

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

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

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT MILTON SEWELL OF FHU

Wayne Coats  
705 Hillview  
Mt. Juliet, TN 37122  
November 11, 1996

Mr. Milton Sewell  
c/o Freed Hardeman University  
Henderson, TN 38340

Dear brother Milton,

I sincerely wish that circumstances were such as to preclude this letter being sent to you; however, I believe it is my duty to communicate with you and I pray that you will not become unduly vituperative toward me. I will try to be as loving and considerate as I know how to be.

If you misjudge my motive in making this letter open and above board, I cannot help it. I do not know how many people you have spoken to in an effort to disparage, belittle, discredit, demean and put me down, so I am responding to your statements allegedly made to a young preacher who talked with you by phone relative to an article which I printed in the *Plumblin*e paper regarding Freed-Hardeman University purchasing booth space at the Jubilee.

Last year I wrote you a letter and voiced my opposition to my beloved Alma Mater having anything to do with Jubilee. Contrary to your statement, I did try to communicate with you by letter. Did I do wrong? I certainly meant to do no wrong.

After the 1996 Jubilee I wrote the article about the University purchasing booth space at the Jubilee. Did I commit sin in doing this? I have the charter of the Jubilee as filed with the state of Tennessee and I challenge any man to affirm the scripturalness of the Jubilee structure. Will you so affirm?

The last time I attended a lectureship at the school, some

young fellow announced at the open forum that, "we will not call names." To me this is the very depths of compromise and I said so in a brief article which was published in the *Plumblin*e. You believe in calling my name when you can disparage me to a young preacher. Why did you try to destroy my influence with your verbal detractions? Will you meet me publicly and defend the Jubilee?

I can think of one other occasion when I wrote something about a teacher taking a class of young preachers from FHU to Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis to learn about Leadership. I think this is terribly wrong, and I have no hesitancy in opposing such things. Have I done wrong? No, I did not come down and talk to you, and I did not violate a Bible principle notwithstanding your accusation against me. I do not expect you to come up to visit me, and I do not think you will, but I ask you why do you think I should come to talk to you? Do you desire to bind a rule upon me which you refuse to keep for yourself?

Is it true that you accuse me of being "unreasonable, griping and attacking...?" How can you know this? You "...have never come to talk to me or ask me anything." I'm sure you are cognizant of the fact that an unreasonable person is without reason, given to imbecility, stupidity, nonsense, foolishness, incongruence, incompetent and very illogical. That should qualify me to be a university president. Brother Marshall Keeble would grin and say, "a school president don't need to know nutten bout nutten." I concede to being at the lowest among the lowly.

If it helps your ego to demean, disparage, belittle, deprecate, and use what to others is a scurrilous verbalization against me to my back, rest assured that I shall pray for you.

Is it true that you actually said that purchasing booth space at the Jubilee would be "taking a risk?" Do you advocate students at FHU taking risks with their morals?

Is it true that you were invited to be a speaker at the Jubilee?

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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## Associate Editorial

# UNIVERSITY LECTURESHIPS

I have come to expect anything and everything (except the truth of the gospel) from the universities operated by certain brethren of the looser variety. In this editorial I want us to examine two lectureships of Universities operated by these brethren.

## ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY'S 1997 LECTURES

ACU's theme for their 1997 Lectureship must have been conjured up by one of the school's most fertile minded and resourceful hypocrites. It is, "*Faith under FIRE, Biblical principles and faithful practice are always at odds with humanism. A Retreat is unthinkable!*". In actuality their theme is very appropriate. They have been "front and center" on the "firing line" in bringing all their guns to bear on gospel truth and the Lord's church for a long time.

## ALWAYS BE SURE TO READ THE SMALL PRINT

In reading the whole ACU lecture theme closely one will note that the school is deceptive in her wording and presentation of it on the lecture theme brochure. While "Faith under FIRE" occupies the whole of the cover page of the 9" X 6" lecture brochure, one must read the much smaller print to see what or who ACU thinks has "faith" under fire.

Please note that ACU does not have in mind that about which most faithful members of the church think when they employ "Faith under FIRE." The theme does not have the article "the" preceding the noun "Faith." Hence, it does not mean the complete Christian system as it appears on the pages of the New Testament and as used in **Jude 3**. The manner in which the theme is written has one's personal belief or faith under fire. Therefore, according to ACU's lecture theme, "humanism" is delivering broadside after broadside against one's personal faith. As far as I know, no informed person in his right mind would deny that "humanism" is adamantly and categorically opposed to God, Christ, the Bible, and Christianity. Certainly, therefore, it is opposed to one's personal faith in all four.

**"YOU'RE A FALSE TEACHER!  
WELL, YOU'RE ANOTHER ONE!"**

When ACU opposes "humanism" it reminds me of an agnostic opposing an atheist. The agnostic does not think that one can really know anything, while the atheist declares that he knows that God does not exist. The atheist laughs in the face of the agnostic for making a knowledge claim while in the same breath declaring that "one can know that he does not know."

Of course, the agnostic and the atheist are equally wrong. Man can absolutely know certain things, and one of the things he can know is that God exists. He does not know God through his physical senses (empirically), but that is not the *only* way one can come to know something absolutely, empirical philosophers and ACU academicians notwithstanding. ACU is guilty of the same silly self-contradictory position in opposing “humanism” as the agnostic is in when he attempts to oppose the atheist.

#### TWO WAYS TO ARRIVE AT KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge that comes only through what one can see, hear, smell, taste, and touch pertain to *empirical knowledge*. One cannot see, hear, smell, taste, and touch God, Christ, or the gospel. Hence, one cannot know God, Christ, and the gospel through such avenues. However, this is not the *only* way one can come to know something absolutely. I also can know things through the proper exercise of my rational powers through inductive and deductive reasoning.

The following is an example of deductive reasoning. If it is the case that one must repent of his sins in the process of becoming a Christian (Acts 17:30), and Saul of Tarsus became a Christian (Acts 9:20), then, it is the case that Saul of Tarsus repented of his sins in the process of becoming a Christian. I do not know this about Saul of Tarsus because the Bible in just so many words (explicitly) states that Saul of Tarsus repented of his sins in the process of becoming a Christian. I know it because the Bible implies it. No one can successfully declare that in the process of becoming a Christian Saul of Tarsus repented of his sins, except it be by *implication*.

How does anyone today know that the Bible addresses him since it is not specifically addressed to him? I know it is addressed to me by what the Bible implies through the explicit language of such passages as II Timothy 2:2. *Will the ACU academicians affirm that what the Bible teaches implicitly is just as binding on man as what it teaches explicitly?* Yes, indeed, “**Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord:**” (Isaiah 1:18).

#### WHAT DOES ACU MEAN BY THE WORD “FAITH”?

In the light of their previous record, I seriously doubt that many, if any, of the “scholars” of ACU have in their minds “faith” as defined and employed in the Bible. One’s belief (verb form) or faith (noun form) is created by adequate evidence and credible witnesses, not by empirical knowledge (knowledge that comes through man’s five senses). The “leap of faith,” about which one often hears, has to do with the false idea that faith bridges the gap from where knowledge ends and things not known through one’s five senses begin. One’s faith in the gospel is formed,

sustained, and strengthened by the infallible adequate evidence and inerrant credible witnesses found on the pages of the Holy Spirit-inspired Bible (Romans 10:17; John 20:30, 31; II Timothy 3:16, 17). Jesus declared that we can know the truth thereof by continuing in his word (John 8:31-32). Furthermore, the inspired apostle John declared that we can know, and thereby have a correct faith in God, Christ, and the gospel (John 8:31-32; I John).

#### WILL ACU AFFIRM THAT TRUTH IS ABSOLUTE, OBJECTIVE, AND HUMANLY ATTAINABLE?

ACU has far more in common with “humanism” than she does with New Testament Christianity. Her 1997 lectureship theme is a farce. It is, therefore, ludicrous indeed for ACU to pretend to oppose “humanism” when she has denied and opposed the very grounds upon which “humanism” must be met and exposed; *i.e.*, that truth is absolute and objective, that man can know and “know that he knows” the truth, that what the Bible implies is just as binding on man as what it explicitly teaches, and that the existence of God can be proven.

#### ACU DOES NOT BELIEVE THE TRUTH REGARDING WHO A CHRISTIAN IS AND WHERE ONE IS LOCATED

Besides the aforementioned matters pertaining to truth, knowledge, and faith, ACU does not believe the first principles of the gospel and the Lord’s church. She has worked as a “fifth columnist” and has openly attacked the Bible as a divine blueprint. Moreover, ACU has opposed the plan of salvation as well as the church in her purpose for existing, organization, work and worship.

#### HAROLD HAZELIP TO “KICK OFF” OCU LECTURES

Preceding ACU’s lectures there is *Oklahoma Christian University’s* 1997 Lectureship. Her theme is “*In Search of the Whole Truth.*” I thought the theme sounded good until I saw that **Harold Hazelip**, outgoing (as in “on the way out”) president of **David Lipscomb University**, was assigned the topic “**What is Truth?**”. This is the first lecture in the 1997 series.

In addressing “What is Truth?” I can almost hear Hazelip declaring that, “Truth is absolute, objective, humanly attainable, and one can know that he knows it.” We can hear him emphatically declare the plan of salvation, the New Testament identifying marks of the Lord’s church, and how the church of Christ contains “Christians only and the only Christians.” With boldness he affirms and proves that Bible truth is set forth explicitly and implicitly. He stresses that what is taught implicitly in the Bible is just as binding as that which is taught explicitly. He then moves to show how the Bible authorizes *only* by direct statement, example, and implication. Furthermore, he emphasizes that if something is not authorized, it is sin (Colos-

sians 3:17). With much boldness he then points out that one's love for God always leads him to obey the truth of God (John 14:15). Moreover, he then emphasizes that the principle of love never rises higher nor sets aside obedience to God's word (John 8:31, 32; 17:17). [I must stop here. I am tired of holding tongue in cheek. To think seriously that he would affirm the previous material regarding truth, and that Hazelip would recognize and follow the implications of these statements, is to engage in wishful thinking.]

**THERE WAS NO GOSPEL PREACHER AVAILABLE,  
SO HAROLD HAZELIP SPOKE**

As I think of Harold Hazelip speaking on "What is Truth?", I am reminded of a remark by **Winston Churchill** after he lost the office of Prime Minister to **Clement Attlee** of the socialist Labor Party in the summer of 1945. "Sir Winston" was in the Potsdam, Germany conference when Attlee came to take his place. Of Attlee's arrival in Potsdam, Churchill said, "I looked out of the window, saw an empty car drive up, and Clement Attlee got out." I think I have some of the same feelings as "Sir Winston" when I see such a person as Harold Hazelip speaking on "What is Truth?".

Why not ask **Rubel Shelly** to speak on the subject? You can be sure that President Hazelip is not going to

offend his eminence, Rubel Shelly. OCU and Harold Hazelip together, what a statement that is to the church! What a statement it makes about the rest of the lecturers, regardless of whom they are, when they appear on a program with Hazelip.

**CONCLUSION**

ACU declares that from "humanism" "*A retreat is unthinkable.*" That such is the case, no faithful child of God would deny, but coming from ACU, it is a sad statement. ACU, and others who walk the same broad path of error, have not only retreated, but have capitulated before and unconditionally surrendered to "humanism." Moreover, ACU has "bowed the knee" to sectarian denominationalism, modernism, and post modernism. She does not realize it because she has committed intellectual and rational suicide. Thereby she has destroyed her ability to "**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good**" (I Thessalonians 5:21).

Because of their false views regarding the nature of truth, knowledge, faith, law, love, grace, respect for Bible authority, how to ascertain said authority, obedience, the plan of salvation, and the church, ACU and OCU are blinded to the truth of their terrible situation. It can be truly said of such modern day characters as was declared by inspiration of their intellectual and spiritual kinsman of long ago.

Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them (Isaiah 6:9; Matthew 13:14; Acts 28:26, 27)

"Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch" (Luke 6:39)? These pitiful apostate brethren are what they are "...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 2:10-12). We can join them or reject them; support them or oppose them. The decision is ours. What will you do?

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor



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## An Open Letter...

(Continued from Page 1)

lee, and you accepted, but the FHU board told you not to go?

Would you tell me the actual amount of money spent by the University in purchasing booth space at the notorious Jubilee? Just give me an honest, factual, unequivocal amount which has been sent to the Jubilee for advertising and booth space rentals, along with any other expenditures incurred by anyone from the University who may have assisted in promoting the Jubilee outfit. I am certain that you will not think that I am being unreasonable or unduly officious in this simple request, I will be expecting to hear from you at a very early date.

Brother Milton, as a poor, penniless, ignorant, impoverished country lad of seventeen years, I entered Freed-Hardeman College. My beloved teacher, brother N. B. Hardeman did not think I was unreasonable. He let me work for the school and also entrusted me with collecting funds which were owed by some of the students. Brother W. Claude Hall did not think I was unreasonable when he asked me to help him drive his car to Oklahoma and back. Brother H. A. Dixon did not think I was unreasonable when he asked me to become a faculty member and teach Bible at Freed-Hardeman. Brother Gardner did not think I was unreasonable when he urged me to become a faculty member at FHC. Was it due to my utter unreasonable spirit that I was asked several times to speak on the College Lectureship? Why and how have I become so unreasonable to you? I really want to know, and you should tell me. I vigorously deny that I have changed one iota in that deep conviction which was instilled in me by those great, godly, wonderful and valiant soldiers of Christ who are now numbered with the silent sleepers of centuries gone by. I hope you will be a bit more reflective when young preachers care enough to call you. Please remember that my friends which number into the thousands will hardly be convinced by your tirades against me—and if I have enemies it matters but little to me what they think.

With kindest regards,  
W. Wayne Coats

[Signed]



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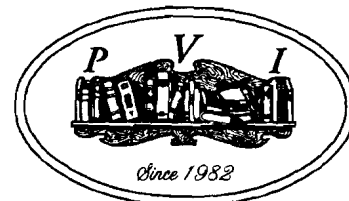
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# “Literal” Compared and Contrasted with “By Means”

Tim Nichols

It is right and good that brethren are showing a renewed interest in a study of the manner in which the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian. It is an important subject and we ought to shed all of the Divine light upon it that we are able to find before drawing our conclusions too quickly or too firmly. Neither the love of brethren nor the fear of foes ought to deter us from the task of seeking the truth of the matter if it can be found. Every argument ought to be carefully examined. The words that we use ought to be sifted carefully before we hastily discount or accept the arguments that even sound brethren make.

In seeking to prove that the Holy Spirit “literally” dwells in us, it has been argued that his “personal” indwelling would be the most “literal” meaning of the word used in the New Testament to describe his indwelling. It is argued that, since this is the simplest and least complicated idea associated with the idea of “dwelling” it ought to be accepted at face value. But is this the case?

We do not have the space, in this brief article, to argue the case for the Holy Spirit's indwelling of the Christian by means of the word that he inspired men to write except to say that it can be shown that every act of the Holy Spirit upon men living today is accomplished by means of the word of God which is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17). For example, he strengthens **“by his Spirit in the inner man”** (Ephesians 3:16) by means of the word (Psalm 119:28), sanctifies us (II Thessalonians 2:13) by means of his word (John 17:17), and dwells in us (Romans 8:9) by means of the word (Galatians 3:2, 14; 4:6, Romans 10:17). Several other examples could be given. Although many of those among us who maintain that the Spirit's indwelling is direct and personal do not proceed any further, some cannot seem to refrain from supposing that he must be providing some sort of guidance, comfort, or support by means of his indwelling that is in addition to what he provides by means of the word. Herein is the danger. The scriptures already make us complete and thoroughly furnish us unto all good works (II Timothy 3:16, 17). The knowledge provided by the word of God gives us **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness”** (II Peter 1:3). One brother has so missed this important point that he suggested the following to me: “Where the Bible speaks—speak. Where the Bible is silent—listen to the Holy Spirit!”

It may be that some are extending the meaning of the word “figurative” a bit too far when they use it to speak of things that are done by means. Things are “literally” done even though they have been done by means of some instrument. The world is literally reprov'd of sin (John 16:8; Acts 2:37) when the Holy Spirit uses his sword, the truth, to point it out to them (II Timothy 3:16). Noah built an ark. Did he literally build it? Yes. Did he employ means? No

doubt. He likely used a hammer and other tools. I recently flew. Did I literally fly? I suppose you could say that I did. But I did so BY MEANS of an airplane. David killed Uriah the Hittite. Did he literally kill him? Yes. In a sense. Uriah was literally dead when it was over. Did David directly kill him? No. Did David kill him by means? Yes. By means of the sword. Did David kill him by means of his own sword? No. He did so by means of the sword of the children of Ammon (II Samuel 12:9). Herod the king killed James the brother of John. Did he literally kill him? Yes. By what means? By the sword (Acts 12:2). Abraham dug a well (Genesis 21:30). Did he literally dig it? You could say so. Did he dig it directly and without means or did he use a shovel or some such tool? Did he dig it himself with a shovel or did he have his servants dig it? Actually, it seems that his servants dug it (Genesis 26:15, 18). Later, Issac re-dug the well, along with others, after the Philistines had stopped it. But he did so by means of his servants' hands (Genesis 26:18-22, 25). I will go out on a limb and assert that they probably used shovels. David killed Goliath. By what means? By means of a sling and a stone. We are to purify our hearts (James 4:8). By what means? By means of the word of God (I Peter 1:22).

If I convey an idea to another person you might ask, “By what means did he convey that idea?” The answer would be, “By means of words.” The fact that I conveyed an idea by means of written or spoken words does make that conveyance “figurative”. If instrumentality is truly figurative then we seem to use more figurative language than literal when we speak of the actions of people. Just think for a moment of all of the miscommunication that would occur every day if we believed that things done by people must generally be assumed to be “literally” done as opposed to “by means:”

“The dentist filled my tooth.”—“How did he fit in there?”

“The dentist drilled my tooth.”—“Did his finger rotate at high speed?”

“I flew to Texas.”—“Didn't your arms get tired?”

“I'm going to run into town to pick up my daughter.”—“Won't you get tired and isn't she too heavy?”

“The soldier stabbed his enemy.”—“It's too bad he didn't have a sword.”

“He turned the gigantic battleship around.”—“What a mighty man! I would have needed a rudder to do that!”

“He cut the watermelon.”—“He must have long and sharp fingernails.”

