alter and to change the organization, worship, practices, and Biblical traditions of the conservative churches of Christ. Their proposals are not generally well understood because they have been less than candid in divulging what they have in mind.

A minority of scholarly brethren and such popular pulpiteers as **Mike Cope** are determined to replace what they call the old hermeneutic—"precept, apostolic example, and necessary inference"—with a new hermeneutic which they do not define. They have spoken much of the "paradigm" versus the "pattern" without defining their terminology.

THE HOLLOWAY-WEED HERMENEUTIC

These matters have been clarified of late by two of our astute scholars—**Michael R. Weed** and **Gary Holloway** who put it all down in black and white in a paper which was read May 5-6, 1995 during the Second Annual **Forrest K. Kirkpatrick Seminar** for Stone-Campbell historians sponsored by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville.

The Holloway-Weed paper was titled "The Gospel in Urban Vessels: Churches of Christ Face the Twenty-First Century." Holloway and Weed obviously endorse the Foster-Hughes contention that the "Church of Christ" denomination began as an exclusive sect in the early 19th century.

They allege that the "Churches of Christ" have societal origins. The Holloway-Weed paper proposes three options as possible replacement models (paradigms) for the churches of Christ as they enter the 21st century.

The models are namely: The Willow Creek Community Church model; (2) the Vineyard ("Third Wave") Pentecostal Movement model; and (3) the "Neo-conservative," or "moderates" which identify with postmodern theology. The rank and file of churches of Christ have no understanding of the structure of the three proposed models. To be sure, the better informed "change agents" do.

I propose over the next several months to explain in simple terms what we are talking about when we refer to the Willow Creek Community Church, the Vineyard ("Third Wave") Pentecostal Movement, and the "Neo-conservative," or "moderates." We have over the past year dealt at length with postmodern theology. This is the theology which comes after **Barth, Bultmann, and Tillich**.

THE LATEST "CRAZE" RUNNING THROUGH THE CHURCH

Due to the increasing number of features in national publications and the volume of information, we can address only one of these three paradigms at a time. It is imperative that we now identify these noxious growths and weed them out of the churches.

We shall address the Willow Creek Community Church first because it has become the paradigm of first choice among our avant-garde liberal brethren. The current bibliography is designed to give us both a firsthand and immediate look inside the Willow Creek Church. We are indebted to Gary Holloway, Michael Weed, and **Rubel Shelly** for laying these matters out on the table for us, which matters are the latest craze sweeping through the churches of Christ and the mainline denominations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

My first introduction to Willow Creek came from news
(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Associate Editorial...

STRANGE THINGS FROM AMONG THE BRETHREN

Did you know that unless a believing, penitent candidate for baptism confesses his or her faith in Christ before at least two humans, he or she is not scripturally qualified to be baptized for the remission of sins?

I am told that Jesus authorized the kind of confession mentioned in the preceding question when he said, "Who-soever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). Notice, please, that the plural for man is used. Hence, the conclusion drawn by some is that there must be at least two humans before whom the candidate for baptism must confess Christ.

CONFESS CHRIST BEFORE MEN

Those who believe this erroneous doctrine reason in the following manner. If it is the case that the Lord said an alien sinner must confess Christ before "men" (more than one), and, if it is the case that "Jane" is an alien sinner, then, it is the case that Jane must confess Christ before "men" (more than one).

Let us apply this reasoning to the following case. Jane's husband, Bill, taught her the gospel. Having been persuaded thereby, Jane desires to be baptized at the same hour of the night (1:00 a.m.). According to the previously studied view, before Jane could scripturally confess Christ, another human other than her husband must be present when she confesses her Lord. Is this what the scriptures teach? Let us continue our study of this matter.

DENY CHRIST BEFORE MEN

Jesus also said, "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:33). Notice that the plural of man (men) is also used in verse 33. Does not the word "men" in verse 33 convey the same meaning to the reader as it does when used by Jesus in verse 32? Of course it does. If in verse 32, by the use of the word "men," Jesus taught that one who confesses Christ must do so before at least two humans, then why does not verse 33 teach that one who denies Christ must do so before at least two humans? The meaning and force of "men" in verses 32 and 33 are exactly the same.

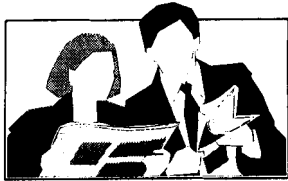
Can anyone imagine Jesus saying that "in order for me to deny you before my Father you must deny me before at least two humans"? That doctrine is no less absurd than the view that declares that Christ will not confess a person before his Father except at least two humans hear the confession. Furthermore, as an interesting side thought, this view implies that it takes at least three human beings to get one baptized.

Now back to our illustration of Bill and Jane. Several years after Jane's baptism her love for Christ grows cold. In time her faith in the Lord weakens and finally dies. Jane orally denies Christ before her husband and no one else. If it is the case that at least two humans must hear the

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confession of Christ by Jane before Christ will confess her before his Father, then why is it not also the case that at least two humans must hear Jane's denial of Christ before he will deny her before his Father? Is anyone willing to affirm that because Jane's oral denial of Christ was made before only one man that it, therefore, does not constitute the sin that Jesus describes in verse 33? Surely no one would be so foolish as to answer this last question in the affirmative.

AN ASSUMPTION — NOT AN IMPLICATION

The problem with the aforementioned reasoning with these scriptures is that it is based on an assumption; the assumption is that "men" is used to mean only a plurality. "*Men*" in these verses is used to emphasize class not number. It is **Romans 10:10** that specifically states that the confession "unto salvation" (toward or in order to salvation) is a confession made by the "mouth." Matthew 10:32 does not limit the confession of Christ to an oral statement that Jesus is the Son of God. The confession about which Jesus speaks in verse 32 is the godly life of a Christian lived before and observed by mankind. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "**Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven**" (Matthew 5:16). In several places in the scriptures "men" is used to mean and emphasize class and not primarily a plurality of persons. Notice the following scriptures where such is the case:

1. When Jesus announced to the disciples the difficulty of wealthy men entering the kingdom of heaven, the disciples asked: "**Who then can be saved?**" Jesus answered, "**With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**" Our Lord is not saying that a plurality of men cannot do what one man can do. By the use of the word

"men" Jesus is saying that **mankind** cannot accomplish this salvation, but Deity can (Matthew 19:23-26). Hence, we learn that in this case the human class cannot do what the divine class can.

2. When Jesus put the chief priests and the elders on the horns of a dilemma, he did so by questioning them. He asked them, "**The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?**" (Matthew 21:25)? The use of the word "men" in this question means mankind; thus, a certain class. John's baptism was of divine and not human origin.

3. Again, note that when Jesus commanded "**Let your light so shine before men...**" did he mean that we are **not** to let it shine before only one man (Matthew 5:16)? Here again "men" is used, not for the purpose of establishing plurality, but to indicate the class before whom a Christian's light is to shine. Christians are to "let their light" shine before a certain class—mankind.