The above examples are all to show us that we regularly recognize that things done by means are things literally done. When David wrote, **“...they have digged a pit before me...”** (Psalm 57:6), he was using strictly figurative

language (See also Psalm 94:13, 119:85, Jeremiah 18:20, 22). When Ezekiel wrote, "...I digged through the wall with mine hand..." (Ezekiel 12:7), he was using strictly literal language.

If a deed done by means is truly done "figuratively," then what figure of speech is employed? Instrumentality is not strictly metonymy, simile, parable, fable, hyperbole, or any other recognized figure. Maybe it would clarify the matter to speak of whether or not the Spirit's indwelling is *direct* or *by means* rather than whether or not it is literal or figurative. D. R. Dungan was not contrasting "literal" with "instrumentality" when he said, "All words are to be understood in their literal sense, unless the evident meaning of the context forbids. — Figures are the exception, literal language the rule; hence we are not to regard anything as figurative until we feel compelled to do so by the evident import of the passage" (*Hermeneutics*, p. 184). He is likely contrasting "literal" with "figurative" in a more specific sense. By the way, did D. R. Dungan write the book on hermeneutics? If you accept the notion that he was considering instrumentality a figure and that we should always assume a thing to be literal in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, then you will have to either say that he "figuratively" wrote the book by means of a pen or that he "literally" wrote the book with his bleeding finger.

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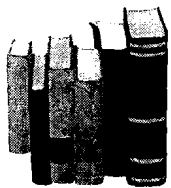
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## THE GROWING HCB LIBRARY

Bob Berard



The best single assessment of the worth of a Bible school such as the **Houston College of the Bible** (HCB) is made by an examination of its faculty. Without a staff of faithful and capable men to teach students the Bible and Bible-related materials, a Bible school can do far more harm than good (II Peter 2:1; I John 4:1). With the appropriate faculty, students will be guided by a "thus saith the Lord" and will be encouraged to "prove all things" and to "search the Scriptures daily" and diligently (Colossians 3:17; Matthew 4:4; I Thessalonians 5:21-22; Acts 17:11; II Timothy 2:15).

There are, however, several other indicators of how well a Bible school can fulfill its charted course and one of these is its library. The work of good teachers in a school can provide only a portion of the needed instruction and students are greatly aided in their studies by a well-supplied library of good books. Much of one's needed study as a Christian and especially as an elder, teacher, or preacher involves individual efforts in library research. A significant part of a student's training in a school such as HCB involves his learning how to acquire needed information and knowledge through his own research of the Bible and Bible-related books. Thus, it is important that a school such as HCB have on hand a library to fill this need. Efforts

to this end have been underway since HCB's beginning and continual progress is being made as this article will show.

### THE LIBRARY'S BEGINNING

HCB opened its doors in September, 1993, as a new work of the Spring Church of Christ. Its elders deemed the school as a much needed effort to prepare brethren to propagate the saving gospel as the Lord commanded and to combat the current digression (Matthew 28:18-20; Jude 3). The Spring congregation at that time had a modest church library of a few hundred volumes. Upon this foundation over the past three years the HCB library has grown to several thousand volumes. The remainder of this article reports contributions to the library which have made it a growing invaluable aid to biblical research in general and to the preparation of gospel preachers in particular.

### THE AL BROWN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Spring congregation's own **Al Brown** and his wife **Marilyn** have made substantial donations which are now being organized as the Brown Memorial Library in several separate stands within the larger HCB library. These volumes number over five hundred and include numerous volumes no longer in print and exceedingly helpful to gos-



pel preachers. Brother Brown acquired his library in his more than forty years of preaching for various congregations. He has served the Spring church by faithfully preaching the gospel for the past eleven years. In addition to his pulpit work he serves on the faculty of HCB and produces an excellent weekly teaching bulletin. Al's wife Marilyn has served as the church's secretary for many years and, along with several other ladies of the congregation, has spent many hours of tedious effort in inventorying and setting up the library for student use.

#### THE HENRY C. McCAGHREN LIBRARY

Another substantial addition to the school's books was acquired from the widow of brother **Henry C. McCaghren** in conjunction with a financial contribution from a generous member of the Spring church. **Sister McCaghren** lives in Baytown, Texas. She was happy to see the books put to use in training men to do the work which her husband did for so long. Brother McCaghren, was a gospel preacher, writer, and debater. He was a close personal friend of brother **Guy N. Woods**. Among his notable lasting contributions was his role in arranging for the great 1974 Gadsen, Alabama debate between brother Woods and brother **Ben Franklin** on the cessation of miraculous gifts. Brother McCaghren was the one who publicly challenged brother Franklin to such a debate when he heard him speak on "Receiving The Baptism of the Holy Ghost" to the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship. Subsequently, brother McCaghren worked out the details for the debate, moderated for brother Woods, and published the finished product in book form.

In addition to about a thousand volumes, brother McCaghren's library included his private papers, charts, and research materials. Since he was himself involved in considerable debating with the anti's, his overhead projector charts are especially helpful in training young men to earnestly contend for the faith in opposition to both liberals and those who make laws which God has not made (1 Timothy 4:1-4; Galatians 2:3-5).

#### THE W. RAY DUNCAN LIBRARY

Brother **W. Ray Duncan** and his wife **Lucille** recently donated the books acquired and used from the beginning of his preaching work in 1930. During his decades of preaching brother Duncan served congregations in several states, had several debates, and did some radio work. Brother Duncan retired from regular preaching some years ago and now has a substantial visual impairment. Being unable to use his books for his own study, he desired to place them where they would again assist in the gospel effort. This desire was made known to brother **Dale Stinson**, who in turn conveyed this information to an HCB faculty member, **Barry Hatcher**. Brother Barry visited the Duncans and made arrangements for moving the library from the Duncan's home in Warner Robbins, Georgia to its new home at HCB. Like brother Brown's books, these books are set up as the W. Ray Duncan Memorial Library. Since brother Duncan also donated the handmade shelves which held his library, the books are displayed in the same stands they occupied in his study in Warner Robbins.

#### OTHER DONATIONS

One of the earliest contributors to the HCB library is a highly esteemed gospel preacher who desires to remain anonymous. His contribution consists of about eight hundred volumes on microfiche and a microfiche reader. These works include many valuable works and some rare books. The total collection is a noteworthy addition to our work in the school.

Most recently about two hundred volumes were contributed by brother **Bill Towry** who preaches for the Harlandale church in San Antonio. Brother Towry included in his donation some two hundred volumes.

#### MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

A number of individual volumes have been donated in memory of deceased loved ones. These contributions are greatly appreciated.

#### CONCLUSION

The sincere thanks of all of us associated with the Houston College of the Bible is extended to those who have helped our labors by their generous contribution of books to the HCB library and to those ladies who have helped to catalog and arrange the book displays. We plan to continue to build the collection as we are able for the good we know this asset can help to accomplish. Please remember our needs in this regard if you learn of books which we might acquire for this good purpose. Please remember our overall effort at the school to advance the greatest cause on earth, the teaching and preaching of God's Book.

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# PULLING WEEDS ABOVE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

Cliff Lyons

[November 6, 1996, from Murmansk, Russia]

I have been in Murmansk this time for nearly two months. **Bob Hawkins** has been here for nearly four months. With God's help, we are making progress in the work here. In recent weeks two women have been baptized into Christ—**Louisa** and **Olga**.

We believe we have several other contacts who are "good prospects," but for some reason (or reasons) they keep fighting the truth. Some of them, however, keep coming back to hear us "preach the word." We keep offering to study with them privately, but it seems difficult for them to take this step. Bob and I are praying and hoping that these precious souls will open their minds to the gospel of Christ, understand it and obey it. Our hearts go out to them as they study and learn the truth because they have so many problem areas (sins) in their lives.

The roots of sin often run deep and crooked. The old communist system has, to an extent, "brainwashed" many of them, and they do not realize what has happened. The Russian people are proud of their heritage—and to a degree that is understandable—but they often take this too far and fail to see the evils of communism.

## EXALTING CREATURE ABOVE CREATOR

The political system, nation or individual that sets God aside and exalts man (Lenin et al.), the creature instead of the Creator, is going to face terrible problems. Some of the people we know have marriage problems—living in adultery. Others have drinking problems—husbands (or perhaps wives themselves) drink. Superstition is widespread; and there are all kinds of false religious views.

Christians, of course—and especially elders and preachers—must never lose confidence in the power of the gospel to convict and convert sinners wherever they may live on this earth. Paul preached the same gospel we preach in Corinth, a wicked city, yet sin was uprooted and our Lord's church established (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Such was the case throughout the world in the first century—and we might add that the world has not changed all that much.

Man is still allowing Satan to deceive him. Men and women throughout the world are lost in sin. God has made them free moral agents; they can choose to trust and obey God or follow the deceitful ways of sin. The

gospel, however, is powerful; it will take root in good soil and bear fruit.

**"SON, GO TO THE CORN FIELD  
AND PULL WEEDS TODAY."**

Years ago I helped pull weeds out of my father's corn field so the corn could grow, bear fruit and in time be harvested. Now I am busy pulling spiritual weeds out of the minds of men and women so my heavenly Father's seed, the gospel of Christ, can be planted and bring forth fruit.

I can remember that some of those cockleburs and ragweeds were difficult to pull out of the ground. I had to pull very hard to destroy them. Now I know that there are some terrible weeds in the minds of men that are far more difficult to uproot and destroy than those cockleburs. I did not enjoy pulling those weeds from the corn field; I did enjoy (later) hauling load after load of quality corn to the barn corn crib.

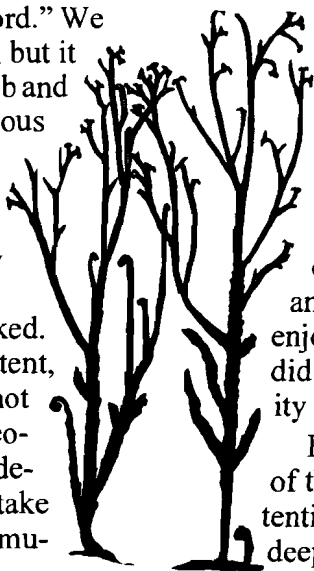
It is not easy work pulling sinful weeds out of the minds of men and women. In fact, it oftentimes is unpleasant and very difficult. The deep sinful roots seem to run deep and in all directions. But, oh, what a blessing to harvest a precious soul that says, "I am ready to be baptized into Christ for remission of my sins."

That corn was not worth much—just a few dollars. However, that precious soul is worth more than all the world! That's what Jesus said and we know it is true.

## MURMANSK CHURCH OF CHRIST

Brethren, the devil has been working for many years sowing all kinds of "weed seeds" into the minds of the Russian people (others, too), and it will take a lot of teaching and preaching—a lot of weed pulling—to save the souls of a few honest hearts (Mark 7:13-14). Let's get the water jug and go to the field and start pulling weeds—not only in Russia, but in America and around the world!

The church of Murmansk continues to meet at the Music College which is about two blocks from "five corners square," the downtown area. We meet in one of the classrooms, which is okay, except we often hear, with some disturbance, different kinds of musicians practicing throughout the building. It is more noticeable during quiet times, such as when we are serving the Lord's Supper.



We are trying to raise enough money (about \$60,000.00) to purchase a meeting place. We hope some of you who read this article will plan to help us raise this money to purchase a meeting place which can be used to preach and teach the gospel of Christ to this lost city of 500,000 lost souls. We usually have from 20 to 26 in attendance Sunday mornings.

#### MURMANSK COLLEGE OF THE BIBLE

There is good interest in our Bible college work. We have been having between 20 and 27 in attendance on Saturdays. On average, perhaps seven or eight of these would be in attendance for Sunday morning worship.

At present we are studying a survey of the New Testament. We have translated brother **Rod Rutherford's** book, *Survey of the New Testament* into the Russian language for this class. We now have printed (copied) 60 copies of this book; thus our copier, which we purchased about a year ago, is getting quite a workout.

It is so very sad to see nearly everyone so confused about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and other eternal matters. I use my Bible history chart most of the time (with the Bible) to help people understand when the Bible was written, where and how God's scheme of redemption unfolded, that the Bible has not changed since it was completed about 1900 years ago, that it alone is the standard of authority in religion, and that anything which has been written by the wisdom of mere man has no authority in religion. Thus, Catholicism, denominationalism, cults, and such like stand condemned by God's word.

There is not an ounce of authority for any man-made religion. It matters not where it (they) started, whether Europe, America, Russia, or wherever. The Russian Orthodox Church, which began in Russia about A.D. 988, is simply 955 years too late. Also, it began in the wrong place. God's word teaches that the church of Christ began in Jerusalem. Christianity did not begin in the west; it began in Jerusalem and is for all men everywhere—the whole world.

Counterfeit religions have no heavenly value; they cannot save the souls of men and women; they will not stand the test on Judgment Day (Matthew 7:13-29; 15:13; 25:31-46; Acts 2:1-47; Romans 2:16; Revelation 22:18-19; 2:10; John 12:48). God created man, knows man through and through, and knows that man can understand his word—God's revelation to man. The Koran, the Book of Mormon, and the creeds of men (written and unwritten) will not guide men to heaven. Only God's great revelation, the Bible, will do that.

Man will be judged by the Bible, not by the philosophies of men. These great truths are not properly un-

derstood by most men. They are difficult for people in denominationalism in the States to deal with, and perhaps more difficult for people here. However, one plus for the Russian people is that more of them seem to be willing to listen and hopefully study and understand (Acts 17:11; Ephesians 5:17; I Thessalonians 5:21). Please pray for us as we preach the powerful, saving gospel of Christ to lost souls in Murmansk, Ruassia.

[NOTE: In addition to his foregoing article from Murmask, brother Lyon enclosed an appreciated letter from one of his students, named **Zhenya**, of Kola, Russia. She wrote, saying,

Thank you for your lessons. Of course, it was difficult for me to study the word of God by myself. I was working during these two months, day and night, every day. Twice I worked on the lessons of the Old and New Testaments, making outlines. I am so glad to have learned the Bible so much. Before that I read the Bible many times, but failed to understand anything. And so now, God has sent me you. So now, it is going to be easier for me to study and learn.

Thank you from all of my heart.

Yours truly,

(Signed)

Zhenya

P.S. It is possible that I've messed up a lot of things. I hasted because my eye sight is bad. It is hard for me to read small print and it is going to be more difficult to do it in the winter time without daylight plus my age. But nevertheless I will be reading and reading, studying and studying, until I am unable to see. My diagnosis is progressing Miopy. Excuse me, please, Zhenya

To this letter, brother Lyons appended the following note, saying,

Let me add a note about Zhenya. She is perhaps 55 years old and travels via bus from a distant location to be with us in Kola for Bible study and worship on Sundays. On Saturdays, she attends the Bible college classes for two hours or more. Sometimes she will visit for worship or lectures in Murmansk. She walks on ice long distances from the bus stop to the place of worship and the college Bible class. She is a rare jewel similar to Ludmylla in Murmansk. May God help us to find more Zhenyas and Ludmyllas in the Murmansk region. Bob Hawkins, Ilya and others would give a hearty "amen" to this statement. C.L.

Those wishing to help purchase the place of meeting that brother Lyons mentioned for the young church in Murmansk, please make your contributions payable to his sponsoring congregation, **Southaven Church of Christ**, clearly earmarked **Murmansk Building Fund**, and address them to **Post Office Box 128, Southaven, Mississippi 38671. IYR Jr.]**

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# BAYLOR GETS DOWN AND BOOGIES

Tyler Young

On the front page of the religion section of the *Buffalo Evening News* an Associated Press article carried the following title: "*After 151 Years, Baylor Gets Down and Boogies.*" The subtitle explained: "*Southern Baptist university celebrates end to prohibition against dancing.*"

## BAYLOR PRESIDENT AND WIFE "CUT THE RUG"

Accompanying the piece was a large photo of **Baylor President Robert Sloan, Jr. and his wife** "moving and grooving to the beat," as the article put it, in the middle of Fifth Street on the Baylor campus. An estimated 10,000 students and alumni turned out for the historic celebration of the lifting of the ban on dancing which had existed since the school was founded in 1845. Sloan and his wife kicked off the event with a little jig to the approving hoots and howls of the thousands of excited onlookers.

## HOW TO DANCE WITHOUT SINNING

Baylor dancers have been warned, however, against being "obscene or provocative." Pelvic gyrations and "dirty dancing" are still not allowed, and the students have been told there is to be no "excessive closeness." In justifying his decision to lift the ban on dancing, President Sloan argued that dancing is morally correct compared with a plan announced by *Playboy* magazine to find several female Baylor beauties willing to pose for an upcoming issue featuring "*Women of the Big 12.*" Sloan has threatened to discipline and possibly expel any student posing for *Playboy*. Baylor is a school with standards! Girls may not pose nude and bring shame to themselves and the university. They may, however, dance to their hearts' content—as long as they don't gyrate their pelvises.

## ANOTHER STEP DOWN IN OUR MORAL STANDARDS

Here we have another indication of how declining moral standards in society have influenced the religious world. There was a time when the kind of dancing commonly done by young people to pop and rock music was severely denounced throughout the denominational world. The kind of movements involved in "fast dancing" and the bodily contact involved in "slow dancing" were correctly regarded as tending to promote lust and unchaste behavior. Consequently, dancing of this nature was condemned as sinful behavior unbecoming especially of those professing Christ. This was in a time when the dancing to popular music was fairly tame compared to what it is today. The kind of "bump and grind" dancing that goes on now is far more lewd and sensual. (I know this firsthand, I'm ashamed to say, because before I was in Christ I attended school dances, night clubs, etc., and I have seen what goes on. Make no mistake about it, the guys are watching and drooling over the girls shaking their bodies, and even very young kids are rubbing and pawing all over each other during slow dances.)

## RELIGION DANCES WITH THE WORLD

Religious groups once opposed to dancing have largely come to tolerate such behavior, and some even celebrate

that they can now "get down and boogie" with the world. Baylor's acceptance of dancing while prohibiting "pelvic gyrations" and "excessive closeness" is laughable. (That's like telling the young children in the congregation they can run loose all over the church building after the assembly, *as long as they don't run too fast!* I dare any parent to try that one!) Are they going to have chaperones watching the students and stopping the music if a hip stops shaking and starts gyrating? Maybe there will be some heated debates between students and administration over whether or not Susie and Tom were boogying or gyrating. Will President Sloan blow a whistle if a slow-dancing couple glued to each other passes the line from "closeness" into the forbidden zone of "excessive closeness?" What nonsense!

## ACU "GETS DOWN AND BOOGIES" WITH BAYLOR

Like our religious neighbors, many in the Lord's church have opened the doors to what once was not considered worthy of discipline. Abilene Christian University's campus newspaper, *The Optimist*, reported in 1994 that **President Money** announced that ACU students who go to bars and dance will no longer be disciplined by the school. Money said, "We are simply allowing for areas of judgment and tolerance in those activities that are not under the direct sponsorship of the university.... We cannot have a rule for every situation." He did not explain why it is that students cannot be disciplined for bar hopping and dancing, but we cannot help but wonder if it is merely a matter of tolerating what students have been doing to avoid losing tuition money from offended parents of disciplined drinkers and dancers. Money went on to make the ridiculous assertion, "Our policy in this regard is firm and unchanged." We think students of the past would disagree.

## COMMON DANCING CONTINUES TO BE

### A WORK OF THE FLESH

The kind of dancing in which young people commonly engage today is lascivious. The meaning of the Greek term for "lasciviousness" in Galatians 5:19 includes "indecent bodily movements" and "that which tends to incite lustful desire." Dancing, therefore, is condemned by the word of God as a work of the flesh which will keep one from heaven (Galatians 5:19-21). What kind of example are we setting before the world when we engage in or refuse to discipline behavior which can cause others to stumble (I Corinthians 10:31-33)? Would we take Jesus to dance with us at a school dance, night-club, or neighborhood party where young men and women are eyeing each other up while they are "shaking their stuff?"

God has not lifted the ban on dancing. We can "get down and boogie" with the world, or we can live pure and holy lives as examples of Christ. But we cannot do both.

—9003 Brookside Avenue  
Niagara Falls, New York 14304



# “Wiggins-Sharon Debate”

Gary W. Summers

On the first of the two-night, above-mentioned debate in Burkburnett, Texas, **Steve Wiggins** affirmed that “The Bible Teaches That The First Day of the Week Is The Day of Worship Required for God’s People in the Christian Age.” **Bill Sharon**, a Seventh-Day Baptist, took the view that the Sabbath day is still binding as the day of worship in the Christian age. Steve was well-prepared with more material than he would be able to use; Mr. Sharon said much that was not relevant to the discussion, and he failed to answer any of the arguments that were set forth.

Brother Wiggins began by defining his proposition; then he explained that he was NOT affirming that: 1) the first day of the week is the “Christian” Sabbath; 2) the Sabbath was never enjoined on God’s people; 3) the Old Testament is useless for God’s people; 4) Jesus did not keep the Sabbath; 5) the apostles did not use the temple/synagogue on the Sabbath as an opportunity to preach the gospel. Sometimes opponents assume we hold these positions; Sharon thought so despite these initial disclaimers.

Wiggins specifically affirmed that the first day of the week is the day God stipulated for worship in the Christian age. After showing that Christ has all authority (Matthew 28:18-20), that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth (John 14:25-26; 16:12-13), and that Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42), he pointed out that Christians never assembled on the Sabbath day for worship under apostolic direction in the New Testament. They were taught, however, to assemble on the first day of the week for worship (Acts 20:7).

He also gave a careful and thoughtful analysis of Acts 20:6-7, demonstrating that Paul stayed there an entire week so that he could meet with the brethren on the first day of the week, which is the only day the disciples came together. Paul instructed brethren in Corinth and in Galatia to set aside a contribution on that same day of the week (I Corinthians 16:1-2). Mr. Sharon said very little by way of response. He ignored these two Scriptures, except to state (falsely): “No Scripture authorizes worship on the first day of the week.”

Instead of refuting the affirmative arguments, he made one of his own. He tried to show that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and raised on Saturday (so that no one could claim that Sunday is the Lord’s day). He cited Matthew 28:1 as evidence that Jesus was raised before 6:00 p.m. on Saturday (just before the first day of the week). Then he cited the phrase, three days and three nights, Jesus used in Matthew 12:39-40 (and assumed Jesus meant a literal 72 hours). He concluded, therefore, that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and buried just before 6:00 p.m.

Sharon’s argument is based upon the phrase, in the end

(Continued on Page 16)

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Paul Sain, Pulaski, TN

8:30 P.M. “One Lord” (Eph. 4:5)

David Sain, Florence, AL

#### Saturday, March 1

9:00 A.M. “Hath Made Both One” (Eph. 2:14-17)

Tom Holland, Nashville, TN

10:00 A.M. “They Twain Shall be One Flesh” (Matt. 19:5)

(Men) Mark Hearn, Gallatin, TN

(Women) Jewel Hearn, Gallatin, TN

11:00 A.M. “One Spirit” (Eph. 4:5)

Steve Brown, Dayton, TN

12:00 P.M. LUNCH

1:30 P.M. “One Body” (Eph. 4:4)

MSOP student (TBA)

2:30 P.M. “One Hope of Your Calling” (Eph. 4:4)

Tom Holland

6:00 P.M. YOUTH GATHERING

Dan Cates, Mabelvale, AR

#### Sunday, March 2

9:00 A.M. “These Three are One” (I John 5:7)

David P. Brown, Spring, TX

Dan Cates

TEEN SESSION

10:00 A.M. “One Baptism” (Eph. 4:5)

David P. Brown

11:30 A.M. Dinner on the Ground

2:30 P.M. First Sunday Sumner County Singing

4:00 P.M. “That Ye Love One Another” (John 13:34, 35)

Anthony Brown, Portland, TN

5:00 P.M. “One Faith” (Eph. 4:5)

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## NOTES & QUOTES

"FROM HEAVEN OR FROM MEN—A Study on Bible Authority" was the general theme of a Bible lectureship and gospel meeting sponsored, December 6-8, 1996, by the Capitol City Church of Christ, where **Gideon C. Rodriguez** preaches in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

"Trusting in God's providence and the support of brethren who love the truth," brother Rodriguez writes, "the newly established Capitol City Church of Christ has taken upon itself the responsibility of hosting the **First Annual Capitol City Lectureship and Gospel Meeting** on December 6, 7 & 8, 1996."

Among those scheduled to speak were **Eddy Ee**, of Jurong, Singapore, on "The Bible—From Heaven or From Men?"; **Gideon C. Rodriguez**, of Quezon City, Philippines, on "Sin—Man's Rebellion to Heaven's Authority"; **Bob Berard**, of Spring, Texas, on "Ascertaining Bible Authority" and "Bible Authority in Matters of Expediency"; **Manuel K. Pelayo**, of Makati City, Philippines, on "Bible Authority in Matters of Fellowship"; **Santiago Sameon II**, of Baguio City, Philippines, on "Bible Authority in Matters of Morality"; **Ulas Nair**, of Australia, on "Bible Authority in Church Discipline"; **Dennis Gresham**, of Wainuomata, New Zealand, on "The Gospel—Heaven's Provision for Man's Salvation"; **Fred Arellano**, of Angeles City, Philippines, on "Faith—Man's Response to Heaven's Call"; **David Chew**, of Four Seas College, Singapore, on "Innovations in Worship—From Heaven or From Men?"; **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**, of Memphis, Tennessee, "Church Growth—Heaven's Desire or Man's Destiny?"; **George Villanueva**, of Quezon City, Philippines, on "Church's Financial & Material Schemes—Heaven's Design or Man's Device?"; **Alvin Luther**, of Bacolod City, Philippines, on "Authority of Leaders in the Church"; **Kwan Tai Choom**, of Lim Ah Pin Road, Singapore, on "The Church—Man's Organization or Heaven's Institution?" and **Jovencio A. Gundayo**, of Gerona, Tarlac, Philippines, on "The Judgment—Man's Imagination or Heaven's Retribution?"

\*\*\*\*\*

"Those who do not know God's word do not know God."—**Shan Jackson**, May 24, 1993, First Annual Gulf Coast Lectures, Portland, Texas.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Harry Ledbetter**, Denton, Texas: "We deeply appreciate the great work you are doing. God bless your efforts with success."

A well-known brother, of San Antonio, Texas, sent us two tape recordings, back to back, on the same tape, of an exchange in pulpits for one day early in 1996, between **Max Lucado**, of the Oak Hills Church of Christ, and the "pastor" of the Trinity Baptist Church, **Buckner Fanning**. The "sermons" of each speaker were recorded by representatives of the

Trinity Baptist Church.

Thus we were able to hear with our own ears brother Lucado teaching error and castigating his fellow Christians in the Church of Christ to his Baptist audience. On the second side of the tape was Buckner's lesson. We hate to have to admit it, but he taught more scripture in his lesson than did Lucado! We have a strong feeling that Max's principal problem is his general lack of knowledge of the scriptures—at least that is the opinion you get if you read much of his writings or hear his "preaching." His audiences must be likewise shallow in their knowledge, for it is obvious they hang on his every word, almost adoring him. How can intelligent people be so easily misled? Yet this is the man whom the **Donelson** (Tennessee) brethren have chosen to be chief keynote speaker for their so-called "Nashville Jubilee" for 1997!

The Oak Hills elders desperately need to read and heed Acts 20:28-30. Or is their knowledge of scripture that shallow, too!

**J. E. Choate**, Nashville, Tennessee: "I am confident that we now can put our liberal brethren in our sights and expose them with increasing clarity. I also am confident that they have limited understandings on these matters because they have not done their research.

"I devoted a great deal of time this past year in defining post-modern liberal theology as it has been embraced by the liberals. The articles which I now have in mind will address the models (paradigms) which the liberals are introducing into the mainstream of the churches of Christ. They are doing so with no introductions of backgrounds or intent. They would leave the impression that they know so much more than the rest of us.

Already, I have done most of the basic research on these matters, and it will take time to put the information in an intelligible format. There is no way that **Holloway** and **Weed** can back away from what they have put in writings. However, they fail to give even the slightest clue of the direction they would take the churches of Christ. The planned articles will be exposés of the paradigms—Willow Creek, Vineyard Movement, and their endorsement of post-modern theology (neo-conservatism, which is a re-worked form of neo-orthodoxy).

[NOTE: Under date of October 18, 1996, I replied, to brother Choate, in part, as follows:

"...I leave the U.S., Lord willing, one month from today or be gone until January 8th. I have missionary work to do in Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Hong Kong, mainland China, India and Nepal.

"In any case, I'll have your article typeset prior to my departure, so it will be published while I am away. I have asked **David Brown** to edit two issues of **Contending for the Faith** in my absence; then I'll resume editorial duties upon my return.

"He and I both fully appreciate and deeply admire the work you are doing and the direction you are taking with these articles, as do a great host of our readers..." **IYRJR.**]

**Michael Sansom**, Elizabethton, Tennessee: "I appreciate the timely articles about things pertaining to the Lord's church. I am sorry many have canceled their subscriptions and have found comfort in 'Wineskins' and 'Image' and other magazines which the paper is not worthy to be hung on the bathroom wall. Please

## 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.

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**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.

put me down for one year, for now, and thanks to all who contribute in proclaiming the truth."

Donald Thornton, Yuen Long, Hong Kong: "In June there were four baptisms plus others were baptized by some of our students. Two were in China and two were in Yuen Long. We will not give the addresses and last names of those baptized in China because there is still some danger. Their first names are Lucy and Cecilia.

"The danger is best expressed by sister Esther with whom we study in China. She has some fear when there is a knock at the door when we are studying the Bible together with her and some other students and members. Because of her belief in God in the past she has been in prison and has been beaten many times across her back. She, being 64 years old, told us she has made up her mind to die for Christ if they beat her again for she said she will never deny Him after it took so many years to come to a knowledge of the truth. We read to her what Paul said, 'And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.' When we read this she had a look of joy on her face.

"Esther also told us of those who had obeyed the gospel before her (about 12 in number) two years ago. One brother after baptism seemed to be wonderful in every work of the church. After a few months he vanished from the face of the earth. Then one of the sisters had an opportunity to go abroad to study. Part of the procedure is to go to the security branch of the government and to get a clearance. She went into the security office and sat at an officer's desk. Soon he came up and took out a large folder labeled 'Church of Christ.' She noticed that 11 names and files were in the folder with a report of all the activities of every worship the small congregation had completed. To her amazement the files were compiled by the missing '12th member' who seemingly had vanished from the face of the earth. He was a government security agent!

"So there is danger if there is a decision to crack down on those who believe in the God and Creator of the universe. The difference in those who study the Bible in China and those in Hong Kong is that after an hour of study the Hong Kong People will look at their watches whereas those in China never think about the time...

"We sent out about 300-plus pounds

of mail in July and August. We have had many new students. We also go out to the streets to get names and members are encouraged to get the names of their friends..."

Carroll P. Bennett, Evangelist, 2681 Beechwood Avenue, S.W., Camden, Arkansas 71701-6406: "I have only recently returned from Ghana, concluding 28 visits. The enclosed information relates to Ghana, and the false doctrine taught there. The liberals are up in arms, ready to fight—literally, and attempting to discredit the writers of the various articles in the booklet. This is the tactic used by liberals—if you can't defend your teaching then try to discredit those who oppose false doctrine. You know this tactic well, for you have been attacked many times. Use the information as you desire.

"Please note my report and plans for Ghana. I need a congregation to oversee my work, contribute some support, and allow me to find the balance needed. I want to make two trips to Ghana annually, and get our school up and running. We have been thwarted for five years with land problems. Now we have found land which can be purchased, and get back into the capitol city—Accra. This will give us a base to do more, and a presence to oppose the liberal school operated by Dan McVey. I have sent information to all the congregations which support him, but no response. No response from Center Street, Fayetteville, AR which is his supporting congregation or Bobby Dockery, of that area, who is truly conservative. Bobby has written much literature for Ghana, and Baldwin church has printed and posted these materials to Ghana. We shall wait and see the outcome.

"Any help you can give in locating a congregation to help with my work will be appreciated. Although I am retired from full time preaching, I have 'supplied' where needed. I am also retired from National Federation of Independent Business, but I can return to work on a part-time basis, and still go to Ghana."

[NOTE: The material that brother Bennett enclosed is much too lengthy for inclusion here. I suggest that those interested in his report, please write to him directly and ask for it—particularly his booklet, entitled, **AN EXPOSÉ OF THE KENYA CONFERENCE—1992, CHANGE AGENTS AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**. Also you might ask for his report re: **Ghana Trip, August 1996**. Address your requests directly to him, per foregoing. You may be astonished what you will learn in his cogent material. IYR Jr.]

Taylor Center Church of Christ (Michigan), in their bulletin for August 25, 1996, had the following on their front page:

*"Welcome to Warren and Glynnis Jacobs who arrived early last week. They will join our ministry team in an effort to impact the community with service and support for Spiritual, Emotional and Physical Healing. Warren is trained as a professional therapist and holds the Masters of Marriage and Family Therapy from the best degree program of that sort in the na-*

*tion. He is to establish a clinical counseling practice as a ministry of our church."*

[NOTE: What could this be all about? Having read and studied the Bible almost my whole life, this seems entirely foreign to anything and everything found therein. Perhaps Taylor Center no longer cares for such things any more.

They also advertised Michigan Christian College's 39th Annual Bible Lectureship, for October 6-8, in that same bulletin.

When I looked at the college's lecture program, it, too, was foreign to the tenor of Bible things. "Dr." this and "Dr." that with a few "Mr.'s" thrown in along the way. Have they never read Matthew 23:1-8? The scribes and Pharisees loved to be called "Rabbi, Rabbi." Jesus taught, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and ALL YE ARE BRETHREN." In principle, what is the difference in being called, "Rabbi, Rabbi," and "Doctor, Doctor"? I would not turn on my heel for the difference! If "all ye are brethren," why distinguish between brethren, calling some "Dr." and others "Mr."? Biblically speaking, it makes no sense at all! IYR Jr.]

Mrs. Loran Gearhart, 1023 Baldwin Drive, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001: "There will be a dedication ceremony in Loran's honor on the 20th of October in Sheridan, Wyoming, and weather permitting, and with the Lord's blessing I plan on being there. It does me so much good, and I am so happy to see the Lord's work progressing through the efforts of loved ones and friends. Loran would have asked for nothing more than that..."

"Our weather has begun to dip lower and is to be around 60 degrees today. The wind isn't blowing, so the chill factor isn't bad...We are looking for a preacher. But since we have limited funds we will need one who has some income of his own. We hope to find an older man who is willing to brave the Wyoming weather (which isn't all that bad—once you become accustomed to it)...We are growing slowly but need a good sound preacher...The most reliable members and the ones contributing the most are older people...Anyway, if you have a good conservative man who wants to come our direction, have him get in touch with us."

[NOTE: "I have mentioned to some that you are looking for a preacher with partial-support," I replied in part. "Such are hard to find. Anyway, I feel sure that someone will come forward.

"You said the Wyoming weather is not all that bad—once you get used to it. I remember, in 1943, I held a gospel meeting at Casper. Snow was everywhere and it was 5 degrees below ZERO—but folks came right on anyway!...Keep pressing toward the mark..."

Any interested preacher, as described by sister Gearhart, please note how to address her in the "quote" foregoing.

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IYR Jr.]

C. Hayes, San Antonio, Texas: "Thanks. Can't live without **Contending For The Faith!**"

Dean Wilson, Fenton, Iowa: "As I recall, brother Don Thornton in Hong Kong baptized a young Chinese from the mainland (?) who proposed to attend Four Seas Bible College this fall. Reading the latest issue of CFTF there was in the letters section a brief letter indicating a young Chinese was attending Four Seas this fall. Are these the same individual? If so, I was wondering if he had support to go to college?...As I recall, brother Rice went to mainland China and taught the gospel to a member of his family."

[NOTE: "...You were inquiring about a young man from the China mainland who was converted and is now studying at Four Seas College, in Singapore." I replied, in part. "Yes, he was the first of his family to be baptized. Their surname is **Bi** (pronounced Bay)—then later his father—**Bi Tong Syng**.

"The son is called **Agit** by his family. However, since going to Singapore, he has taken an English name of his own choosing—**Jackson Butt**. I asked him how he chose these names. He said he just liked the way they sound. As often has been said, there is no accounting for tastes!

"The son now is in his second year of preacher-training studies at Four Seas College. Since then, the father's secretary and also another young lady from another province have been baptized from inside China and also are studying at Four Seas College, in Singapore.

"You asked if we need help for these students attending the college. We certainly do. In fact, this is the only way they can attend. Any way you or the brethren there could assist, we'll be most grateful..."

Contributions to the support of these students should be made payable to **Bellview Church of Christ**, clearly earmarked **Four Seas Scholarship Fund**, and mailed to **4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526**. IYR Jr.]

**Dwight A. Gamit**, Sison, Pangasinan, Philippines: "For more than two years now I have been receiving the powerful paper 'Contending for the Faith.' Indeed, you are doing a powerful job—exposing error among the brotherhood and telling that which is right, as the Bible says...Please continue sending me this paper."