4. When Peter and the other apostles declared to the Jewish council, "**We ought to obey God rather than men,**" the emphasis is placed on class and not number (Acts 5:29). Peter is simply teaching that we ought to obey Deity rather than humanity. Hence, whether one or more humans command Christians contrary to the will of Heaven, we ought to obey God rather than men.

5. When Paul told Timothy that there is "**one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ,**" he was simply pointing out and emphasizing that the race of man or humankind has access to Deity only through Jesus Christ (I Timothy 2:5; John 14:6). Hence, again it is seen that the emphasis is not on number, but class. More of these examples of the word "men" being used to mean mankind as a class could be offered, but these are sufficient for the honest-hearted rational person to get the real meaning of Matthew 10:32, 33.

THE CONCLUSION

MAY BE A LOGICAL ABSURDITY

From such men as **Guy N. Woods** and **G. K. Wallace** I learned a long time ago that one of the best ways to clearly show the falsity of a position is to reduce it to its utter absurdity; and, a more absurd and ridiculous doctrine than the one just studied I have not found. It is simply a crazy doctrine concocted by minds whose rational capabilities, at least as regards this doctrine, are totally befuddled.

IF SOMETHING "SOUNDS GOOD,"

IT MUST BE SCRIPTURAL

Some people, including not a few preachers, hear something that sounds good. Without proper examination they begin to declare and defend the "good sounding" doctrine. Thereby they cause a considerable amount of hurt. We do not need to be "parrots" in what we teach. God has commanded us to think, examine, and prove in the light of the absolute, objective standard of divine truth before we propagate anything. We are instructed: "**Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord,**" "**Prove all things: hold fast that which is good,**" and "**try the spirits to see whether they be of God**" (Isaiah 1:18; I Thessalonians 5:21; I John 4:1). Furthermore, Paul directed Timothy: "**Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to**

them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:15, 16).

CONCLUSION

We must learn how to logically evaluate a subject, then take the necessary time to do it (Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:21). Only then will we be less susceptible to

error simply because it "sounds good." If we do not engage in these necessary matters, we are putting our salvation totally in the hands of someone else's thinking. This is a good way to become a "parrot" preacher or teacher, but it is a poor way to serve God.

—David P. Brown
Associate Editor



Seminar on Willow Creek...

(Continued from Page 1)

stories written by world class feature writers for major American publications with no ties to particular mainline churches. Their feature stories are strictly reportorial and are of interest to the general public.

The most significant of these sources are the following: (1) The *New York Times*, Sunday, April 16, 1995 carried a series of four special articles on the Willow Creek Community Church. The first article is titled "Where Shopping-Mall Culture Gets a Big Dose of Religion." The articles were written by **Gustav Niebuhr**, son of **Rheinhold Niebuhr**.

(2) The *New York Times Magazine* carried on July 21, 1996, Section Six: "The Capitalist: God in the Packaging." The lead sentence is: "A few years back the Harvard Business School gave its blessing to the Willow Creek Community Church." In this flattering case study, it was shown how in less than fifteen years, Willow Creek had grown from a hole in a wheat field in Illinois into the largest church in America.

(3) By far, the *Atlantic Monthly* for August, 1996 carries the most penetrating and definitive feature article titled "Welcome to the Next Church," written by **Charles Truehart** on the Willow Creek Community Church and other similar churches. The names on the packaging are different, but the content is the same. Kindred churches using the megamarket packaging of religion wear such names as Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Mariners Church, and the Church of the Open Door.

(4) Coming from the religious side of the picture, an article was published July 18, 1994 in *Christianity Today* titled, "Selling Out the House of God," with a decidedly negative, if not unfriendly, approach. **Bill Hybel**, the genius who brought his Willow Creek dream to reality, answered a series of critical questions put to him by **Michael Maudlin** and **Howard Gilbreath** from *Christianity Today*. The Willow Creek Community Church is singled out as the undisputed prototype of this new pop "Shopping-mall culture" organized church where the biggest doses of this "make-you-feel-good" religion are dispensed.

Max Lucado was the first to give a glowing and approving report of the Willow Creek Community denomination in the January/February 1993 issue of *Wineskins*. He endorses the doctrine that there are Christians in all churches regardless of beliefs, practices, and denominational distinctions. **Jeff Walling** is the polished front man who goes

across the country selling the "community church" concept. He delivered a series of lectures during Jubilee '95 under the title "A Truly Community Church." I listened attentively to him. He divulged absolutely nothing about the parent Willow Creek Community Church and the relations to churches of Christ.

The only bona fide "community church" in the Nashville area is the Hendersonville Community Church. The Masons are no more secretive than the "Church of Christ" community church who leave the false impression that they form an open religious society. My big question to the Hendersonville Church of Christ community church is: "What are your official ties to the Willow Creek Community Church Association?" We do not expect a reply.

We ask **Doug Varnado** of the Hendersonville Community Church, does your church belong to the parachute organization called the Willow Creek Association whose church memberships number 70 denominations with a total of 1700 churches? **Harold Hazelip** and **Carl McKelvey** preach in your pulpit. The churches of Christ in this area are entitled to know this much. And before you and your kind further milk the churches of Christ, tell us really who you are.

I have the resources of David Lipscomb University and Vanderbilt libraries (and their professional librarians) to assist my research efforts. My purpose at this place is to put the fear of God into the liberals lest they should be so foolhardy as to question my sources.

POSTSCRIPT

We say to our liberal brethren that the long haul is on, and it will take time to flush you out into the open. The day of sophomoric strategies borrowed from **Lynn Anderson** is now a matter of the past. We can now force our liberal brethren out onto a level playing field where the rules apply to all.

ADDENDUM

To editors of papers who have printed my articles in the past, would you print this article? My purpose is to flush the liberals out into the open so that our brothers and sisters who sit in the pews may sooner understand and identify the chief take-over "change agents" who are after your churches.

We are now at the fork of the road, as church leaders will either opt for the liberal image, or remain committed to the pattern of New Testament Christianity.

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard
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LED BY THE SPIRIT

Dub McClish

(Note from the author: The following article is basically one I wrote approximately twenty years ago for the church bulletin I then edited. It represents what I have believed and taught for many years and what I continue to believe and teach.)

LED BY THE SPIRIT

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

DIRECT OPERATION IN SANCTIFICATION

It is not surprising, but expected, that unbelievers advocate the above-listed errors. Nor are we surprised that "change agents" and "new hermeneutic" advocates are urging at least some of these activities of the Spirit of God in their do-or-die agenda to wreck the church of the Lord. The matter that causes both surprise and dismay is that some otherwise sound brethren are now saying that the Spirit operates in a *direct* mode *apart from* and *in addition to* his Word in the realm of sanctification. Our concern is that they apparently do not have in mind merely how God operates and what he does through his "behind-the-scenes" providence or in answer to our prayers, *indirectly* and *external* to our hearts and minds (which Biblical doctrines are practically universally taught among the elect [e.g., Genesis 50:20; Esther 4:14; Romans 8:28; et al.]). These brethren seem rather to be insisting that the Spirit does some things *directly* and *internally* to and in the Christian's heart that he does not do through his word alone. If this is not what these brethren mean by their words, they should say so and do it *plainly* (and we would hope soon)! It is imperative that our words on this subject be carefully chosen, precise, and well-defined so as not to raise questions unnecessarily. (We say this realizing that we all fall

short of this lofty aim occasionally.) If one's concept of the way the Holy Spirit does his work for the Christian cannot be stated in unambiguous, clearly-comprehensible terms, it may be a strong signal that he has an incorrect concept that he needs to abandon or at least hold only to himself if he must hold it.