**Al & Caroline Thompson**, Goodlettsville, Tennessee: "Just read August ('96) 'Contending For The Faith.' Excellent! Thanks for your great column on the 'Waylon Jennings' matter. Just talked with J. E. Choate about his front page article which, coincidentally, also dealt with Jennings. He sends his warmest regards..."

**Earnest Pickle**, of DeKalb, Texas sent \$100.00, paying for his bound volume for 1995 (\$12.00) and asking us to apply the balance "to help any way you deem necessary."

**Velma Goad**, Charleston, Mississippi: "I enjoy this paper much! I pass it on to others to read when I finish reading it."

\*\*\*\*\*

### ELIJAH GOODWIN

A preacher of some sort, back in 1835, was asked a question which he could not answer: "What is baptism?" He studied the question several years and could not answer it to his own satisfaction; then, he and his wife heard **Barton W. Stone** preach. Stone preached,

"Now when they heard this (the sermon preached on Pentecost), they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto (for) the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Elijah returned home and began to preach all the fulness of the gospel. Those who responded to the invitation and obeyed the teaching had their sins forgiven. He was tried for heresy, and charged with preaching Campbellism. But Elijah got the doctrine from Stone, and Stone got it from Peter, and Peter got it from the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit inspired Luke to write it in the book of Acts.—**Wait A Minute**

**Mrs. Winston Roberts**, Shelbyville, Tennessee: "I always look forward to getting the paper."

**Danny Bennett**, Madison, Alabama: "Brethren are purchasing versions (actually perversions) of the Bible for personal use and often giving them as gifts. Satan is tempting and deceiving many in the brotherhood with a very deadly gift.

The Christmas holidays are especially profitable for the publishing houses. Versions of the Bible such as the **New International Version**, the **Amplified Bible**, and

the **New American Standard Version**, are being purchased without regard for their reliability and trustworthiness. These perversions, along with others, are replacing the King James Version and the American Standard Version (1901)...

"At the request of the elders where I attend I am preparing a series of 13 lessons on 'Versions of the Bible.'...I am reminded of the words of the apostle Paul, 'And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God'."

**Bill Pierce** and **Coleman Simpson**, elders, Southaven (Mississippi) Church of Christ, to the **Bellview Church of Christ**, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526: "Dear brethren: On behalf of brother **Cliff Lyons**, we would like to express our appreciation for your generous contribution of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for **Murmansk, Russia building fund**.

"While it seems that the Russian people will withstand many discomforts to hear the Word of God, we feel that a suitable, and permanent, meeting place would certainly help further the work there.

"Again, thank you for your support. And continue to pray for the work in Murmansk, brother **Cliff**, and us."

[NOTE: Contributions for the Murmansk building fund should be made payable to **Southaven Church of Christ**, earmarked for **Murmansk, Russia Building Fund**, and addressed to **Post Office Box 128, Southaven, Mississippi 38671-0128**. IYR Jr.]

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## Wiggins-Sharon Debate

(Continued from Page 12)

of the Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath day actually begins about sunset (6:00 p.m.) on Friday evening and ends at the same time on Saturday evening. Therefore "the end of the Sabbath" would be just prior to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. One need not know Greek to resolve this problem. Just look at the text. How can it be (at one and the same time) "the end of the Sabbath" (6 p.m.) and "dawn" on the first day of the week when these two designations are separated by twelve hours? The New King James better translates the phrase as "**Now after the Sabbath.**" Besides, all of the accounts have the women coming to the tomb in the morning, not at sunset the evening before.

Wiggins showed that an exact 72 hours was never in view the way the Jews and Romans reckoned time. Luke 24:1 identifies the day of the week. "**Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.**" The two disciples on the road to Emmaus were traveling "**that same day**" (Luke 24:13). Later they mention to the stranger (whom they did not recognize as the Lord) that Jesus had been "**condemned to death, and crucified**" and that "**today is the third day since these things happened.**" The point is that these people considered "three days and three nights" equal to "on the third day" (see also I Corinthians 15:3-4).

Brother Wiggins went on to note that the Sabbath day was commanded to be observed in only one dispensation, the Mosaic Age. God gave no commandment concerning its observance during the Patriarchal Age, and He gave no such commandment to Christians, either. Furthermore, there was no example of the Sabbath day being observed until Sinai, and there was no penalty for violating the day during the Patriarchy or in the Christian age.

Sharon's only response was to affirm that the ten commandments were spoken by God, are eternal, and were not abolished by Christ (Matthew 5:17). He argued that only the ceremonial portions of the Law of Moses were done away, but the Law of God is eternal. Brother Wiggins was

prepared to explain this false dichotomy that seventh-day adherents consistently (and erroneously) champion. He referred to several passages which show that the Law of God and the Law of Moses are identical (Nehemiah 8:1, 8; 10:29). He also presented Jeremiah 31:31-32 which talks about the new covenant and then showed how that the ten commandments constituted the old covenant (I Kings 8:9, 21), which has been done away (Hebrews 13:6-13).

In response to Matthew 5:17 (the one verse seventh-day advocates rely on most heavily) it was pointed out that Jesus taught that the law was to be obeyed until it was fulfilled, but Jesus himself (after his death for our sins, his burial, and resurrection) demonstrated that all things written concerning him had been fulfilled (Luke 24:44). Finally, he pointed out that Jesus kept the Passover and all other portions of the law (in harmony with what he taught in Matthew 5:17-20), but when he died, he nailed the law to the cross (Colossians 2:14).

Mr. Sharon began his final speech with perhaps the most astute observation he had made all evening. He assessed Steve Wiggins as a "formidable opponent." His problem, however, was not his adversary (well-prepared though he was); his problem consisted mostly in being opposed to the truth. Instead of answering the arguments based on Acts 20:7, he finally said of the passage, "it has no significance." When teaching a group of neophyte inductees in one's religion, dismissing an argument with a wave of the hand may suffice; in debate it fails.

He made several wild charges, such as "only semi-converted pagans kept Sunday" In a debate the audience expects some evidence to be given to substantiate one's position. He ignored his opponent's arguments while responding to some that were never made. Whenever a debater dodges, sidesteps, or ignores his opponent's main arguments (and even spends time refuting what was not said), there must be a reason: he knows he has no case. One's pride and commitment to the error he has espoused will cause him to be blinded to the truth.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## I CORINTHIANS 14:26–40 AND MODERN ASSEMBLIES OF THE SAINTS

Dub McClish

Is it scriptural for a woman to translate a gospel message delivered by a man from one language to another for a mixed assembly of men and women? For more than three years (at least) brethren have been earnestly discussing this question in lectureships, papers, and debate. Figuring prominently in this discussion has been I Corinthians 14, especially verses 26–40 (and even more especially vv. 34–35). The principal contention relating to I Corinthians 14:26ff has to do with whether or not the assembly therein described should be considered (1) a regular or ordinary (for lack of a better term) Lord's day assembly in Corinth or (2) a special assembly specifically for the exercise of some of their spiritual gifts which, in the very nature of the case (due to the cessation of spiritual gifts), cannot be duplicated today.

The implication of position (1) above is that women must maintain absolute silence (vv. 34–35) in our mixed worship assemblies today. Brethren who thus view this passage forbid the woman translator function. (Obviously, if a woman is forbidden to utter a word in the worship assembly then she could not orally translate.) The implication of position (2) above is that the *detailed instructions* regulating this meeting do not apply to our assemblies today (although there are some abiding general principles). On this ground it is argued that verses 34–35 do not demand absolute silence of women in regular worship meetings and thus do not forbid her to function as a translator under certain circumstances.

### A RESPONSE TO AN ARTICLE

Specifically, I wish to respond to some selected statements in an article a brother wrote on this subject a few months ago ("Does First Corinthians Chapter Fourteen Address Today's Assemblies of Saints?" *Seek the Old*

*Paths*, May 1996). I heartily agree with *some* of the article (e.g., the author's comments on the respective authority/submission roles of men and women). I appreciate his zeal for maintaining the scriptural limitations upon women in worship assemblies. I assure him that I (and others who respectfully disagree with some of his conclusions) are just as zealous to maintain these limitations.

He asks near the beginning of his article: "Does the **Keep Silence** statement of I Corinthians 14:34–35 apply today as it did in the first century? Many are convinced, by good reasons, it does with equal force." He is among those who so believe (and his article is apparently representative of the convictions of those who agree with him). However, some of his brethren are equally convinced "by good reasons" that it does not.

He acknowledges that many argue that I Corinthians 14:34 (and its context) cannot apply to modern worship assemblies because the women in this passage are forbidden to speak so as to utter a sound, yet all Christians (including women) are commanded to both speak and teach in singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Yes, but this is by no means the only "good reason" to question the hypothesis that the meeting of I Corinthians 14:26–40 is an ordinary worship assembly which we can duplicate today. I will subsequently set forth several others.

In his first paragraph he apparently describes those who differ with him as follows: "Numerous are those who affirm that at least parts of the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians do not apply today." If I understand him he is implying that unless one applies everything in I Corinthians 14 to our situation today he errs. But does he (or anyone else) believe that all of it applies to us today? What about the following: "...**Desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy**" (v. 1)? Or, "**Now I would**

(Continued on Page 19)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVIII, No. 2

February/1997

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

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

All setups and layouts of advertisements in *Contending for the Faith* will be done by **Bible Resource Publications.** A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is useful. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

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*Editorial...*

## Some Things Don't Matter One Way Or The Other

When Curtis A. Cates and Garland Elkins pleaded with us all, last April, at the Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, not to push the woman-translation matter to the dividing of brethren, *Contending for the Faith* acquiesced. In fact, we have said nothing more about it since February, 1996.

In our view, some things are of so little consequence that they just don't matter one way or the other. And to make an "issue" where there *is* none, to us at least, seems absurd.

Now in my 80th year—almost 65 of them as a gospel preacher—I have lived to see *other* "non-issues" forced into "issues" to the dividing of brethren—non-issues such as Anti-Bible-Classes, Anti-Women-Teachers, Anti-Bobbed-Hair, Veiling, Anti-More-Than-One-Container, Anti-Eating-in-the-Building, Anti-Congregational-Cooperation—and now...Anti-Women-Translators! As dear old brother **J. D. Tant** used to say, "Some brethren seem to be 'anti' everything but 'ante-up'."

### NOT ALL OPPOSERS ARE "ANTIS"

Had those pushing this anti-women-translation contention only listened to brethren Cates and Elkins, even this editorial need never have been written. However, while great numbers of us have remained silent (not for any change in view but to keep the peace), those determined to force this non-issue into an issue have kept up a steady drumfire month after month. We see it in their periodicals and church bulletins; we hear it in their speeches and on tapes.

Not all of those with qualms over women translators, of course, are "antis"—neither are we charging them with "anti-ism." They are just not sure. They do not use women translators themselves; but neither do they push their private views to a "decision of scruples." These words are not directed against such sincere, honest demurrals.

Rather, it is with those who keep pressing and *pressing* and *pressing* this non-issue—making a "hobby" of it—that we have a problem.

### JESUS HAD SIMILAR PROBLEM WITH PHARISEES

We are not alone having such a problem. Jesus had one somewhat similar to it with the Pharisees. In Matthew 12:1-8, we read:

At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do

upon the sabbath day.

But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

We are not saying, of course, that Jesus' problem with the Pharisees and ours with the Anti-Women-Translators are exactly the same—but note the similarity.

#### QUESTION IS ONE OF AUTHORITY—NOTHING MORE!

Having waded through all the lengthy arguments on both sides of this non-issue, when all such arguments are boiled down to their lowest common denominator, the *only* question left with any merit is one of *authority*.

That a woman can say *something*—even with men present—without violating man's authority over her (I Corinthians 11:3) is easily proved. Can she *confess Christ* before men (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8)? Can she *confess faults* before men (James 5:16)? Can she *speak by singing in the congregation* with men present (Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 2:12)? Can she *teach men while singing in the congregation* (Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12)? Could Aquila AND Priscilla take Apollos unto them and *expound* unto him the way of the God more perfectly (Acts 18:24-26)? But of course! Could all these speakings be done *without the woman violating man's authority* over her? Who can deny it!

If the “*silence*” required by I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:11-12 is not violated by a woman's speaking either as *specified* or as *necessarily implied* by the above, how then is that silence to be understood? Evidently, as long as her speaking is not done authoritatively *over* a man, she violates neither passage.

#### WHO IS OVER WHOM—THE SPEAKER? OR THE TRANSLATOR?

All the quibbles about the woman translator being *over* the audience are nothing more—just quibbles. Manifestly, it is the *speaker*, not the *translator*, who is over *both* the translator *as well as* the audience. Whether the translator is male or female makes no difference—the *speaker* still is authoritatively in charge of *both* the translator *and* the audience, also.

Paul said, in I Timothy 2:11, “**Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not**

**a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.**”

Based on this passage, let us ask ourselves a few questions:

1) Is the woman translating so *she* can learn? Or is she translating so *others* can learn?

2) Is the woman translating so *she* can teach? Or is she translating so the *speaker* can teach?

3) Is the woman translator *usurping authority* over the speaker? Or is she *submitting* to *his* authority simply translating what *he* speaks into another language, thus enabling *him* to teach his hearers?

4) If the woman translator *teaches* no one, *per se*, and if she is *submitting to*, not *usurping authority over*, the male speaker, how is she transgressing this passage?

#### CAN TWO WALK TOGETHER EXCEPT AGREED?

One curious thing about these new “antis” is their insistence that we agree *with them* when they don't agree *with each other*! One editor presented a lengthy article against women translators by a writer who *also* makes an issue of women wearing an artificial “covering” during worship and not cutting their hair—*at all*! Will said editor “walk together” with said writer against women translators and NOT “walk together” with him on “hats and hair”? What about Amos 3:3? Shall they “walk together” and NOT “walk together” at the same time?

One brother and his wife went to Latvia with some of us. When we could find no male translator who could translate Bible doctrine correctly, that couple returned home to the U.S. without teaching a single soul rather than acquiesce in our use of female translators who *could* and *did* translate correctly. It makes no sense at all if Jesus commanded us to go into all the world teaching every creature among all nations—then the Holy Spirit placing a requirement in a couple of scriptures making such impossible in such a case as this.

#### WE STILL AGREE THAT WOMEN MUST NOT USURP AUTHORITY OR TEACH OVER MEN

That I Timothy 2:11-12 teaches that women are not permitted either 1) to usurp authority over men or 2) to teach over men, we still agree.

Where disagreement arises is whether women transgress *either* requirement by translating with men present. We simply deny that such is the case.

It was not her *translating*; *per se*, which caused that lady in Taichung, Taiwan to be wrong. It was her *insistence* that *she* do the translating *instead* of that Chinese colonel, thus *usurping authority over* him, that was wrong. We *still* agree that it was wrong for her *not to acquiesce*.

**IF ANOTHER DIVISION COMES,  
WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE?**

As many non-issues as brethren have divided over since the Restoration Movement began 200 years ago, are we now to divide over yet *another* non-issue, such as *Women Translators*? And if we *do* divide, who will be responsible—those who tried to keep the peace? Or those who rode their hobby to a “decision of scruples”?

Some questions among us evidently never can be settled—like the “War Question,” the “Indwelling of the Holy Spirit Question,” and possibly others. The use or non-use of Women Translators may be in this category.

By not pushing these other questions too far, brethren on both sides have stayed together across the decades without dividing. Shall we “endeavor...to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3) over this question also? I, for one, sincerely hope so; but the decision is left to others.

Hopefully, we will not divide over things that do not really matter one way or the other.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

*In politics, you “get along” by “going along.”  
In Christianity “it ain't necessarily so.”*

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## Associate Editorial...

# A MEDLEY OF MATTERS CONCERNING THE FEMALE TRANSLATOR

One year has passed since we have written one single solitary word in *Contending for the Faith* concerning a woman translator as previously discussed. We have been silent because we thought that those brethren who believed contrary to us would be willing to leave well enough alone. Furthermore, in view of the incorrect charges that we were “pushing” the matter, we decided to say nothing in the hope that others would follow suit. Yet, in August of 1996 in a Missouri lectureship one speaker was puzzled because he had heard nothing of late from us on this matter. It seems there is no pleasing some people. If we speak up, we should be quiet. If we are quiet, we should speak up. This has not been the case with those who oppose a female translating a sermon in a worship assembly containing men. (Please notice on page 9 the list of articles pro and con on this subject to see who has written so often on it.) While they ignore the contradictory differences among themselves, they continue to speak and write as if they are all in perfect accord. Certainly, that is not the case.

### PLEASE NOTE

We have no problems with brethren who, for conscience sake, will not use a female translator in a worship assembly containing men. Furthermore, we have no problem with those elders, preachers, and churches who do not think it expeditious to use a female in said assembly for the same purpose. We will defend them in their right not to use a woman translator in said assemblies. We have primarily addressed ourselves to those persons have made it clear that this issue is a matter of fellowship.

### ONE'S PERSONAL LIKES AND DISLIKES

Brethren, if I went strictly according to my own *likes* and *dislikes* I would not have women speaking to women in lectureships, teaching ladies' Bible classes, and other things of like nature. However, my likes and dislikes do not stand as the authority in these matters or in any other. Moreover, no other human being's personal preferences are on the level of the word of God. Therefore, I do not intend to be brought under the power of anyone else's likes or dislikes anymore than I intend to bind my preferences on others as if they are the authorized will of heaven.

For example, one lectureship speaker plainly declared (we have him on tape saying it) that it was not enough for a school of preaching to declare that

though they had used a woman translator they were not now using one. (Would this school be a certain West Tennessee school of preaching?) What would be enough to satisfy such thinking? Would it be a confession that they have sinned and that they will never do such a thing again? Another brother declares that such action places said school and others like them in the false teacher camp. *If these persons do not intend to divide the church over this issue, what would they have to say and do to promote division?* Primarily, these are the brethren to whom we address ourselves.

#### WAS IT AN ASSUMPTION?

In the February 1996, issue of this paper I wrote that brother **Joe Ruiz** had no problem with a sister supplying him with Mandarin Chinese words while he was translating a sermon. Brother Ruiz wrote that my conclusion was an assumption. No, I **assumed** nothing. Along with more than two witnesses I sat through and witnessed the whole event. There was no concern evidenced by brother Joe or the Taichung, Taiwan church before, during or after the episode under consideration. If brother Joe and the Taichung brethren were not sure that what she was doing was authorized by the scriptures, they should have been careful not to participate in a practice for which they were uncertain any Bible authority existed (Romans 14:23; Colossians 3:17). That is the way that is right and never can be wrong.

No matter the situation, brother Ruiz had every opportunity to correct her then and there; especially after she did it the *second* time. He has Paul for an example regarding correcting Peter's sin in Antioch of Syria. Nevertheless, he did not withstand her to her face then or while at the building after the service. According to his *own* doctrine at that time, he allowed her to exercise dominion over him and the rest of the men in the assembly without rebuking her. Moreover, according to his view, he allowed her soul to be in jeopardy while he determined the time that he would attempt to correct her.

At the same time brother Joe allowed brother **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.** to display and make available his *Far East Newsletter* to all present. Some, if not all of those issues, reported the work in Russia wherein a female translator was used in a worship assembly containing men. Hence, brother Joe allowed the display of that which he did not believe to be biblically right, and which he at other times opposed. Now, let us hear "the rest of the story."

#### A CONFESSION OF FAULT

In his *May, 1996* news letter regarding the above matter, brother Joe quotes a confession of fault from him and the Taichung brethren. The confession is reproduced below.

**"In our further study of the role of a translator/interpreter, we have come to understand that I Corinthians 14:34, 35 and I Timothy 2:11, 12 not only prohibit women from serving as a translator during mixed assemblies from the pulpit, but also from one's seat, whether one word, one sentence or a full sermon. We ask God's forgiveness for having allowed such practice to take place here."**

However, in brother Joe's *November, 1993* news letter (*the instance of the confession of fault took place in December of 1993.*) under the heading of **"LINES ARE DRAWN IN TAIWAN/CHINA IN 1982,"** he revealed that it was as long ago as 1982 when he concluded that...

*...it was indeed, a violation of Scripture (I Cor. 14:34, 35, and I Tim. 2:11-15) to employ the use of women to address a mixed public assembly as an interpreter. The reasons were 2-fold: she would be, (1) teaching over the man; and (2) usurping authority over the man. From then on, the lines were drawn in Taiwan, and the liberals went one way, and we went another, initiating the work in Hualien (Vol. XV, no. 1, p. 2; emphasis by bro. Joe).*

Please understand that in November, 1993 brother Joe reported a conclusion he had drawn back in 1982 — *eleven years* prior to the events reported above and *fourteen years before* the publication of his confession of fault. It took brother Joe *over a decade* to reach his conclusion that if a woman is not authorized to translate while she *stands* in front of the audience beside the preacher, she is also not authorized to *sit* in the audience and translate "one word, one sentence, or a full sermon."

Believe it or not, I do appreciate brother Joe's efforts to be consistent. I also believe that his and the Taichung brethren's confession of fault are from the heart. But I really wonder how far brother Joe and others such as he will go in their efforts to be consistent with the implications of their doctrine, especially when it seems that they have a terrible time seeing what their doctrines imply.

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## PATTERN, PATTERN, WHO HAS THE PATTERN?

It is obvious from the following material that everyone who opposes a female translator has not gotten it as "correct" as brother Joe does. The following quotation was written with the intent to defend brother Joe and the sister's aforementioned "sinful" actions of which brother Joe and the sister have repented.

**The helpful sister was not leading anything. This quibble is just as specious as that of the pro-instrument people asserting that the pitch-pipe is equivalent to the piano. The pitch-pipe doesn't play a song, and the helpful sister doesn't take the lead as Interpreter. If, in the course of a sermon or class, I am struggling for a passage and a sister discreetly cites the reference: is that "vocalized sin"?<sup>1</sup>**

According to brother Joe those practicing the view taught in the previous quotation are engaged in sin. Of course by now, I am sure that this well-intentioned, but mistaken brother, knows of his terrible sin. I suppose I have missed where brother Joe has "written him up" or, possibly, the erring brother (from brother Joe's perspective) has "written brother Joe up." Maybe, it has been recorded somewhere that the erring brother has repented. Of course, *according to their view*, one or the other must repent in order for them to remain in fellowship. However, maybe brother Joe missed this effort by his erring friend to "help him." I am sure if brother Joe knew that this friendly, helpful brother was teaching this error, he would not let the sun set before he had attempted to correct this well-meaning, but false teacher (from brother Joe's perspective).

Brother Joe, did I read something from your pen sometime back regarding the importance of "integrity"? Yes indeed, "POLITICS, POPULARITY, PRIDE, AND PRESSURE" will get you if you don't watch out. So, "LET'S BE BIG ENOUGH TO REPENT." Let us also be "BIG ENOUGH" to expose ALL of those who teach any doctrine that is false, even mistaken, supportive, erring, friendly, brethren.<sup>2</sup>

### AN IMPARTIAL COMMENT FROM AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION

The end of this list of differing views on this subject is not yet. Another comes with "an impartial investigation" declaring that...

**When this formal discourse (preaching/teaching) is in the worship assembly, God has forbidden the woman to utter not a sound in the sense of speaking. She may not whisper to her husband an explanation of what is said. She may not ask a question of the speaker. She may not read the Scripture for the speaker. She is commanded to utter not a sound of speech.<sup>3</sup>**

[I think when the brother writes "God has forbidden the woman to utter *not* (?) a sound...", and "She is commanded to utter *not* (?) a sound of speech.,"

that he means she is forbidden to utter a sound of speech. That is the only reason I can see for him to use double negatives.— Associate Editor]

God forbid that a woman should interrupt the preacher with the question, "What must I do to be saved?" That question would be a sure sign of her usurpation of his authority! *Would these brethren affirm that under any and all circumstances the scriptures teach that a woman is out of order in a worship assembly containing men if she interrupts the sermon to ask, "What must I do to be saved?"*

### LIBERALS ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES TO ATTEMPT TO PRACTICE "UNITY IN DIVERSITY" IN WHAT SOME CONSIDER TO BE OBLIGATORY MATTERS

The following is a summation of the aforementioned differing views.

1. One teaches that a woman may not translate "one word" in a worship assembly containing men.
2. Another teaches that not even "a sound of speech" may be made by a woman during a sermon in a worship assembly containing men.
3. Comes another teaching that if the preacher is "struggling" for a passage in his sermon within a worship assembly containing men, "a discreet sister is not sinning to give him that for which he is struggling."

Moreover, I have also heard the following positions advocated.

1. A woman is wrong if she translates "upfront," but not if she translates "downback." For these people the "place" of the female translator in the auditorium is the issue.
2. Others say if a woman is "silent" when she translates she is scriptural. Hence, "sound" is the issue between them.
3. Still others teach that she can translate to "one," "two," or "three" in a worship assembly containing men, but not to everyone. Thus, the "number" in said assembly to which she translates is the issue.

**"Can two walk together, except they be agreed"** (Amos 3:3)? In this case the answer is *yes*. They have been doing it for some time now. Is this some kind of "unity in diversity" regarding what they have concluded to be a matter of obligation?

### DEBATE, DEBATE, LET'S HAVE A DEBATE

*Why are these brethren not falling over one another as they race to debate their own differences?* Just take a look at all the possible opportunities for these fellows to debate themselves.

1. Why not have a debate between "the 'upfront' woman translator brethren" and "the 'downback' woman translator" brethren?

2. Why not have a debate between “the ‘silent’ woman translator (a woman signing) in a worship assembly containing men” brethren and “the no kind of woman translator in a worship assembly containing men” brethren?
3. Why not have a debate between “a woman may translate to ‘one,’ ‘two,’ or ‘three’ persons in a worship assembly containing men” brethren and “the it is wrong for a woman to translate to anyone in a worship assembly containing men” brethren?
4. Would you not enjoy hearing a debate between the “no sound in the assembly from a woman while the sermon is being preached” brethren and “the discreet sister supplying a word to the struggling preacher during his sermon” brethren?
5. Why not a debate between “the ‘downback’ in the assembly woman translator” brethren and “the not one word from a woman translator in a worship assembly containing men” brethren?

I dare say that such possibilities for debate as aforementioned among these brethren have not exhausted all the

combinations that could be debated among and between them. Of course they may not want to debate. In that case maybe they could have some sort of “unity meeting” to determine which one of their views is the “exclusive pattern” for all to follow.

**AS LONG AS WE AGREE ON THIS POINT,  
THAT'S ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS**

I am afraid that these brethren are not very concerned about the differences that exist among themselves, just as long as they are opposed to some extent to a female translating in a worship assembly containing men. Is it asking too much of these brethren to settle their own differences among themselves before they seek to teach the rest of us “the way of the God more perfectly.” Especially is this important since many of these same brethren have stated that in time, whether a woman may or may not translate in a worship assembly containing men, is going to be a matter of fellowship. But please do not hold your breath until they begin to deal with their own contradictory legislative differences.

1 *Banner of Truth*, (February, 1996), p. 13.  
2 *Taiwan/China Messenger*, Vol. XVII, No. 7, (May, 1996)  
3 *Seek The Old Paths*, (May, 1996), pp. 6, 7.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

## A CORRECTION

Several have called my attention to the following quotation on page seven of my February 1996 *Associate Editorial*. The quotation reads: “*We must understand that while all interpretation is translation, not all translation is interpretation.*” The following excerpt is from a letter I wrote on May 25, 1996, in response to one of those who cited the quotation as incorrect.

**You are correct in your evaluation of the quotation from CFTF, Feb. '96, p. 7. The words “interpretation” and “translation” were mistakenly inverted. This was not the way I originally wrote it. In trying to state correctly what was intended the aforementioned terms were inverted when they were reviewed by brother Rice. The quotation should read: “All translation is interpretation, but not all interpretation is translation.” You are**

**also correct when you observe that said quotation “...was simply a case of oversight....” ... I do not intend to stand by the quote as it appeared in the Feb. '96 issue of CFTF.**

My published remarks in the remainder of the paragraph were made based upon the way the sentence was *originally* written. I continue to possess the rough draft and the first layout of the article with the quotation in question reading as it does in the above excerpt from my letter of May 25, 1996. With the inverting of the terms, “translation” and “interpretation,” in the published article, my remarks following it are contrary to the meaning of the sentence as it was finally printed. Many thanks to all of those who read closely enough to note the error of the sentence as it was printed.

—Associate Editor

## Maintaining Our Balance

Lynn Parker

The new preacher took the pulpit for the first time. He introduced his subject by saying, “Today, I shall speak on the subject of baptism.” The oracle went on to present a wonderfully prepared, imminently scriptural sermon on the subject. Everyone in the congregation was well-pleased. The corresponding bulletin article for the week was also on “Baptism.” The next Sunday, the preacher again took to the pulpit and preached on “Baptism.” The

brethren tolerated it well until the bulletin article for the week remained fixed on the same subject. The elders suggested that he move along to another needed topic but the preacher continued on the subject of baptism for another three weeks! The elders met, and in their wisdom, they assigned the preacher the topic of “The Creation” for the next Lord's day. The minister arose at the designated time, announced to the congregation that he was assigned the topic



of, "The Creation," and that his text would be Genesis 1:1. He continued thusly: "Brethren, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth is two-thirds water, and water is a necessary element of the new birth, which brings us back to the subject of baptism..."

#### REFUTE ERROR BUT DON'T RIDE A HOBBY

Brethren, on any scriptural topic, it might be possible to become unbalanced—to "run a horse into the ground." **"Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee"** (I Timothy 4:16). We must be careful not to lose balance in preaching and teaching to follow a "sugar-stick" or hobby. There are matters that arise from time to time that absolutely must be addressed. Error must be refuted. False teachers must be rebuked. But in all these matters, let us consider a couple of important points.

#### NOT EVERYONE IS LIBERAL

First, not everyone that disagrees with me (or you) is a raving liberal. I do not believe it right to use women translators in public worship assembly with men present. My reasoning may be different from others who hold this same view. Regardless, I do not believe that the time or need is upon us to "split" the church over women-translators. It is a circumstance which is rare, an issue which is relatively "new," and a matter deserving of, and receiving, serious Bible study.

Having personally spoken with those who differ on this issue, I certainly would not view them in the same light as liberals and digressives. Many of these brethren have stood on the firing line, shoulder-to-shoulder, in the heat of the battle against the "change agents."

#### REAL LIBERALS

I know of some brethren who are liberal—they are flip-pant and disrespectful with God's commands. They seek to loose where God has bound. These liberals castigate strict adherence to the Scriptures, and label as "Pharisees" those who demand Divine authority for acts and beliefs. These folks show that the attitude and acts of Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Philetus are alive and well today (I Timothy 1:18-20; II Timothy 2:16-18), and the names have been changed to Jeff Walling, Max Lucado, and Rubel Shelley.

Rather than study and debate to arrive at truth, these men digress further away from the truth and shy away from public discussion which might expose them. Their true colors and goals are showing, and those with an open mind and Bible can see where they are guiding their gullible disciples. We shall continue to "take the fight" to them.

#### WE MUST NOT BECOME UNBALANCED

Secondly, brethren, we can become so unbalanced in pursuit of a position that we fail to take care of building up and strengthening the church. Let me present some true illustrations:

Brethren in Texas, just a few years ago, watched as one man, obsessed with his covenant theory, destroyed a church and his reputation in the process.

I watched another man, formerly an elder, who thought that everyone making mention of God's providence was

advocating direct operation of the Holy Spirit. He had an explosive temper and a smoking habit, but all he saw was the alleged error of those who differed on his pet issue. The church split and dwindled.

Still another case occurred in which brethren split a church but eventually sent out a public letter of repentance. Some however, refused to accept it, saying it was "insincere," and managed to get a number of congregations to "pick sides." What once was a flourishing stronghold for truth is now divided and bickering.

And finally, there was a man known for his strong stand against doctrinal error and what he thought was error. Disagree on the number of children for an elder, and you were in for a fight. Yet when it came to modest apparel, forsaking assemblies to do secular work (he was self-employed), and some other matters of personal righteousness, he was as quiet as the proverbial tomb.

All of these illustrate individuals who rode hobbies, became unbalanced in Christian living and teaching, and thus caused harm to the influence and the precious church of our Lord.

"Christian charity" is not a concept invented by the liberals, and wisdom is not just for the gray-headed. Let us proceed cautiously before deciding that the issue before us is worthy of a fight—or a split.

—105 Memorial Drive  
Piedmont, Alabama 36272

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## OPPOSING SOMETHING BECAUSE SOMEONE ABUSES IT

David P. Brown

When people try to oppose a female translator on the basis of abuses in the work of translating, they are opposing translators and translating in general. *No one I know defends any abuses committed by male or female translators.* It is nothing less than amazing that brethren will attempt to oppose something on the basis of its abuses. Yet, the various "antis" have tried it over and over again. Those who are determined to divide the church over this matter are making the same sad mistakes.

Brethren, before one may abuse a thing it must first be authorized. One cannot abuse something that is wrong. Is it possible to abuse false worship, fornication, idolatry, murder, and lying. *If so, please tell us how many times one must commit fornication before he abuses it?* Have we simply taken our rational powers and thrown them away? One might just as well oppose preachers and debates on the basis of the abuses committed by preachers involved in preaching and debating as to oppose female translators on the basis of abuses. Why not oppose marriage on the basis of the abuse of such? *What proves too much proves absolutely nothing.*

—25403 Lancewood Drive  
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## ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN OPPOSITION TO A FEMALE TRANSLATOR

1. Joseph Ruiz, *TAIWAN/ CHINA MESSENGER*, Volume XV, Number 1, November, 1993.
2. Wayne Jackson, *Living Oracles*, August, September, October, December, 1993; January, February, March, 1994.
3. Walter Pigg, *Banner of Truth*, March 15, 1994, Volume 3, Number 3.
4. Joseph Ruiz, *Christian Courier*, April, 1994, Volume XXIX, No. 12, Appendix I.
5. Jim O'Connor, *Nirikshan*, Spring, 1994, 39th St. Church of Christ, Independence, Missouri.
6. Wayne Jackson, *Christian Courier*, April, 1994, Volume XXIX, No. 12.
7. Wayne Jackson, *Spiritual Sword*, April, 1994.
8. Gary Workman, *Spiritual Sword*, April, 1994.
9. Wayne Jackson, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 5, Number 6, June, 1994.
10. Holger W. Neubauer and Kerry Duke, Tract, Forest Park, Georgia, No Date.
11. Alan Adams, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 3, Number 7. July - August, 1994.
12. Gary Workman, *THE RESTORER*, September, 1994.
13. Wayne Jackson, in *Women To The Glory of God*, Nineteenth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship book, October, 1994, Getwell Church of Christ.
14. Robert Taylor, in *Women To The Glory Of God*, Nineteenth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship book, October, 1994, Getwell Church of Christ.
15. Gary Workman, in *Women To The Glory Of God*, Nineteenth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship book, October, 1994, Getwell Church of Christ.
16. Alan Adams, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 3, Number 9, November, 1994.
17. Dean Crutchfield, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 6, Number 1, January, 1995.
18. Garland Robinson, editor, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 6, Number 2, February, 1995, All of that issue.
19. Kerry Duke, *Living Oracles*, Volume 5, Number 2, March, 1995.
20. Jim O'Conner, *International Bible Studies*, Not sure of date.
21. Dean Crutchfield, *TAIWAN/CHINA MESSENGER*, Volume XVI, Number 7, May, 1995.
22. Gary Workman, *THE RESTORER*, June, 1995.
23. Alan Adams, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 4, Number 6, September, 1995.
24. Thomas W. Franklin, "Labourers together with God...", Volume 2, Number 4, December, 1995.
25. Joseph Ruiz, *TAIWAN/CHINA MESSENGER*, Volume XVII, Number 2, December, 1995.
26. Robert Taylor, *THE RIPLEY BEACON*, Volume XXII, Number 17, December 10, 1995.
27. Melvin Elliott, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 7, Number 1, January, 1996.
28. Garland Robinson, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 7, Number 1, January, 1996.
29. Alan Highers, *Spiritual Sword*, Volume 27, Number 2, pp. 22-26, January, 1996.
30. Alan Highers, *Spiritual Sword*, Volume 27, Number 2, pp. 45-47, January, 1996.
31. Robin W. Haley, *INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES*, Volume 3, Number 1, January/February, 1996.
32. Alan Adams, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 5, Number 2, February, 1996.
33. Garland Robinson, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 7, Number 2, February, 1996.
34. Ben F. Vick, Jr. *The Informer*, Volume 49, Number 23, March 31, 1996 (*sic*).