TWO DIFFERING VIEWS

Two major differing views concerning the way the Spirit *dwells* in the Christian (*i.e.*, representatively or personally) have been held by those who have genuinely pleaded for the restoration of the ancient order over the past two centuries. The "how" of the Spirit's indwelling, *in and of itself*, has not been considered a "fellowship" issue by respected men among us in past generations and should not be now. However, so far as we know only an infinitesimal number who were/are counted faithful through all these years have advocated (until very recently) the idea that the Spirit leads, guides, instructs, strengthens, or produces spiritual fruit in the Christian in any direct or immediate way, apart from or in addition to his spiritual "sword," his word (Ephesians 6:17). (We realize that "how many" or



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“which” brethren believe a certain doctrine does not guarantee its truthfulness. However, it hardly seems wise to disdain or hastily abandon doctrinal convictions arrived at by many able men over a long period of time.) To contend that the Spirit thus operates on the heart of the Christian in some direct, immediate way has generally been (and continues to be) correctly perceived both as (1) a surrender of the all-sufficiency of the Word of God and (2) an opening of the door to unrestrainable subjectivism.

SEPARATE ISSUES

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

THE HOLY SPIRIT—HOW DOES HE LEAD, GUIDE, AND DIRECT THE CHRISTIAN?

Now back to our original question: How does the Holy Spirit direct, lead, and do his work in the Christian? Does he provide *direct* leadership and influence in our lives? Does he *directly* (apart from, in addition to his written word and his external providence) tell us where to go, what to do, when to do what, and such like? Does he *directly* (apart from, in addition to the Bible and providence) give us spiritual strength and cause us to produce his fruit (Galatians 5:22, 23)? Please bear in mind that however the Spirit leads, he leads not a few, many, or most, but *all* of us, according to Romans 8:14.

MIRACULOUS DIRECTION IN THE FIRST CENTURY

In the first century, miraculous power was given to the apostles, and they were able to impart it to others for the purpose of revealing and confirming the gospel (Hebrews 2:3, 4). However, so far as we can discern, the New Testament neither explicitly nor implicitly teaches that every Christian possessed miraculous gifts. On some occasions, the Spirit *directly* told someone to go to a certain place and to do or not do a certain thing (e. g., Acts 8:29; 10:19, 20; 16:6, 7; et al.). However, it is readily observable that such direct messages and instances of guidance, *even in the days of miracles* (long since ended [I Corinthians

13:8–10, et al.]), were not the ordinary, but the extraordinary occurrence. Since even these miraculous incidents of the Spirit’s leadership were exceptional and were confined to only some or perhaps even a few individuals, it is manifest that such miraculous leadership was not in Paul’s (or the Spirit’s) mind in Romans 8:14. The kind of leadership of which Paul wrote is that which the Spirit gives to *every Christian*, implying that it is not occasional and extraordinary, but constant and ordinary.

LED BY THE SPIRIT AS ONE OBEYS THE WORD

How then are sons of God led by the Spirit? We repeat that until very recently, faithful brethren, whether they held a personal or a representative-only view of the Spirit’s indwelling, answered almost unanimously as follows: “We are led by the Spirit when and as we obey the word of the Spirit.” Paul commanded: “**Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh**” (Galatians 5:16). Surely none would deny that to “walk by the Spirit” is to be “led by the Spirit.” Immediately after his statement just quoted, the Spirit (through Paul’s inspired pen) led us to understand what the “**works of the flesh**” are and what the “**fruit of the Spirit**” is (Galatians 5:19–26), with the implied obligation to shun the former and produce the latter. There is not the slightest hint that Paul had in mind any idea that the Spirit apart from or in addition to the written word would somehow *directly* produce this beautiful and everywhere-lawful fruit in us.

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

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

—908 Imperial Drive
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“Of All Places, a Church of Christ”!

Lester Kamp

BAPTIST PREACHES AT THE MINTER LANE CHURCH OF CHRIST, ABILENE, TEXAS

An article in the *Baytown Sun* (Baytown, TX) focused attention on **Charles Hundley**, the superintendent of the Abilene Independent School District and a “Southern Baptist layman” preacher-teacher. The article described in some detail Hundley’s visit with the **Minter Lane Church of Christ** in Abilene and his association with Abilene Christian University. Hundley’s involvement with the Minter Lane Church of Christ and Abilene Christian University are matters of great concern to me and many others in the brotherhood.

DO BAPTISTS AND MINTER LANE “SPEAK THE SAME THING”?

Even the author of the article expressed his (or her) amazement regarding the visit of Hundley to the Minter Lane church. “He [Charles Hundley] recently found himself teaching a four-week study on the missionary journeys of Paul in, of all places, a Church of Christ.” What would it be other than amazement that would provoke the words, “of all places, a Church of Christ”? It is amazing to many that such would occur in, *of all places, a Church of Christ!* It is amazing especially because of the New Testament teaching regarding denominationalism. The inspired Paul condemned religious division and commanded all who would follow Christ to “**speak the same thing**,” to be of the “**same mind**” and of the “**same judgment**” in I Corinthians 1:10. In verses 12 and 13 of the same chapter, he went on to condemn the wearing of names religiously, authorizing the wearing of Christ’s name only. The actions of the Minter Lane church are truly amazing and manifest a departure from what the New Testament teaches. Instead of opposing and condemning departures from the New Testament pattern the Minter Lane church is bidding them “God speed” by inviting into their classrooms those who teach things contrary to the doctrine of Christ (see II John 9-11). In this the Minter Lane church acts without Divine authority and differs from the church of Christ as we read about it and identify it in the pages of the New Testament. Faithful members of the church of Christ must oppose all such departures.

Isn’t it interesting that it is amazing to the Abilene newspaper reporter that such would occur, but it is something which is occurring with some frequency and is being defended and encouraged by a growing number of liberals among us who are promoting change all the while acting as if they are not advocating anything truly different? The movement toward change and the actuality of changes in some places are all too apparent to any discerning observer. The *dishonesty* of these “change agents” is obvious.

“SPONTANEOUS APPLAUSE” FOR BAPTIST

The same newspaper article manifested a laxness in

other areas at Minter Lane toward the teaching of the New Testament. Referring to the reaction of the class to Hundley’s lesson, the article states, “Spontaneous applause indicated the rest of the audience felt the same way.” Spontaneous applause!?! Where is the New Testament authority for such a practice—spontaneous or otherwise? The one who introduced Hundley at Minter Lane was, according to the article, “worship leader **Dr. Jack Boyd**.” Where in the New Testament is there authority for having a “worship leader”? What does a “worship leader” do according to the New Testament pattern? Can a congregation worship God acceptably without a “worship leader”? According to the New Testament it can. The New Testament is as silent as a tomb about “worship leaders.” Jesus condemned in Matthew 23:5-10 the wearing of religious titles, but Jack Boyd at Minter Lane is elevated above others and distinguished from them by the title of “Doctor.” This practice, though popular, is a violation of God’s word.

BAPTIST HUNDLEY RECOMMENDED BY ACU COLLEAGUES

Jack Boyd, who is a professor of music at Abilene Christian University, said while introducing Hundley, “Mr. Hundley comes highly recommended by two highly-placed colleagues at ACU. When two Campbellites recommend a Southern Baptist to teach the Bible to us I figure we’d better listen.” It is amazing and appalling that brother Boyd would refer to members of the church of Christ as “Campbellites” in light of I Corinthians 1:10-13. Brother Boyd has identified himself with a mere man and his teaching rather than identifying himself with the “doctrine of Christ” and the church begun by God on Pentecost in Acts 2. Typical of the liberal thinkers among us brother Boyd thinks he is part of the “restoration movement” and not part of the New Testament church. Their focus is in the wrong time and place. Brother Boyd’s reaction was, “...we’d better listen” when a Baptist preacher comes highly recommended by members of the church. Jesus said rather, “**Beware**” (Matthew 7:15).

The recommendation of Hundley’s Bible teaching by “two highly-placed colleagues” at Abilene Christian University recommending Hundley’s Bible teaching reflects a departure of the school from the principles upon which it was established. Those who worked so hard to establish this school and labored so hard for its growth and development would have opposed such a “recommendation.” Things have changed and continue to change at ACU! (Read *Abilene Christian University “Ever Changing, Never Changing”?* by David P. Brown.) Time was when only members of the church of Christ were on the faculty of the school. This is apparently no longer true. The same newspaper article mentioned above stated that Mr. Hundley has “been teaching United States history at ACU two

nights a week for six years.” It is obvious that ACU does not stand where it once stood. Many in the churches of Christ are concerned and have attempted to bring the school back to the Bible. The administrators of the school seem determined to go their own way and leave the principles of sound, Bible doctrine upon which the school was established. *Regrettably, some in the Church of Christ have more loyalty to schools than they do to the word of God and continue to support ACU with their words of encouragement, continue to defend what they do as the school pollutes the doctrine of Christ in teaching and practice, and continue to back them financially ignoring their obvious departures.*

What an indictment of the church for it to be deemed necessary to bring in a Southern Baptist preacher (teacher) to teach the missionary journeys of Paul! It should be noted that, according to the article, Hundley emphasized a number of things about Paul in this series. One was that Paul was “[m]aster to his blinding light conversion.” I suppose that the folks at Minter Lane sat quietly soaking in with great eagerness the idea that Paul was converted on the road to Damascus by his blinding light experience that caused him to believe in the one he earlier had persecuted. Perhaps they were enthralled as they were taught that salvation for Paul and the others in Acts was by “faith only.” Though the article does not give the details, I have no doubt that such was taught for that is denominational, Baptist doctrine. The Minter Lane people were effectively taught on those Wednesday nights, but you can rest assured

that much of what they were taught was not the truth of God’s word. When truth is polluted with error the result is error! The church of the New Testament is the “**pillar and ground of the truth**” (I Timothy 3:15), not the podium and promoter of error! I say with James, “**My brethren, these things ought not so to be**” (James 3:10).

THE BAPTISTS’ “HOLY WOW”

When Jack Boyd returned to the podium for the final hymn, the article describes him as “Shaking his head in apparent disbelief he said simply, ‘Wow!’” He was apparently so impressed that he could not believe it. All he could say was, “Wow!” I suppose Rubel and his cohorts would cite this as an example of a “holy wow.” But it was anything but holy. I also shake my head in disbelief—not because I am impressed, but because I am distressed! I shake my head in dismay! I am amazed at the length to which some will go to be “**like all the nations (denominations)**” about them by departing from the Lord and his way. I am appalled!

“**And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep...The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light**” (Romans 13:11-12). We had better wake up! It is later than we think. The battle against righteousness is being fiercely waged. Rise up, soldiers of Christ!

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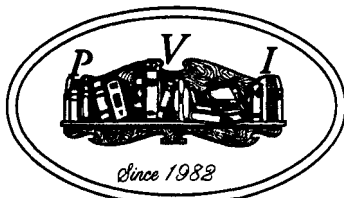
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THE UNFASHIONABLE CHRIST

Al Brown

INTRODUCTION

When God came in the flesh, the world saw man as God wanted all men to be. Jesus was the perfect man. His character comprised just those traits ideal man should have. If men aspire to be perfect, they have but to observe and emulate what Christ thought about, the ways he talked and what he had to say, and what he did. This includes those negative qualities so politically incorrect to those of any age who walk in darkness. Worldly wisdom had so warped man's understanding and judgment that the moral attributes found in Jesus' life were the very traits men despised most—and still do.

VAIN REASONING AND BLINDED TO THE TRUTH

By inspiration, the apostle Paul explains why this is true: **"They...became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and...exchanged the truth of God for a lie. ...Even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting"** (Romans 1:21-23, 25, 28).

Another great truth helps us understand why worldly people have such warped concepts of what is right and wrong—correct and unacceptable. The god of this world (Satan) has blinded them to the truth (II Corinthians 4:4). Paul wrote about the man of sin (an agent of Satan) **"...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 2:9-12—KJV).

THE DIVINE CHARACTER

Because Jesus is unfashionable to worldly men whose ideals, morality, and wisdom are flawed, they try to recast his character into their own mold. This is not the first time men have tried to force deity into conforming to man's marred standard of what they think is the perfect man. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God charged the people of Israel with doing the same thing: **"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself"** (Psalms 50:21).

Jesus' character traits he enjoins his followers to assimilate in their own lives have never been popular with people estranged from God. Those qualities valued by God are the ones most despised by the world, but they are the very attributes that distinguish Christians from other men and make them as novel as Jesus was. Paul wrote, concerning those at odds with God: **"...(They) became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.**

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves; for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." (Romans 1:20-25).

WORLDLY MEN ARE HOSTILE TO THE DIVINE IDEAL

Worldly men are exceedingly poor judges of what constitutes acceptable character traits. This is why the more negative, aggressive traits Christ and his apostles demonstrated and endorsed are especially obnoxious to most people. Worldly wisdom has so influenced great numbers of professed Christians that they refuse to preach or practice these qualities. Rejecting what the scriptures teach, they have shown how unlike Christ and hostile to the divine ideal they really are.