35. Ben F. Vick, Jr. *THE INFORMER*, Volume 49, Number 24, April 7, 1996.
36. Joseph A. Ruiz, *TAIWAN/CHINA MESSENGER*, Volume XVII, Number 7, May, 1996.
37. Tom L. Bright, Garland M. Robinson, Charles A. Pledge, Roger D. Campbell, Ron Cosby, Robin W. Haley, *Seek The Old Paths*, Volume 7, Number 5, May, 1996.
38. John M. Grubb, *International Bible Studies*, May/June, 1996.
39. Darin K. Chappell, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 5, Number 6, July, 1996.
38. Roger D. Campbell, *Curry Street Church of Christ* bulletin, West Plains, Missouri, Volume 28, Number 32, August, 1996.
39. Walter W. Pigg, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 5, Number 7, August/September, 1996.
40. Robin Haley, "Give Me the Bible Because it Enables Me to Confront False Ideas About Women Translators," (Audio Tape) Fourteenth Annual Mid-West Lectures, *Give Me The Bible*, 39th St. Church of Christ, Independence, Missouri.
41. Randy Watson, *International Bible Studies*, Volume 3, Number 5, September/October, 1996.
42. Walter W. Pigg, *Banner of Truth*, Volume 5, Number 7, November 9, 1996.

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## ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN SUPPORT OF A FEMALE TRANSLATOR

1. Bob Berard, *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXV, Number 9, September, 1994.
2. Dick Sztanyo, "An Overview Of The Present Discussion: The Role Of Women In The Church" in *Women To The Glory of God*, Nineteenth Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship book, October, 1994. (*Not specifically written to defend women translating for men in a worship assembly. We agree with some of what he says.*)
3. Guy N. Woods, "Please Answer the Following Questions Regarding I Corinthians 14:34, 35, Touching Women Keeping Silent in the Assembly." *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXVI, Number 10, October, 1995 (*Not originally written in support of women translators.*).
4. Roy C. Deaver, "First Corinthians 14:26 - 40," *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXVI, Number 11, November, 1995 (*Not originally written in support of women translators.*).
5. Ira Y. Rice, Jr, Editorial, *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXVI, Number 5, May, 1995.
6. Bob Berard, *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXVII, Number 2, February, 1996.
7. David P. Brown, *Contending for the Faith*, Volume XXVII, Number 2, February, 1996.

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## BOTH POSITIONS FAIRLY REPRESENTED

*The Berard/Haley Debate* (A written debate between Bob Berard and Robin Haley).



# *Did you know that you cannot prove that Priscilla taught Apollos anything?*

David P. Brown

And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:26).

In view of the grammar of the above passage if it is true that Priscilla did not teach Apollos anything, then it is equally true that Aquila did not teach him either. Notice please, that if it is the case that the passage declares that Aquila and Priscilla did the same thing, and, if it is the case that the thing Aquila did was to teach Apollos "...the way of God more perfectly," then it is the case that the thing Priscilla did was the same thing Aquila did. What was that thing that Aquila and Priscilla did? Together this husband and wife taught Apollos.

Surely we can see that if one cannot determine from the passage that Priscilla taught Apollos, one cannot determine that Aquila taught him either. If people would cease their illogical efforts to hold to a doctrine too narrow for gospel truth, they would not get themselves into such intellectual contortions.

## **BUT WAIT! THERE IS MORE CONCERNING AQUILA AND PRISCILLA.**

*Did you know that the only reason Priscilla could have participated with her husband Aquila in teaching Apollos is that Apollos was not a Christian at the time they taught him?*

It is amazing how far some people will go in attempting to uphold a false doctrine. In order to forbid a woman from ever teaching a man, yet not able to escape the grammar of Acts 18:26 that says one woman did teach a man, certain ones are driven to the false doctrine that non-Christians are not amenable to the law of Christ.

## **JAMES D. BALES' DOCTRINE REVISITED**

If it is the case that the Bible doctrine pertaining to a woman teaching a man only applies to persons who are Christians, and, if it is the case that Apollos was not a Christian when Priscilla helped Aquila teach him, then, it is the case that the Bible doctrine pertaining to a woman teaching a man did not apply to Priscilla teaching Apollos.

Brethren, to those who have studied the marriage, divorce, and remarriage issues over the last few decades, does the above reasoning have a ring of familiarity to it? Let us reason the same way regarding the biblical doctrine of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. and see if the studious person in this area sees where the above logic leads.

If it is the case that the Bible doctrine pertaining to marriage, divorce, and remarriage **only** applies to persons who are Christians, and, if it is the case that at one time Apollos was not a Christian, then it is the case that the Bible doctrine pertaining to marriage, divorce, and remarriage did not apply to Apollos during the time he was not a Christian.

If the previous reasoning is correct, then the following reasoning is correct. If it is the case that **only** persons who are Christians are amenable to the doctrine of Christ, and, if it is the case that Apollos was not a Christian when Priscilla taught him, then it is the case that Apollos was not amenable to the doctrine of Christ. Both of the major premises in the previous two paragraphs are false.

*The truth of the matter is this: not all teaching done by a woman to a man violates the prohibition of the law of Christ forbidding a woman to exercise dominion over a man. The case of Aquila and Priscilla teaching Apollos "the way of God more perfectly" is exceedingly clear on that point.*

The false doctrines just noticed concerning Aquila and Priscilla teaching Apollos would never have been devised if certain ones were not "scared to death" to admit that a woman may scripturally teach a man without exercising dominion over a man. They also know that if they admit that Priscilla taught Apollos, they may not teach that it is sin for a woman to teach (explicitly or implicitly) in the same way Priscilla taught Apollos.

## **A TRANSLATOR IS A FOLLOWER**

Because of the nature of translating no translator (male or female) has the liberty that a woman in a Bible class containing adult men does. But, her liberty therein does not allow her to conduct herself in such a way that would cause her to exercise dominion over the leading male teacher in charge of the class or her male classmates.

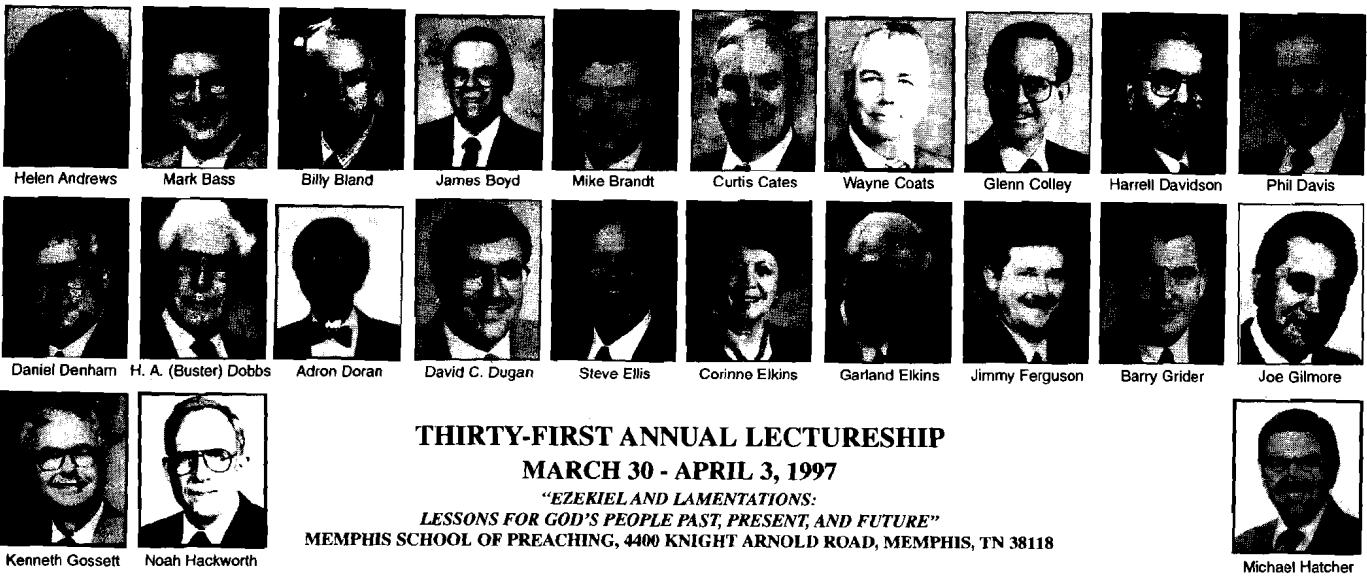
Every translator is a follower, not a leader. A *male translator* must follow the lead of the man for whom he translates. If not, then where does the translator get the material that he renders into another language?

If the male translator is going to go ahead and originate the message, he ceases translating because he is not following the words of the controlling male preacher for whom he purports to translate. He, therefore, becomes the leading and controlling preacher or teacher. Hence, there would be no need for a translator.

The relationship of the male translator to the male preacher for whom he translates is that of a follower. *If such is the relationship between a male translator and the male preacher for whom he translates (and it is), how does the relationship change when the translator for a male preacher is a female?*

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 Kenneth Gossett Noah Hackworth  
 Michael Hatcher

**THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL LECTURESHIP**  
**MARCH 30 - APRIL 3, 1997**

*"EZEKIEL AND LAMENTATIONS:  
 LESSONS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE"*  
 MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING, 4400 KNIGHT ARNOLD ROAD, MEMPHIS, TN 38118

**SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 1997**

9:30-10:20 A.M. "Introduction to Ezekiel" (Keith A. Mosher, Sr)  
 10:30-11:30 A.M. "They Shall Know There Hath Been a Prophet Among Them--2:5" (Steve Ellis)  
 8:00-7:00 A.M. "Ezekiel, A Hard-Headed Preacher--3:8,9" (Joe Gilmore)

**MONDAY, MARCH 31, 1997**

9:00-9:50 A.M. "Ezekiel's Vision of God's Glory--1:1-28" (Curtis A. Cates)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The New Testament Church" (Adron Doran)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Two Women, the Daughters of One Mother--Ch. 23" (Women's Class) (Corinne Elkins)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Ezekiel's Call and Commission--2:1-3:27" (Gary Summers)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Introduction to Lamentations" (Phil Davis)  
 Class 2: "Ezekiel and Christ" (Terry Hightower)  
 Class 3: "Let Us Search and Try Our Ways, and Turn--Lam. 3:40" (Tommy Stacks)  
 Class 4: "The Anointed Cherub: Satan?" -- 28:11-18" (David B. Jones)

**LUNCH**

11:50-1:10 P.M. "Judgment on Israel Symbolized--4:1-5:17" (Joseph D. Meador)  
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Jerusalem Mourns--Lam. 1:1-22" (Eddie Whitten)  
 Class 2: "Unanswered Prayer--Lam. 3:44" (Fred House)  
 Class 3: "God's Woman: Her Scriptural Role" (Women's Class) (Jane McWhorter)  
 2:10-3:00 P.M. "Punishment for Idolatry and False Worship--6:1-7:27" (Kenneth Gossett)  
 3:10-4:00 P.M. "Open Forum" (Garland Elkins)

**INTERMISSION**

7:00-7:30 P.M. **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**  
 7:30-8:30 P.M. "I Sat Where They Sat--3:15" (Harrell Davidson)

**TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 1997**

8:00-9:50 A.M. "Visions of Judgment Upon Jerusalem--8:1-11:25" (Dub McClish)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Restoration Movement" (Adron Doran)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "There Sat the Women Weeping for Tammuz--8:14,15" (Women's Class) (Carol Mangrum)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Signs and Messages--12:14:23" (Michael Hatcher)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "The Lord Punishes Jerusalem--Lam. 2:1-22" (Clarence Lavender)  
 Class 2: "Ezekiel as a Preacher" (M. H. Tucker)  
 Class 3: "False Teachers, Then and Now--13:1-16" (Glenn Colley)  
 Class 4: "God's Holy Name and Attitudes Toward It-- 36:21" (Mark Mosher)

**LUNCH**

1:10-2:00 P.M. "Judah Described in Parables--15:1-17:24" (Daniel Denham)  
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Godly Sorrow Brings Hope--Lam. 3:1-66" (Jimmy Ferguson)  
 Class 2: "They Hear Thy Words But Do Them Not--33:31" (Dave Dugan)  
 Class 3: "God's Woman: Her Triumph in Adversity" (Women's Class) (Jane McWhorter)  
 2:10-3:00 P.M. "God's Righteous Judgments; Weeping Over Jerusalem--18:1-19:14" (Mack Lyon)

**PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS SEMINAR**

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. "Valley of Dry Bones" (Jerry Moffitt)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 1997**

9:00-9:50 A.M. "Jehovah's Past Dealings and Future Retribution--20:1-21:32" (Noah Hackworth)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Difficulties Encountered by the Restorers with the Restoration Plea" (Adron Doran)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Thou Didst Trust in Thy Beauty--16:15" (Women's Class) (Helen Andrews)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Sin, Spiritual Adultery, and Destruction--22:1-24:27" (Bobby Liddell)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Punishment Caused by Wickedness--Lam. 4:1-22" (David McElwain)  
 Class 2: "Christ on David's Throne Now?--37:24-28" (Mark Bass)  
 Class 3: "I Sought for a Man--22:30" (Robert R. Taylor, Jr.)  
 Class 4: "Things Necessary for God to Dwell in Man's Midst--43:9" (James Boyd)

**LUNCH**

11:50-1:10 P.M. "Prophecies Against the Nations--25:1-28:26" (H. A. "Buster" Dobbs)  
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Earnest Prayer to God--Lam. 5:1-22" (Kenneth Jones)  
 Class 2: "God's House Has Law--43:12" (Bill Lockwood)  
 Class 3: "God's Woman: Her Service to Others" (Women's Class) (Jane McWhorter)  
 2:10-3:00 P.M. "Prophecies Against Egypt--29:1-32:32" (Wayne Coats)  
 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. "I Have Made Thee a Watchman--3:17" (Don McWhorter)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1997**

9:00-9:50 A.M. "Ezekiel's Call Renewed; Israel to be Restored--33:1-35:15" (Mike Brandt)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Barton Warren Stone and the Cane Ridge Church" (Adron Doran)  
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "The Role of Women in Maintaining Morality and Spirituality" (Women's Class) (Irene Taylor)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Land Restored; Nation Resurrected as One--36:1-37:28" (Billy Bland)  
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Is It Nothing to You, All ye That Pass By?--Lam. 1:12" (Ira Y. Rice, Jr.)  
 Class 2: "It Is Good to Bear the Yoke in Youth--Lam. 3:27" (Barry Grider)  
 Class 3: "God's All-Seeing Eye--8:12" (Tim Nichols)  
 Class 4: "Woe Unto the Shepherds of Israel--34:2" (Eddie Smith)

**LUNCH**

11:50 - 1:10 P.M. "Final Triumph and Deliverance--38:1-39:28" (John West)  
 1:10 - 2:00 P.M. Class 1: "God's Blessings Are New Every Morning--Lam. 3:2" (Paul Sain)  
 Class 2: "They Have Committed Lewdness and Shed Blood--22:6-12" (Robert Williams)  
 Class 3: "God's Women: Her Spirituality" (Women's Class) (Jane McWhorter)  
 2:10 - 3:00 P.M. "Vision of the Future Temple Described--40:1-43:12" (Roy J. Hearn)  
 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. "Vision of Future Worship and Future Land--43:13-48:35" (Robert R. Taylor, Jr.)

**NOTE AN ATTENDED NURSERY SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL LECTURES. THERE WILL BE CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN DAILY, AND ALSO FOR THE EVENING CLASSES. WATER/ELECTRICAL HOOKUPS PROVIDED.**



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# “NEW” HERMENEUTIC AND OTHER EFFORTS FAIL TO SUPPORT MAN-MADE LAW AGAINST THE FEMALE TRANSLATOR

Bob Berard

The liberals' so-called “new” hermeneutic (“the science and method of interpretation, especially of scriptural text”)<sup>1</sup> is an old sham which sidesteps logic (valid or correct reasoning) so as to declare some of the Bible's obligatory matters to be optional. Our liberal brethren have long attacked the idea of logically drawing the conclusions that are *implied* by the explicit words of Bible texts. Thus, it is really no new thing to fear, hate, or attack the fact that the Bible teaches both implicitly (that is, by approved account of action and implicit statements) and explicitly (that is, by direct statements).<sup>2</sup> Such liberal proponents spurn the Bible's insistence on man's drawing and accepting as authoritative the conclusions warranted by the Scriptures (I Thessalonians 5:21-22). They are blind leaders of the blind destined for the eternal ditch, being without excuse for failing to accept both what the Bible's ultimate author has set out in just so many words (explicitly) and what he has implied (that which logically follows) by those words (Isaiah 1:18; I Thessalonians 5:21; Romans 1:20).

Directly to the point of concern here, the liberals are not the only ones departing from right reasoning by way of a “new” hermeneutic or rejection of logical interpretation of Bible truths. As shown below, some on the firing line against liberalism have devised and advocated a “new” hermeneutic twist which they suppose negates the force of an argument which proves the scripturalness of using a woman to translate a preacher's sermon. Their rule only appears to support the “anti-woman translator position,”<sup>3</sup> for in the process they make a rule contrary to logic and the Bible (I Thessalonians 5:21; Revelation 22:18). By their illogic, they lend credence to the illogic of the liberals' “new” hermeneutic and, as shown below, they undermine the war against anti-ism which our good brethren have long fought in “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit” (Ephesians 4:3).

## BACKGROUND: THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENT ARGUMENT'S PROOF OF THE SCRIPTURALNESS OF A WOMAN TRANSLATOR

The constituent element argument involves the following premise:

*If there is authority for every part (component or element) of a composite action (total situation), then there is authority for that composite action.*

This proposition is based on the un-get-over-able truth that the sum of the parts is equal to the whole. For example, scriptural worship is composed of five parts: Bible study, singing, prayer, the Lord's Supper, and giving. We rightly go to several passages to find Bible authorization for each of the five parts and every Sunday we add the parts together in authorized observance of the Lord's day worship serv-

ice. This worship service is the authorized whole and it is equal to the sum of the authorized parts. If the whole is equal to the sum of the parts, then what is true for the whole is *implied* (logically follows) as also true for the parts; and, what is true for the parts is true for the whole. Therefore, if the parts are all authorized, the whole is authorized.

This approach works every time it is correctly used. If there are two or more elements or parts of any composite action or total situation and if every one of those elements has Bible authority, then putting them together (summing or adding the parts) will produce a composite action or total situation which is authorized. Looking at it negatively, unless sin can result without having at least one sinful element (an obvious impossibility) you will never produce sin by using only authorized parts, no matter how many parts are involved. Authorized parts “add up” to an authorized total situation. Think about it! How can a total situation be sinful if each and every component part (constituent element) of that total situation is authorized?