For instance, they believe the lie that everyone, and especially their brethren in Christ, must speak only in a positive way and reject everything negative. Isn't it odd? They adamantly insist that this should characterize everyone—except themselves. They are so blinded they do not realize their own criticism of others is negative—a no-no, according to them. When they tell those who will listen to their lying words that they must not be negative, the *critics* are being negative.

THOSE WHO IGNORE GOD'S WORD

These unbelievers ignore the testimony of God's own book. They portray Christ as a mealy-mouthed, milquetoast coward who would never say anything to upset others. Such people are as distressed as his first-century disciples, and not a little ashamed, that Jesus would label those who misled and deceived the unsuspecting as being the **"offspring of vipers"** (Matthew 12:34) or some such term. Jesus even called Peter a very unflattering name, "Satan." In the same verse, he made another negative statement when he told Peter he was not minding the things of God (Matthew 16:23).

In the preceding chapter, Jesus charged the Pharisees with ignoring the will of God (Matthew 15:3-6). Then he called them hypocrites (v. 7) and said their worship was vain (v. 9). These were the leaders of Israel! It was in this context that the spiritual weakness of the disciples, and Jesus' response to it are shown: **"Then came the disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, when they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind guides (another unflattering, negative statement—ab). And if the blind guide the blind, both**

shall fall into a pit" (Matthew 15:12-14).

AFRAID OF OFFENDING MEN

The disciples were deeply concerned about offending such influential men. They would have avoided it had the matter been left to them. Jesus pointed out that these Jewish leaders were teaching what God had not authorized (plants which God had not planted), and that such teaching would be uprooted—no ifs, ands, or buts! Then Jesus told them to leave these blind guides alone. If they did not, they too would find themselves in the same pit of religious error into which the false teachers had fallen.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN TRUTH AND ERROR

So much was at stake in this great battle between truth and error—the destiny of men's souls. Jesus, the champion of truth, could not remain silent and let Satan win the day. He would not allow his disciples to do it either because of some misplaced allegiance to a code of etiquette dictated by worldly wisdom. Jesus said what needed to be said when it needed to be said. Thus, he showed that some things are more important than humanly-imposed rules. Could anything demonstrate more vividly that man-made edicts—even those honored by cultured society—are to be ignored if they would frustrate God's will by keeping one from doing what needs to be done.

This does not mean a Christian can be mean-spirited, malicious, slanderous, or hateful in what he says or does. He is commanded to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), and to be gentle, forbearing, and meek toward all men (II Timothy 2:24f; I Peter 3:15). He is to consider himself as he corrects others, realizing he may also need correction in the future (Galatians 6:1f).

At the same time, he is told to "speak the things which befit the sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1), and to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Even liberals are familiar with II Timothy 4:2. They may despise it, but they know it is there: "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Modern infidels in sheep's clothing would never tell a fornicator he (she) was lost unless he repented and obeyed the Lord—especially if the sinner was a big contributor. After all, they might lose the contribution! Isn't that more important than where an immortal soul might spend eternity? They would never, ever upset those who had the power to get a preacher fired or have a member ostracized. They reason (?) that such sinners must not be made to feel guilty—or that they must obey God's will if they would be saved.

Judging by their speech and actions, it is not amiss to charge that such false brethren today are just as distressed as Jesus' disciples were when he told sinners (and that included all men) that they were lost. Jesus convicted men of sin and called them to repentance. He exposed false teachers, hypocrites, and religious charlatans of every stripe in no uncertain terms.

CONCLUSION

Today, do these wolves in the body of Christ believe anyone is lost and faces a devil's hell unless he is reconciled to God (Colossians 1:21, 22)? Does it ever occur to these blind leaders that sinners might repent if they were confronted with the condition of their souls and what the will of God requires of them? Could it be they have no faith in the transforming power of the gospel or the ability of God to accomplish his will through his word? God said, "For as the rain cometh down and...watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10f).

Jesus' character had many sides. He was meek and humble; he was loving and patient—the Lamb of God (John 1:29). He was also courageous, unwavering, and strong—the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5). He never courted popularity at the expense of what men needed to hear—and they needed to hear the truth about the sin in their hearts and lives. They needed to know that God demands faithful obedience if one is to be saved. Jesus told men what they had to believe and do in order to be forgiven of their sin and be reconciled to God. We cannot do less, and we can be sure that faithfulness to God will not make us any more popular than it did him.

Our Master said: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). Again, Jesus warned: "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:18-20).

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ON PROPERLY TRANSLATING THE BIBLE

Mark K. Lewis

INTRODUCTION

As the reader is no doubt aware, in recent years there has been an explosion of new Bible versions. Some of these versions claim to be direct translations from the original languages (e.g., Revised Standard Version, New American Standard, New International Version), while others (e.g., Today's English Version) are only "paraphrases," designed to give the "sense" of the passage and not a direct, literal rendition of Hebrew and/or Greek. With this plethora of new versions, it is not uncommon to walk into a house of worship today and see several different editions being carried by various members. This does create some confusion, for when someone reads from his/her particular favorite Bible, many others have difficulty following in their editions. Undoubtedly this lack of consistency in translation has led many people to conclude that it is not important if we have lack of consistency in belief.

Are there some guidelines for a proper translation? Are all of these different editions of Scripture equally correct, is it simply a matter of "taste" what version one uses? In this article, I wish to discuss the art of translation and illustrate how certain principles apply in one very popular Bible edition today.

TRANSLATING IS NOT AN EXACT SCIENCE

Up front it must be noted that translating from a foreign tongue is not an exact science. Word-for-word translations are not always possible, and would often make no sense. But certainly a translator, to be honest and fair with the author whom he is translating, should want to get as close to the original as possible and convey exactly the meaning of the text. This is certainly true with the Bible, the most important book in the world. God authored the Bible, not man, and thus those who translate the Bible must remember and understand that they are handling God's word and ought to convey what God said as accurately as possible, whether they fully comprehend it or not. A translator is a *tool, a medium, a means to an end*; he ought not to *interpret*, for he must recognize that he is simply a go-between. Once he puts his own ideas into the text of what (he thinks) the original author meant, he ceases to be a translator and becomes a commentator. He thus becomes unfaithful, disingenuous (for he claims to be a translator), and, frankly, dishonest. Let me elucidate on this further by quoting from the introduction of a translation of Plato's *Republic* by Dr. Allan Bloom.

THE WORK OF THE TRANSLATOR

First, some background. The late Dr. Bloom was a classicist. In 1968, he completed a translation of Plato's great work and announced "this is intended to be a literal translation"¹ (p. xi). Obviously most students cannot read *The Republic* in the original, and Bloom was hoping to aid the "serious student [who] wishes...to arrive at his own understanding of the work" (ibid).

He [the student] must be emancipated from the tyranny of the translator, given the means of transcending the limitations of the translator's interpretation...[t]he only way to provide the reader with this independence is by a slavish, even if sometimes cumbersome, literalness (ibid).

Bloom obviously had a very different conception of the translator's work from those who believe that English versions (of any work) must be "easy to read," or "thought translations." "The translator," Bloom argued, "should conceive of himself as a medium between a master whose depths he has not plumbed and an audience of potential students of the master who may be much better endowed than is the translator" (ibid). It is not the translator's job to tell the reader, through his translation, what the original author meant (or, more precisely, what the translator *thinks* the author meant), but simply to tell the student what the "master" said; it could be, as Bloom notes, that the student is more capable of understanding the ancient author than is the translator. But regardless of the comparative intelligence of translator and student, it is the translator's job to *translate*, as accurately as possible, and let the student come to his own conclusion, however correct or faulty. "It is least of all his [the translator's] function to render the work palatable to those who do not wish...to expend the effort requisite to the study of difficult texts. Nor should he try to make an ancient mode of thought sound 'contemporary'" (ibid, pp. xi-xii). In regards to the Bible, if someone is not willing to take the time and effort to study and find out what the Word of God means, that is his fault; it is not the translator's job to tell the lazy student what he [the translator] *thinks* the Bible, or Plato, or any other non-English work, means. Bloom's analysis here is absolutely correct—but not the least bit popular in today's world.

A FALSE VIEW OF TRANSLATION

Dr. Bloom was especially irritated—and indeed was motivated to translate Plato—by the work of one H. D. P. Lee. Bloom quoted Lee, who expressed this view of a translator's job: "The translator must go behind what Plato said and discover what he means, and if, for example, he [Plato] says 'examining the beautiful and the good' must not hesitate to render this as 'discussing moral values' if that is in fact the way in which the same thought would be expressed today" (ibid, xiii). Bloom did not accept this kind of reasoning. What if, by "the beautiful and the good" Plato did *not* mean "discussing moral values"? Is it the translator's job to inform the reader what he *thinks* the original author meant? Given Lee's translation, a modern reader would never be able to tell that Plato did not use the Greek words for "discussing," "moral," and "values;" he used the Greek words "beautiful" and "good." As Bloom noted, "it might be more prudent to let the reader decide whether 'the beautiful and the good' are simply equivalent to 'moral values.' If they are the same, he will soon enough

find out. And if they are not, as may be the case, he will not be prevented from finding that out and thereby putting his own opinions to the test" (ibid). A reader must be told, as closely as possible, exactly what the original author said and allowed to come to his own conclusions. Any translator with any other mindset is arrogant, thinking he has the answers, and is being totally unfair with the original author and those who read his translation. As Bloom said, "what is lacking in many translations [is that] they are not animated by the passion for the truth; they are really the results of elegant trifling" (ibid, xii).

These principles certainly apply to Bible translations, yea much more so. The Bible is the Word of God, and no man, or group of men, have a monopoly on what it means. If ever a volume deserved as literal a translation as possible, it is the Bible. Obviously, paraphrases of Scripture can amount to nothing more than brief, mostly useless, commentaries; the author of the paraphrase is putting into his own words what he thinks the Bible means. But there are many versions which claim to be translations; if so, then those who translate them are under the obligations as noted by Dr. Bloom above. Unfortunately, most seem to be motivated by the spirit expressed by H. D. P. Lee.

THE NIV

Perhaps the best example of this is the New International Version. The NIV is, far and away, the most popular modern version; it is estimated that, by the end of 1996, over 100 million copies of this Bible will have been sold. In the preface of the 1978 edition, the translators of the NIV claim that it is "a completely new translation of the Holy Bible" (p. vii). Their first concern, so they claim, "has been the accuracy of the translation and its fidelity to the thought of the biblical writers" (p. viii), though they admit that they "have striven for more than a word-for-word translation" (ibid). Word-for-word translations are indeed difficult; as the preface notes, "thought patterns and syntax differ from language to language" (ibid). But in many instances word-for-word translations are quite possible, and when dealing with the Bible, most desirable, simply because *it is God who chose the words!* What is easy to demonstrate is that the translators of the NIV had absolutely no concern for verbatim accuracy, even when such was possible.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE NIV WITH KJV

Here is a simple illustration. Open the King James and New International versions to Mark 3:1-6. Note that in the NIV the word "Jesus" is found four times in this text; in the King James, it is not found once. In the Greek New Testament, the word "Jesus" does not appear at all. Why did the NIV "translators" put the word "Jesus" into this text four times when it is not in the Greek text even once? Obviously, they were not "translating" here, and certainly not word-for-word. There is nothing difficult about the syntax of the Greek word for "Jesus"; the NIV translators simply put into the text what they wanted with little or no regard for what the original language actually said. This is a constant feature of the NIV.

Some might respond, "But what difference does it make? No damage is done to the text of Mark 3:1-6 by

putting the word 'Jesus' in for clarity's sake." And, indeed, in this instance, no real damage to the meaning of the text is done. The problem is *God did not say "Jesus" one time in this context!* We are not dealing with Plato here; we are dealing with words of the Almighty God of heaven and earth. What right does man have to change one single syllable of what God wrote? What is at stake here, beloved, is an attitude toward divine authority, a respect for the words of Jehovah God. Though no ultimate damage is done to the meaning of Mark 3:1-6, it does illustrate that the translators of the NIV have no real regard for the integrity of the words of Jehovah, which is, of course, the very problem with denominationalism (nearly all the "translators" of the NIV are members of Protestant denominations). The translators are simply reflecting their own lack of respect for God's word, as much as they might claim otherwise. Such looseness of attitude might be acceptable to people in denominations, but ought to be wholly anathema to members of the church of Christ. While this looseness of attitude may not be particularly damaging in Mark 3:1-6, in other contexts it does make a difference.

CALVINISM AND THE NIV

Such an attitude is useful to the NIV translators when the original does not teach their Calvinistic, denominational doctrines. Notice the differences in the following:

Psalm 51:5—"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin did my mother conceive me." (ASV)

Psalm 51:5—"Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." (NIV)

The whole structure of this sentence has been changed by the NIV. In the first phrase, the "translators" completely twist the verb "brought forth" (Hebrew, *shawa*) and render it a perfect tense of the verb "to be" in conjunction with the prepositional phrase "from birth." The prepositional phrase "in iniquity" is personified to "sinner." In the second phrase, the thought of David being conceived "in sin" is changed to David being "sinful." The NIV translators deliberately wrested this verse to make it teach the Calvinistic concept of total hereditary depravity. Even if that were what the verse meant, *that is not what it says*, and the job of the translator is to tell the reader what the verse says, not what he thinks it means. As noted earlier in this article, Professor Bloom is so correct when he notes that the serious student will soon enough figure out what a writer means, and the translator has no business trying to "help" the student by "going behind" what the writer (in this case, God) said. Psalm 51:5, in the NIV, is a horrible abuse of the translator's responsibility, regardless of the accuracy or inaccuracy of the *meaning* they put on the text. In this case, they are doubly to be blamed because they put their own false doctrine into the text.