Proper development of the constituent element argument encourages careful analysis of a questioned composite activity for its scripturalness by examining *every* part of the activity. If one succeeds in correctly identifying every part of a composite activity, and if every part of that composite activity has Bible authority, the conclusion logically follows (is implied) that that composite activity is authorized. This argument has been properly and successfully used by our good brethren in defending the scripturalness of church support of orphan's homes, Bible classes, church cooperation, and other matters opposed by antis dating back several decades.<sup>4</sup> Consider the following quote in this connection:

Many times these fellows (antis, BB) 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 a couple of years ago. I had a chart on which was drawn an auditorium, with a baptistry at the front of the building, and dressing rooms on each side of the baptistry. 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. But he is no more illogical than are these men who oppose cooperation and orphan homes. They will admit each and every *point* in the whole thing—and then turn right around and deny that the *whole* thing is scriptural! Yet, they will ridicule the anti-class debaters for their inconsistency. It is just a case of the “pot” calling the “kettle” black!<sup>5</sup>

Those today who oppose the constituent element argument are part of the same “pot,” failing to have learned or having forgotten the lessons of the past. Whether they know it or not, their opposition to the proper use of the constituent element argument is a turn against logic (correct reasoning), and no man turns on logic unless logic turns against him.<sup>6</sup> Even more sobering, one who turns on logic turns against scripture and against scripture's ultimate author (I Thessalonians 5:21).

The same constituent element argument has been used to defend (not insist on) the use of a woman translating to a gender-mixed audience while under the direction of a present and controlling male speaker.<sup>7,8,9</sup> In such efforts Bible authority has been shown for every component part of the total situation in which a woman translates the sermon of a present and controlling man to a gender-mixed audience. The reader is encouraged to read the works referenced in footnotes 7-9 with regard to the constituent element argument and to examine responses to objections and questions surrounding the woman translator issue. But, for a quick summary here, the constituent element argument proving the scripturalness of a woman translator is briefly described.

The woman has authority:

1. to mentally translate the message of a preacher (II Timothy 2:15; I Thessalonians 5:21);

2. to speak in a gender-mixed assembly (Ephesians 5:19);
  3. to speak alone or singly (Romans 10:10; James 5:16); and
  4. to impart spiritual instruction (Colossians 3:16).
- Adding these four authorized parts together produces a composite action or total situation which is authorized.

The total situation involves the woman (under the preacher's direction) translating his message and speaking the translation of his message to a gender-mixed assembly. She need not exercise any more authority than does a judge's translator who tells a defendant that the judge has sentenced him to hang by the neck until he is dead. The defendant may not appreciate the sentence, but he understands that the judge, and not the translator, is the one who has sentenced him to die. So it can be with those in an assembly who see and hear the present and controlling preacher's message, but are unable to understand his words until they are translated and spoken by someone else's voice. They can see who is in control. Given the trustworthiness and competency of the woman translator (judges trust some women to translate, can't we?), she can comply with the Bible restrictions for her gender and translate for a present and controlling man. She is authorized to do all of the elements which make up the whole; therefore, she is authorized to do the whole.

**THE “NEW” HERMENEUTIC LIMITS OR DENIES SOME IMPLICIT AUTHORIZATION FOR WOMEN**

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woman is authorized by Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, and James 5:16 to: (1) speak in an assembly, (2) speak alone to an assembly, and (3) speak spiritual instruction to an assembly. However, he quickly added that this did not mean that a woman may speak spiritual instruction to an assembly as would be done with a woman translator. Does this sound like the earlier quote, "They will admit each and every *point* in the whole thing—and then turn right around and deny that the *whole* thing is scriptural! Yet, they will ridicule the anti-class debaters for their inconsistency. It is just a case of the 'pot' calling the 'kettle' black!"<sup>10</sup> Our brother agreed with the parts, but opposed the whole (that is, simply putting the parts together). Trying, but failing, to support this illogic, he said about the authorized parts, that "she can (may, BB) do them (the aforementioned actions, BB) only in the realm of what the context of those passages teach."<sup>11</sup> This is his "new" hermeneutic which might be dubbed, to use his words, the authorization to act "only-in-the-realm-of-what-the-context-of-a-passage-teaches." For short, it could be called the limited-implications hermeneutic, since limiting the implications of God's word is precisely what the rule accomplishes. Logically, the woman is authorized to do *all the elements* that the passages explicitly and implicitly say she may do; if no unauthorized element is added, she acts with Bible authority. Our brother affirms that there is authority for the parts, but denies there is authority for the whole by saying that the authorization to act is "only in the realm of what the context of a passage teaches."

**THE "NEW" HERMENEUTIC APPLIED ELSEWHERE  
CREATES OBVIOUS PROBLEMS  
AND EXPOSES ITS OWN FALLACIOUSNESS**

To be consistent with his limited-implication "new" hermeneutic, our brother will have to say that his claim applies to every similar situation. If it makes sense to limit the implications of some passages to the authorization of actions "only in the realm of what the context of a passage teaches," it should be logical for similar passages, shouldn't it? To avoid contradiction with his own rule, it is therefore demanded that wherever a passage has an explicit statement requiring someone to do something, the action authorized is "only in the realm of what the context of [that] passage teaches." One wonders if our brother had tested his rule on some other verses, if he would have declared it as he has done? You be the judge.

Try out the limited implication hermeneutic on the action of paying a preacher's salary from the Lord's day collection authorized by First Corinthians 16:1-3. A church would be allowed to take up the contributions on each first day of the week; but, what about the use of those funds so collected? Is there a preacher's salary "in the realm of what the context of [that] passage teaches?" No, there is not; nevertheless, almost all of the churches, likely including the one where our brother preaches, use the passage as authority for collecting funds which are used to pay a preacher's salary. Are all these churches acting without Bible authority? No, they have authority, but their authority for the expenditure of those Lord's-day-collected funds is covered by another passage of scripture. This is exactly

what is done with the constituent element argument. Authority for one part of a composite action or total situation (the collection on the Lord's day) is found in one passage and authority for a different part (the expenditure of those funds) is found in another passage. Since you have authority for both parts, you can add them together into an authorized whole.

Our brother condemns the total situation of the woman translator, that is, the combination of authorization from more than one passage into a whole; but, he condones such combinations in other total situations. Brother, if the woman may do what Ephesians 5:19 says "only in the realm of what the context of a passage teaches," then consistency demands that the church may do what First Corinthians 16:1-3 says "only in the realm of what the context of [that] passage teaches." The obvious falsity of the latter implies the falsity of the former.

Interestingly, in the same sermon here considered, our brother said that Acts 20:7 is the only passage authorizing the day on which to observe the Lord's Supper. He also said that other passages give us instructions for partaking of the Supper. Here again is the use of the authorization of one passage for one part of a total situation and the authorization of a different passage for another part of that total situation. Adding the parts together produces an authorized whole. Unwittingly, our brother, by implication, affirmed what he said he opposed in the same sermon.

The constituent element argument works every time it is correctly applied, regardless of the number of parts involved. This is so because of the unchanging underlying principle that the whole is equal to the sum of the parts.

**OTHER FUTILE ATTEMPTS TO REFUTE THE  
IRREFUTABLE CONSTITUENT ELEMENT ARGUMENT**

A brother has claimed that the speaking in an assembly by a woman translator is speaking in a sense different from the speaking authorized by Ephesians 5:19. On this basis he implied that the constituent element argument, with which he claims to agree, was inadequately developed to prove all the components required for the contested woman translator.<sup>12</sup> Our brother, in his objection shows a failure to rightly apply the idea of the parts being equal to the whole and the supported conclusion that when all the parts have authority, there is also authority for the whole and vice versa. Specifically this failure is shown by his not recognizing that the speaking of Ephesians 5:19 is a component part of a larger whole, singing. The reciprocal singing of the passage involves more than speaking, but it does involve speaking. The speaking involved, as our brother ably notes is the speaking which teaches and admonishes (Colossians 3:16). Well, if the teaching and admonishing by reciprocal singing is an authorized composite action (and obviously it is, in that it consists of more than one part), then every component part of that composite action is also authorized. One of those composite parts is speaking. Speaking in what sense or what kind of speaking? Speaking which communicates a spiritual message which teaches, admonishes, and praises God. What is the sense of speaking needed in the woman translator situation? Why, the very same kind of speaking which is authorized in

Ephesians 5:19—speaking which teaches, admonishes, and praises God. Is there authority for sung or unsung speaking? The passage specifies the former, but it is a broader category which includes the latter. If you are authorized to speak a message in song (the whole), you are authorized to speak the message (a part within the whole). Has our brother never heard some of the talking that passes for singing by brethren who are sincerely doing the best that they can do? Are they to shut up entirely because of their musical inabilities? What about the mute who signs his singing? To him his signing for singing is the same as his signing for non-singing talking? Will our brother tell him to cease singing by signing unless he can add something to his singing to distinguish it from talking by signs? Incidentally, Thayer says that the word *ado* which is translated as “singing” may also mean chant.

The same objecting brother also indicated that we have proven too much in showing that there is authority for a woman to teach since Paul says she is not allowed to teach (I Timothy 2:12). The problem here is that Paul did not say she is not allowed to teach at all, but that she is not allowed to **teach over** men or in any other way to exercise dominion over men. Space does not permit explanation of the exegesis to prove this point from First Timothy 2:12, but it can be proven. For now, pause and ponder the implications of saying that a woman may not teach a man rather than may not teach over a man. Is our brother really willing to affirm that it is sin for a woman to teach a man other than by singing? Does he ever allow women to speak in a Bible class where in all likelihood he is going to be taught something by one of them sooner or later, accidentally or on purpose? Does he ever teach a ladies' Bible class? Does he require them to be absolutely silent? May they ask questions? Do questions sometimes instruct?

Let the reader carefully note that the foregoing is no admission that the woman translator **teaches** in the same sense that the controlling preacher **teaches**.<sup>13</sup> She need not exert teaching authority over the hearers any more than a judge's translator need exert judgment authority over a defendant. The claim that a woman is authorized to teach in an assembly is, of course, limited by every New Testament restriction on her gender or that otherwise relates to such action. She is to be in subjection, but she can be in subjection to the controlling speaker and to every other man present, if she simply translates the speaker's message (I Timothy 1:11-12; I Corinthians 14:34). The constituent element argument as set out in this and earlier articles proves such to be the case.

#### TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE? YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

Hear another brother's rabid self-contradictory attack on the constituent element argument. He wrote, “The five points (constituent elements or parts, BB)<sup>14</sup> listed authorize far more than the Bible authorized. As they are listed and used together, I see absolutely no valid reason why we cannot have women preachers today.”<sup>15</sup> Now, notice that our brother just said that if our five elements are proven, we would prove that women may be preachers. In other words, he has claimed that we have proven too much and have

thus proven nothing. But, having said that, he then said about the same five points:

...at least one necessary component part has been omitted. One of the certain functions inherent in one serving as an interpreter/translator is that one is imparting (passing on, giving) spiritual instruction to the audience... Where then, is the component part that takes into consideration that a woman, using her voice when all others are silent, reads scripture or otherwise engages in didactic (spiritual instruction, teaching) discourse to the assembly of saints with men present? It's missing in the listing of these five!<sup>16</sup>

Should we not ask our brother about this missing component part? He says he can't find a component part authorizing women to “[read] Scripture” or otherwise [engage] in didactic ... discourse,” but our brother himself declared a few lines earlier that he had found such a part among the five set out in our constituent element argument. As a matter of fact, he said that we had a part or parts that would allow a woman to be the preacher. Where did that part or parts go? The same brother, on the same page, in the same column, in the same attack that had claimed he had the part among the five, looked again and found that part missing. Brother, I didn't take it.

Such illogic has characterized various attacks made on the constituent element argument in defense of the woman translator. “No man turns on logic until logic turns on him.”

The constituent element argument in defense of the woman translator (set out in part in this article and in full elsewhere)<sup>17</sup> is a valid argument with true premises, therefore it is a sound argument. The conclusion of a sound argument is true and cannot be refuted. The conclusion of the argument here considered says that there is Bible authority for the use of a woman translator to present the message of a present and controlling male preacher to a mixed audience.

The many objections to the argument have been no surprise since those opposing an authorized thing can go about it in just so many ways, all of which likely have been tried in efforts to support some other anti-cause. All objections and quibbles have not yet been answered, but all can be answered since only sophistry can be used to assault the truth and sophistry can always be refuted by right reasoning with God's Revelation, the Bible. “Truth is truth and will be truth regardless of any man's ignorance of it or attitude toward it.”

#### CONCLUSION

The intention here has been to expose the error of those wrongfully opposing an authorized practice, to further defend the scriptural use of a woman translator to communicate a soul-saving message, and to thwart division among brethren.

The limited implication “new” hermeneutic and other illogic employed by those who have made a law against the woman translator have repercussions that extend far beyond the woman translator issue. Battles with both liberalism and anti-ism within the church and warfare with the devil in general are lost if we too allow opinion rather than right reasoning to govern our thinking (Revelation 12:9; I Thessalonians 5:21-22).



The woman translator is a scriptural situation and may be used or not used; however, those who insist that such is a sinful practice are binding where God has not bound and will therefore cause discord and division among brethren. Such work is as serious as serious gets (Proverbs 6:16-19).

May God help us to continue to work and fight together in opposing devastating liberalism in every area including abuses of the woman's role, but let us not overreact and make laws that God has not made.

**ENDNOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary.*
- <sup>2</sup> Thomas B. Warren, *Logic and the Bible*, (Lebanon, TN: Sain Publications, 1984), pp. 50-70.
- <sup>3</sup> No offense is meant by using this term, but it is clearly the case that those who declare an action to be sin that the Bible says is authorized are "anti" that action in the sense of opposing what God says is permissible.
- <sup>4</sup> Thomas B. Warren, *Lectures on Cooperation and Orphan Homes*, (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, Inc., 1958).
- <sup>5</sup> Warren, *Cooperation and Orphan Homes*, pp. 33-34.
- <sup>6</sup> Warren, *Logic and the Bible*, p. 4.
- <sup>7</sup> Bob Berard, "May Women Scripturally Translate in a Mixed Assembly," *Contending for the Faith*, Vol. XXV, No. 9; September, 1994.
- <sup>8</sup> Bob Berard and Robin Haley, *Berard - Haley Debate: May a Woman Translate to an Audience which Includes Men?* (Spring, TX: Bible Resource Publications, 1995).
- <sup>9</sup> Bob Berard, "Answering Questions About Women Translators," *Contending for the Faith*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, February, 1996.
- <sup>10</sup> Warren, *Cooperation and Orphan Homes*, p. 34.
- <sup>11</sup> Audio tape of this 1996 sermon is in my possession.
- <sup>12</sup> Tom Bright, "The Constituent Parts Argument and Female Translators," in *Seek The Old Paths*, Vol. 7, No. 5, May, 1996, pp. 1, 3.
- <sup>13</sup> This point was discussed in an earlier article showing how the word "teach" is used in more than one sense. See Bob Berard, "Answering Questions About Women Translators," *Contending for the Faith*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2; February, 1996.
- <sup>14</sup> These are the same five elements in view by the objector who just preceded this one and both are trying to deal with David Brown's associate editorial in the "February, 1996 issue of *Contending for the Faith*."
- <sup>15</sup> Garland M. Robinson, "Editorial," in *Seek The Old Paths*, Vol. 7, No. 5, May, 1996, p. 2.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> See footnotes 7 and 8.

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- "...Practice Church Discipline?" . . . . . Toney Smith
- "...Not Teach Once Saved Always Saved?" . . . . . Allen Weakland

**Sunday, March 23, 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.**

- "...Teach That Baptism Is Essential for Salvation?" . . . . . Ted Clarke
- "...Observe the Lord's Supper Every Sunday?" . . . . . David Brown
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## NOTES & QUOTES

Sam G. Roach, Manila, Philippines: "During the mid-'90s, two missionaries (one hearing man and one deaf man) came to the Philippines to initiate a program for preaching the gospel of Christ to **DEAF PEOPLE**. Three congregations were started. One at the Navy base. Another deaf congregation which was started in the province of Nueva Eciha was taken over by an Evangelical denomination due to the fact that they had no trained, sound teacher to help them to remain faithful. And the other one was the United Nations Avenue congregation in Manila.

"Since the beginning of the above congregations, nothing was done to teach and train hearing Christian men to assist the deaf congregations in any way as needed to help them to help themselves and prepare for life with God. For lack of trained men to guide and help the deaf as needed, all of these congregations no longer exist...Members of the United Nations Avenue congregation met with brother Manuel K. Pelayo in April 1991 and asked if they might meet at the Makati Central church building. Permission was granted. Those few who wanted to remain faithful now meet with the hearing brethren during their Sunday morning services.

"To my knowledge, no Christians in the Philippines are trained to preach the whole counsel of God to deaf people. What are you willing to do about this?..."

Dalton P. Ellis, of Hughson, California, enclosed \$200.00 "to help on your trip to China...I know the Lord is opening a door in China..."

**[NOTE: The mother of one of our students at Four Seas College, in Singapore, even before her conversion, was imprisoned for several years and beaten repeatedly for her work among the underground denominations in China. Now that she is a Christian after the New Testament order, she has asked me and others to come to China this coming April to help win her many friends to the truth. Those wishing to help me go, please address all such contributions to BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST, clearly earmarked "RICE CHINA TRIP," and mail them to 4850 SAUFLEY FIELD ROAD, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32526. IYR Jr.]**

Stephen Wiggins, Burkburnett, Texas: "The August issue of Contending for the Faith was superb as usual. I appreciated the things you had to say about the writings of brother Choate and the necessity to keep the pressure on the liberals. The apostates among us, such as Shelly and Cope, would like nothing better than for you to relinquish the pressure..."

"I am writing a booklet to be published by the Firm Foundation. It is a reply to some of the liberal bosh from Cope..."

Bill Towry, minister to the Harlandale church of Christ, in San Antonio, Texas, sent some enclosures in October, saying,

"Look what Max Lucado and the Oak Hills Church of Christ are up to now."

Among the enclosures was a general letter from Billy Graham, inviting the "Pastors" of San Antonio "to attend a very important meeting during the week of October 19, 1996. As you know, our Team, at the invitation of a broad cross section of churches, will be in San Antonio for a major four-day Crusade, April 3-6, 1997, at the Alamodome. Even though the South Texas Crusade is six months away, we believe it is very important to begin preparation now.