FURTHER MISTRANSLATION IN THE NIV

They have done it also with the Greek word *sarx*. This word is found 151 times in the Greek New Testament (Textus Receptus); in the King James Version, 147 times it is rendered "flesh," twice "carnal," once "carnally minded," and once "fleshly." Thus, this is not a terribly difficult word to translate word-for-word. *Sarx* means

"flesh" pure and simple, and should be so rendered unless such a rendering makes no sense whatsoever. Then a slight variation is necessary. But in general there is no great difficulty in translating this Greek word.

Unless, of course, one wants to claim he is "translating" the Bible but in reality is changing the text as he sees fit. In the NIV, the word *sarx* is rendered "flesh" only 33 times. In all, there are 38 different ways the NIV chose to render this word; approximately 15 times, the NIV text (where this word is found) simply leaves the word out (e.g., Mark 10:8).² What is interesting is how the NIV further handles this word *sarx*. It is variously translated with the following words/phrases: man, one, body, mankind, human decision, human standards, people, human nature, physical, natural selves, sinful nature, sinful man, nature, it, race, human ancestry, natural, sinful, sinful man, life, worldly manner, worldly point of view, standards of the world, world, human effort, ordinary way, outwardly, its, birth, earthly, personally, unspiritual, human, earthly life, sinful human nature, perversion, and external.³ Now what theory of translation allows for one simple word to have some 38 different renditions? The Greeks had perfectly good words for "body," "human," "world," even "it" and "its," and for all the other words/phrases used by the NIV. And whether the *meaning* of the passages is accurate or not is a moot point. God used the word for "flesh," not the words for "sinful nature," and honest translators would so render it unless absolutely impossible. And, again, if "flesh" does mean "sinful nature" (which it does not), that is the job of the student to find out, not the job of the translator to tell him. And since "flesh" does *not* mean "sinful nature," then the NIV translators are more to be blamed for writing their own false philosophy into the inspired text of Jehovah God.

One more example, among many, must suffice. Romans 1:17 in the King James Version reads, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The same verse in the NIV: "For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" Let us overlook the fact that in the Greek New Testament (UBS) the word "gospel" is not found, and the word "righteousness" appears only once (the first time); such amendments and additions are so common to the NIV as to be hardly worth mentioning. I wish to examine the statement "by faith from first to last," or as the KJV renders it "from faith to faith." Here again we find gross editing by the NIV "translators" in favor of their false denominational doctrine.

In the Greek Testament, the phrase translated in the KJV "from faith to faith" is *ek pisteos eis pistin*.⁴ "From faith to faith" is a faithful, word-for-word rendering of this phrase; "by faith from first to last" is not, for the words "by," "first," and "last" are nowhere in the Greek of Romans 1:17. When the whole phrase in the NIV is considered, "a righteousness that is by faith from first to last," it is easy to see that the NIV "translators" are not translating Romans 1:17 (the word for "righteousness," as noted, is also not in the Greek), but are writing their own

(false) doctrine of salvation by faith only into the text. Thus, again, not only have the NIV authors been dishonest with the Word of God by not translating it as God wrote it, but they are also guilty of teaching false doctrine and trying to pass it off as an accurate translation of the Word of God. One does not need a vivid imagination to wonder what Jehovah thinks of that.

CONCLUSION

There is no perfectly accurate translation of the Bible, but there are several which are far superior to the NIV, and not nearly as deceptive. The complaint of this article is not so much that the NIV exists—for, indeed, there are Bibles much worse than it—but that the authors of that Bible claim that it is something it is not, i.e., a translation of God's word. There are places where the NIV clarifies, just as a commentary would, the meaning of an obscure text. But let the reader beware when he uses the New International Version: he has a brief commentary in his hand, not an accurate translation of the Word of God. If he wishes the latter, he must look elsewhere.

NOTES

¹All quotations in this section are from Allan Bloom, tr., *The Republic of Plato* (Basic Books, 1968).

²It must be noted that, in some of these instances, there are variant readings in the received Greek texts. For example, in 1 John 4:3, the UBS Greek text omits the phrase "in the flesh," while the *Textus Receptus* (the Greek text behind the KJV) includes it. The NIV follows the UBS rendering, interestingly, in this case, the ASV follows the *Textus Receptus*. Another example: in Romans 8:1, the UBS omits "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Obviously, the TR does include it and it is in the KJV, but not in the NIV, or, in this instance, in the ASV. So some of these "omissions" of the word *sarx* from the NIV are based upon these variant Greek texts.

³These renditions are from my own personal study. They are, I am sure, in the main correct, but due to the possibility of personal error, there could be a few inaccuracies which the author is more than willing to acknowledge if someone wishes to go to the trouble, as I did, of looking up, in the NIV, every instance where a translation of the word *sarx* is to be located.

⁴There is no variant reading in the Greek texts at this point. Both the TR and UBS texts have the same wording.

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ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA DEVASTATED BY WORST HURRICANE; 1,000S KILLED, INJURED; MANY BRETHREN NEED HELP

The night of Wednesday, November 6, 1996, will be long remembered by the brethren and churches of Andhra Pradesh, India, when they were devastated by the worst hurricane (typhoon) in the history of that country. Disruption of all services was so bad that it was several days before brother Joshua Gootam, of Kakinada, could fax us the following report:

November 9, 1996

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
2956 Allshore
Memphis, Tennessee 38118
U.S.A.

Dear brother Ira,

I am writing this to you from the city of Kakinada, which looks desolate like never before. On the night of Wednesday, 6th November, we were hit by an awesome hurricane. The weather forecast had said some such thing is coming. The government ordered all schools and colleges closed till Monday, the 11th morning. It stopped all rail and road traffic wherever it was. Around 5:30 that evening it began to rain some. In about half an hour we began to feel the fury of nature.

The wind blew at 160 to 200 kilometers an hour. It came by waves. Its sound was like that of 100 jet fighters taking off at the same time. It lasted exactly six hours. After the fury of the wind abated, it rained through the rest of the night. By Thursday morning the east and west Godavari Districts of Andhra Pradesh were badly mauled. All power lines were broken, telephones went out of order and it looks like a city of dangling wires. There were at least 10,000 huge trees that came crashing down in this city...It has been three and half days since I wrote this. We do not have electricity or drinking water. There is water water everywhere but not a drop to drink!

One of the areas that suffered most is the delta which lies between two branches of the river Godavari. This is very fertile rice and coconut land. It is also an area where we have most number of congregations, about 200 approximately. The initial reports say there are more than 1,000 people dead, about 1.9 million coconut trees came crashing down, millions of acres of rice fields which were just ripening for harvest were washed away or inundated and at least 30,000

homes that were either crashed or the roofs were blown off. There are all kinds of huge trees that fell on the roads, roof tops, buses and trucks killing several people on the spot. This morning's Telugu Daily said one village 25 miles south of Kakinada called Bhairavipalem has only four permanent houses and 200 thatch roofed houses. All these 200 were down to earth killing the most number of people. This is all together a fisherman's village and we have a small congregation there. There is no way right now to know if there were any survivors.

The rivers and canals are overflowing with water carrying carcasses of animals and people. The stench of rotten flesh is everywhere. There are huge heaps of felled trees or plants in front of every household in Kakinada. It would take more than a month for anyone to clear this debris. Road transport is still very much blocked. Our brethren need some help to come out of this calamity. I am sure most all their meeting places and homes were either blown off or have crashed. The government says it would take at least ten years for the delta to recover. As soon as things permit, I will be travelling to see how the brethren are faring and to encourage them to keep on going with faith in the Lord. Just now a brother called to say sister Paul Gootam died last night. One tree fell on her and she succumbed to injuries. Two widows in Kakinada lost their homes and belongings. They are now sheltered in a government school building. We will know more of this news in the next one or two weeks. Brethren, keep praying and extend us your helping hand. God bless you.

In Christian Love,
[Signed] Joshua Gootam

November 11: Could not send this out till today. Mail was not going out. Many preachers reporting their church buildings collapsing. Two reported four

deaths of members. All fell under trees. Another preacher's wife in hospital. Their thatch house caved in on them. Expect many more of such incidents.—JG.

The government says more than 5,000 died in this calamity.

* * * * *

[NOTE: Since receiving the foregoing letter from brother Gootam by fax during the night of November 11th, I have been in touch with him by telephone.

As you know, I was just in that part of India at the end of May and early June. Brother Gootam was my host. I knew personally the preacher's wife who was killed during the hurricane by the falling tree. (In my *Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter* for April-July, 1996, she is shown on the left side of the middle photo on Page 4. Her husband, also in photo, is a converted Pentecostal Holiness preacher, now preaching the truth of the gospel for our Lord.)

As you can see, the situation among our Indian brethren in Andhra Pradesh is desperate. To send food or clothing by ship would take months—so long, in fact, it is almost out of the question. However, certified cashier's checks by registered overseas airmail can reach them in from nine to ten days. The brethren at Kakinada have agreed to receive and distribute such funds where needed most. Please make all such checks payable to Kakinada Church of Christ, earmarked Hurricane Relief Fund, and airmail them to Post Office Box 80, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh 533 001, India. Time is of the essence. God bless you as you help. IYR.Jr.]

As we go to press, brother Rice is in the Far East. Before returning home, he will be visiting Andhra Pradesh and brother Gootam. When he returns, he will have an update on this report. DPB, Associate Editor.

WAKE UP THOU THAT SLEEPEST

Marvin L. Weir

The judgment will come and many brethren will still be asleep spiritually speaking. It is a tragic shame that brethren prefer to bury their heads in the sand—and *hope* (?) all turns out well. Last March 17 I wrote an article entitled "Amazingly Amazing." It revealed that Abilene Christian University lectureship director, William Young, allowed Bill Banowsky to be a speaker at the lectures. Not only did he allow and thus endorse Banowsky, but let me remind you of his statement in the *Christian Chronicle* advertising the lectureship. "The Church: Who Needs It?" is the theme for the 78th Bible lectureship at Abilene Christian University. With moderns asking this question, we all need affirmative responses....Theme speakers include William S. Banowsky...." In the above mentioned article it was emphasized that William Young visited me and gave his assurance that both he and ACU desired to abide by God's eternal truths. Please remember, before this year's lectureship, Mr. Young took notes as he and I discussed Bill Banowsky and his infamous sermon in the Methodist church.

Now please note a sample of another "affirmative response" delivered with ACU's blessings at this year's lectureship. The speaker is Mark Henderson and this excerpt is taken from the August 1996 *Firm Foundation*.

Another preacher asked me to meet him at the Ministerial Fellowship's weekly prayer meeting. Ours is the only Church of Christ in Boulder, so I accepted the chance to meet these colleagues in ministry, though I had some anxiety about how we would deal with our many differences.

I needn't have worried. Those 15 or 20 men didn't come together to debate; they came together each week to get to the serious business of prayer. ...As I sat there, a silent observer for the better part of an hour, I found a lump forming in my throat while I listened to these men from so many different fellowships unite with one voice before

Directory

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—Alabama—

Holly Pond—Church of Christ, Hwy 278 W., P.O. Box 131, Holly Pond, AL 35083, Tel. (205) 796-6802, 429-2026. Sunday: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

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Somerville—Union Church of Christ, 4626 Hwy 36 E, one mile east of Hwy 67, Tel. (205) 778-8961, 778-8955. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—Florida—

Miami—Westwood Lake Church of Christ, 10790 SW 36th Street, Miami, FL 33165, Tel. (305) 554-8229. F. Matherly, preacher, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:30 p.m.

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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.: 7:30 p.m.

—Indiana—

Evansville—West Side Church of Christ, 3232 Edgewood Dr., Evansville, IN 47712, Sunday: 9:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 6:30 p.m., Larry Albritton, minister.

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Farmington—Sunnyview Church of Christ, 2801 Hwy H, Farmington, MO 63640, Tel. (573) 756-5925 or 3595. Evangelist, Sean Hochdorf, Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

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—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m. Jimmie B. Hill, minister.

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Memphis—Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Rd., Memphis, TN 38118. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:30 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, minister, (901) 366-0617.

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Nashville area—Villages Church of Christ, 436 Belinda Parkway, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, Sun.: 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) 758-7406.

—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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the Lord for the sake of each other and for the sake of the lost of Boulder. Finally, I interrupted and told them who I was and which church I was from. I told them about struggles we were facing in our church, and asked for their prayers. Nothing in my experience could have prepared me for what happened next. For the next ten minutes, all they did was pray for me and our congregation. They prayed God would give me a powerful ministry and that our church would be an effective witness for the sake of the kingdom. Many words were said by a Baptist, a Presbyterian, someone from a Reformed church, the preacher at a community church, another from a Charismatic fellowship, but I will never forget the prayer of a man I later learned preaches for the Assembly of God fellowship. He only knows how to pray at full throttle. ...As I listened to the voices of all those men, whom many of us have regarded as enemies, flooding me and flooding us with their prayers, great tears of release began to roll down my cheeks as I received that anointing with the precious oil of unity.

Brethren, all who are spiritually awake still regard denominational bodies and false teachers as enemies of the cross! You will also notice that this erring brother refers to these denominational "pastors" as his "colleagues in ministry" saving the lost of Boulder. Can you imagine the apostle Paul making such a statement? Neither can I. Paul would say, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11). Such a biblical statement would play havoc with Henderson's so-called "anointing with the precious oil of unity."

Those that are spiritually asleep had better wake up before the judgment. ACU and those like her can no longer be supported and fellowshiped. Neither can false teachers pretending to be sheep be invited to speak on lectureships and in gospel meetings. Elders need to remember that they will give an account to God for their overseeing the flock (Hebrews 13:17). And members of the body of Christ, regardless of whether elders choose to do right or not, must remember that they will be held accountable for worshipping "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). The day of judgment

will reveal where our allegiance belongs!

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