"The focus of this Crusade is your church. Our Team comes to serve you and your church in your work of telling people in this area about new life in Christ..."

Since Billy Graham at no time ever tells one how to get "into Christ," what possible relevance could his "Team's" coming have to any church of Christ? Yet, we noted, that Oak Hills, where Lucado preaches, was hosting such a **SOUTH TEXAS BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE "seminar,"** October 21, at 8308 Fredricksburg Road, in San Antonio. This is the same Max Lucado the Donelson Church of Christ has invited as chief speaker at their Jubilee '97 shindig in Nashville. Does Donelson agree with Billy Graham doctrinally? If not, how can they have Lucado coming out of the Billy Graham Crusade in April to preach to churches of Christ in July?

The "Jubilee" crowd is going all-out to induce Willard Collins to come receive a plaque from them at their '97 celebration in July.

"I think that how the angle on Willard Collins plays out will be ultimately revealing regardless," J. E. Choate writes. "I do not see that he can do an absolute turn around on his previous assertions.

"I think Neal Anderson has exposed himself by placing membership with West End which is a Jubilee supporter and where Rubel recently spoke on three Wednesday evenings. I would not at all be surprised to see 20th Century Christian and the GA back with their booths on the Jubilee floor this summer.

"I do not think that anything we write or do will change the minds of the liberals, but we can warn the brethren who their foes are and help prepare them to resist their calculated schemes..."

Much appreciation to Irene Johnson, of Seattle, Washington, for contributing to our "Special Mailings" fund seeking to warn the members of the churches sponsoring such contrary-to-truth events as "Jubilee," the "Tulsa Lectures" and the "Greater Northwest Evangelism Lectureships." It is only as brethren can be informed of the errorists they are fellowshipping that brethren will know enough to stay away from such.

W. O. Blakeney, of Stinnett, Texas, sent \$25.00 for "Special Mailings," saying, I appreciate your Contending for the Faith so much. I have heard great preachers like Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Marshall Keeble and so many more...I want the church to stay true to the word of God. I preach the true gospel to all the world.

So many I hear on TV preach for money and let the people think they can be saved without obeying the gospel. We all need to have faith and do what the Bible tells us to do."

Joe Wilson, Eastland, Texas: "I commend 'Contending for the Faith' and the stand you take for the truth..."

V. H. Turpin, Pagosa Springs, Colorado, enclosed \$100.00 to help in our preacher-training work at Four Seas College, in Singapore. We began this work in January of 1965—32 years ago. The school never has been large—nor was it intended to be. Our purpose always has been to teach faithful men to be teachers of others also. The effect across the years has extended into many nations—including Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Pakistan, Australia and possibly others.

Walton Harris, of Monterey, Tennessee, enclosed \$25.00 for "use as needed." James & Amy Harvey, of Rush Springs, sent \$50.00 for the Rices' travel fund.

Asghar Ali, Allama Iqbal Road, Quaid-E-Azam Park, Kot Lakhpat, Lahore 54760, Pakistan: "As you all know we started the Bible correspondence work with our own meager resources. Ours is the only congregation doing it. So far it is going just fine and God is supplying our needs. In the month of May we received, graded and mailed out 47 lessons. Four of our students completed our first series of lessons in Urdu (our national language) and as result New Testaments in Urdu and certificates were mailed out to them.

"So far as the history of Bible courses in our life is concerned, 1987 was the best as we had 97 lessons in a month on the average.

"47 lessons a month is nothing compared to our past. In the past, one or the other congregations in the U.S. was helping us for this work besides the individual brothers who helped us from time to time, but presently we are trying to stand on our own two feet as far as this work is concerned. Comparing our sources in the past with our sources at present and at the same time keeping in mind the rise of cost of everything, we are not discouraged. It is great improvement.

The Bullards, Stephenville, Texas: "Just a note to say we don't want to miss your paper. Thankful for you soldiers of the cross. May you have many more years in your work."

Ann Williamson, who lives in New Caney, Texas, laments that the Deerbroke church she formerly attended at Humble, Texas, now sells meals (\$2.00 for adults and at \$1.00 for children) on Wednesday evenings.

"How can this be?" she writes. "Where are their elders? I have family members attending there and would like a scriptural answer to explain this to them..."

"George Means, the preacher, attends the Tulsa Workshop and the Jubilee with his family. I gave a year's subscription for Contending for the Faith

along with a stack of my books to one of the elders and also talked to them about the preacher. Brother Means told me he didn't see anything wrong at Tulsa or the Jubilee..."

[NOTE: "I understand your being upset by things in the bulletin you enclosed," I replied, in part. "However, if that preacher can attend the Tulsa Workshop and the Nashville Jubilee and see nothing wrong, then he is walking by a different book than you are..."

"I suggest that you go back through your old issues of the paper, pick out the numerous articles we have published both re: the Tulsa Workshop and also the Nashville Jubilee, make photocopies of them and hand the copies to the preacher suggesting he read and study them closely. If he will do so with an open mind—and if his mind is not already biased against the truth—perhaps then he will be able to see what is wrong. If not, then his case is hopeless. What Jesus said about casting our pearls before swine would then apply."



▲PERRY & TERESA COTHAM celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary, June 23rd, 1996. They were married June 25, 1936, at Muskogee, Oklahoma. The Cothams have three children, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. They make their home in Grand Prairie, Texas.

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Advice to elders: If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen.

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Joseph D. Meador, Director, Southwest School of Bible Studies, Austin, Texas: "This marks the fourth consecutive year that the school has enjoyed continued growth. However, this year's enrollment increase has been the largest since the school began in 1978.

"Southwest will now be publishing In Word and Doctrine on a quarterly basis. This publication, hopefully, will be of benefit to all who receive it, and will allow brethren to keep up with the work taking place at Southwest. In addition,

for this new 19th annual school year, we will be bringing in quarterly Southwest lecturers, as well as inviting other brethren from across the country to come and lecture to our students on relevant Bible topics. In addition, we are planning for a school mission campaign to the country of Jamaica, which will take place in May, 1997. We are receiving more and more invitations to come to various regions of the country, having already been on similar evangelistic campaigns to California and South Texas."

Danny Bennett, of Madison, Alabama, enclosed another check for \$100.00 "to assist your efforts in 'Contending for the Faith' to combat error by informing/exposing so that the faithful might be forewarned and that those who have fallen prey 'may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will' (II Timothy 2:26)."

Brother Bennett also enclosed a copy of the list of speakers scheduled by the International Bible College, of Florence, Alabama, to appear on their annual workshop, September 25-28, 1996, saying, "It is interesting that Doris Black is listed. Brother [Wayne] Coats, in his topic "Enemies of the Cross—From Within" told of her views of the Holy Spirit which are similar to those of Joe Beam, Lindsay Garmon, Steve Flatt...Tim Rice, pulpit minister, West Huntsville Church of Christ, where I attend is also listed. It is amazing that Ephesians 5:11 and Romans 16:17 can be cast aside for 'thirty pieces of silver' (Matthew 26:15) or less."

[NOTE: Thanking brother Bennett for another \$100.00 to assist our efforts to combat error through Contending for the Faith, I replied, in part, "It makes a difference when faithful brethren, such as you, step up beside us to help carry the load.

"That is quite a hodge-podge of speakers they have lined up for the International Bible College Workshop this time. I may not recognize all of the false or questionable teachers listed; however, Charles Hodge and Owen D. Olbright should never have been invited. Thanks for sending the list for my attention. [YR Jr.]

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#### KNOWLES SHAW

[1834-1878]

His father died before he was grown. Just before his father died, he was called to his bedside where these words were spoken to him: "Son, take care of your mother, and prepare to meet your God." The boy was gifted. He took up the violin his father left him and began to practice. He used all his spare time with the violin, well into the night, every night. He mastered the instrument and then began to play for dances.

It was customary to drink whisky at dances, so he drank whisky. He was very popular and was paid handsomely. He gave his money to his mother. Young Shaw was skilled in everything he tried, even to repairing watches.

One night while playing for a dance, a

feeling came over him reminding him of his father's dying counsel, "Prepare to meet your God." He begged to be excused from the rest of the dance, went home, fell on his knees with a quilt over his shoulders, humble before God and remained on the floor for several days, refusing to eat. Never underestimate the power of a quotation from a line of Holy Writ! That scripture endures through all time into eternity.

Knowles resolved to change his life, soon heard the gospel preached by Gabriel McDuffe and was immersed on September 13, 1852. His associates allowed that he would not hold out for the Lord, and said he would go back to his old haunts. They underestimated his determination.

He taught school where the boys had a reputation of being tough to the point of running the school. On the first day he spoke to them, saying, "Boys, if I swear, you may swear; if I fight, you may fight; if I lie, you may lie; but if you do any of these things which you do not see me do, you will get a whipping." He made a success of the school.

He quit teaching school to preach. No preacher of the time allotted him was as successful as Knowles Shaw. He held a meeting in Lebanon, Ohio, making 252 converts; in Jamesville, Indiana, 183 obeyed the gospel...

Brother Shaw's last gospel meeting was held in Dallas, Texas; it went on for five weeks. The number of converts was not reported.

His next meeting was scheduled in McKinney, Texas. He wired McKinney that he would arrive there the morning after the Dallas meeting closed. Perhaps the telegram should have ended, "if the Lord wills." The train wrecked in a strange sort of way. The coach in which brother Knowles Shaw was riding left the tracks and he was killed.

In addition to his other great gifts, he was a poet. You will appreciate this of the blessing he brought. He wrote, "Bringing In The Sheaves."

—From "Wait a Minute"

AUSTIN, TEXAS—The Southwest church of Christ is pleased to announce that the 16th annual Southwest Lectureship will be held April 13-16, 1997. The theme for this year's lectureship is "The churches of Christ Salute You." Speakers from several states have been invited to come and lecture to an expected record number of brethren who will gather in

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"On June 1994 we at the Margate congregation opened a section of our building to Haitian brethren...Our aim is to build up the church of Christ, not to tear it asunder as some are doing today...Please find enclosed check for a three-year subscription. Use balance to further the great cause of Contending for the Faith."

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Charles Ivie, gospel preacher, Abilene, Texas: "Continue to contend for the faith."

\*\*\*\*\*

Since we tend to excuse celebrities and wealthy brethren for almost anything, do churches of Christ today have a brotherhood inferiority complex?

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James W. Dagen, of Fredericksburg, Texas, sent \$25.00 for our "Special Mailings," saying, "I hope it will help a little. Maybe more later."

[NOTE: It ALL helps. It is not what any ONE of us sends that gets the job done, but what we all do TOGETHER. Remember what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 3:9—we are "WORKERS TOGETHER with God." IYR Jr.]

Jack K. Williams, of Corsicana, Texas, a great encourager of our work, died January 8, 1994 of prostate cancer after a two and one-half year battle, which included 90 radiation treatments at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas.

"The last weeks of his life," his widow sister Mina Williams wrote, "were spent in our home with the loving care of the Hospice of Mercy team in our area. Jack truly loved the Lord and was interested in the work that you and many others do to preserve the truth. I pray that much good is being done."

"Jack's death is a great loss to me and our family. Grief is so painful but we must continue as best we can. May our Lord bless the great work you are doing for His church."

It is chic for some to say, "We agree with WHAT you are saying, but not the WAY you say it." The trouble is that these neither say WHAT nor show us HOW!

For a long time, brethren denied that there was any such thing as "liberalism" among us. Now they lament "What happened!"

Some now are exclaiming, "What can be done to STOP this apostasy!" Well, brethren, where WERE some of you when there was STILL TIME to do something about it?

\*\*\*\*\*

Aaron S. M. Matantilo, Mansa Church of Christ, Post Office Box 710028, Mansa Luapulo, Zambia, Central Africa: "I am most touched always when I receive the 'Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter.' One of our able co-workers, the late Udom Kananaporn, has left us at the time his services were most needed. I hope brother Rice, the Editor, shall pass my brotherly condolence to the bereaved family."

"Our brother evangelist Dorsey Traw has been left without a right-hand man. Mind you, brother Traw, our God through our Lord Jesus Christ shall provide for your soul."

"I rejoice always when I receive this Newsletter. On page 3 you pictured a gift from brethren in the U.S.—blankets, second hand clothing were sent to the 'needy' in the Far East. Luapula, Zambia, is one of the needy areas. I have crippled, blind and deaf brothers and sisters who could be assisted. What procedure should I take in order to receive some here."

"So far I have six (6) churches of Christ—and to win or bring the people to God by giving some second hand clothing and blankets [shows] that the church is touched."

"I have...retired from Zambia Police. I had been doing evangelism as part time preacher. I had been using government vehicles since December 1993. When I retired I am unable to cover distances 200 kilometers away from provincial capital. If genuine gifts as aforesaid above are sent, it shall not be much hardship for me. I can always find alternatives to meet the needy. Bibles in English (KJV or ASV) would be most welcome to receive, including tracts."

"The gifts or givings Paul received during his time eased his work and others were much influenced through the gospel God had provided. People can gain much faith as per II Timothy 2:2...Faithful men can be encouraged as they hear, see, learn and understand the gospel, through giving."

[NOTE: Concerned readers of the foregoing, please write directly to the address given before sending anything to confirm how best to do so. Also ask how best to mark your gifts so he will not have to pay customs duties on his end. IYR Jr.]

Bill Jackson once was getting water from a particular spigot to make coffee. He later found out this spigot was the drain from the baptistry.—Joe Gilmore.

## I Corinthians 14:26-40...

(Continued from Page 1)

have you all speak with tongues, but rather that ye should prophesy" (v. 5)? Or, "Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues" (v. 39)? I know of no brother who affirms that absolutely none of it applies in any respect to the church today. What we must do then is determine not *whether* it applies, but, by means of careful exegesis, *how much* of it still applies in detail.

Our brother, on the basis of verse 34, says that in connection with "formal discourse" (preaching/teaching) in the worship assembly, "God has forbidden the woman to utter not [*sic*] a sound in the sense of speaking." He is certain that this even includes: "She may not whisper to her husband an explanation of what is said." He says, "This is the force of the word translated silence in verse 34," after which he quotes the verse. Then he says, "The word silence is from the Greek *lalein* meaning to utter not a sound; to not speak at all." (He is obviously confused in his reference to *lalein*. Rather than being the Greek word that means "silence," it is an infinitive that means "to speak"; the Greek word for "keep silence" is *sigatōsan*). Most certainly there is some circumstance in which some women are to remain absolutely silent, but who are the women and what is the circumstance?

The article asserts that the proscription of a woman's (and a man's [vv. 28, 30]) uttering words applies only to the specific context of "a male delivering a formal discourse in the worship assembly of the saints." He concludes that the prohibition therefore does not apply to her singing, but only to her saying anything during the sermon. This, however, assumes at least two things that must be proved: (1) that the assembly under discussion is merely an ordinary worship assembly comparable to ours and (2) that the prohibition laid upon the women relates *only* to the time when a man "is delivering a formal discourse" in the assumed worship assembly. I will address these assumptions later.

The author of the article is rather free in his assumptions concerning

those who view I Corinthians 14 differently from him and concerning their attitude toward this passage. Near the beginning of his essay (concerning verses 34-35) he avers: "In fact, this is the critical part of Scripture the advocates of women interpreters among men wish would go away." It is rather serious to charge brethren with wishing this or any other portion of God's inspired word would "go away." I can't speak for others, but for myself I deny the allegation and resent even the suggestion of it.

Later he wrote: "This [*i.e.*, his conclusion that a woman is forbidden to utter a word in the worship assembly] is why those who wish women to be involved in authority roles in the worship service do not want I Corinthians chapter fourteen to be applicable today." Is he accusing all who take a different view of I Corinthians 14 from that which he holds of wanting "women to be involved in authority roles in the worship service"? Is he lumping all who respectfully suggest that there are situations in which a woman translator could scripturally be employed (in a mixed-gender worship assembly) in with rank liberals, change agents, and "women's libbers" who have no respect for scriptural worship and who are bent on destroying the church? If so, he makes a reckless accusation indeed! It is not that those who disagree with him do not want I Corinthians 14 to be applicable today. Rather, we are merely seeking the *correct* application of its details (as we are willing to give him credit for doing).

Again, he opines: "Many...probably accepted this view [*i.e.*, that the meeting of I Corinthians 14:26-40 re-

lates peculiarly to the miraculous age] because it was easier to handle in debate than to face the difficult questions raised if we view this chapter as applicable to modern worship assemblies...." Did it never occur to our brother that brethren who differ with him just *might* have arrived at their conclusions about the nature of the meeting in these verses from their study of the context? Similarly, I *could* say: "Many probably hold his view of these verses because it is thereby easier for them to support their position on women translators than to deal with the difficult questions they would have to face if they viewed the assembly described in the context as one pertaining peculiarly to the miraculous age," but I will not. I am sure he would resent it if I did, and I wouldn't blame him. Likewise, he should not be surprised if those who differ with him on this passage resent his assignment of motives.

The brother says, "This matter of interpreters resolves into an authority question." He then asks two questions which he believes demonstrate the lack of Biblical authority for a woman to translate before or otherwise address a gender-mixed worship assembly. He follows his two questions with a related syllogism. However, as before, he has based his conclusion, his two questions, and his syllogism upon his *assumption* that I Corinthians 14:26ff describes an ordinary worship assembly comparable to ours today. Thus, his conclusion, questions, and syllogism are invalid till he has proved that an ordinary worship assembly is the setting of this passage.

The article further alleges: "Many who use women interpreters argue that the assembly of chapter fourteen was not identical to ours today because of the presence of miraculous gifts in the assembly." No, not because of the "presence" of the miraculous gifts, but because of the *preeminence* of their exercise in this meeting (note this in every verse, vv. 26-32). He claims that, if we reject this Corinthian meeting as identical to ours due to the miraculous element, then, since there were some who possessed the gifts present in all of their meetings, we are left without an assembly like ours today in all of the New Testament.

# Directory

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Therefore he supposes that we would be left without a standard for worship except "our conscience and intellect." How easy it is to tear down a straw man of one's own making!

Our brother comments in the closing part of his article on the "constituent element" argument (as set out in *Contending for the Faith*, February 1996), by which it was demonstrated that there is scriptural authority for using a woman translator when necessary. He thinks that the argument made there is flawed because it proves too much, namely that if a woman may address a mixed worship assembly as a translator, she could, on the same ground, preach in said assembly. Here we find another assumption for which no proof has been offered—the assumption that translating a message being delivered by a preacher is tantamount to preaching itself. He therefore charges that an essential element was omitted in the list of constituent elements: "Where may a woman address a mixed audience in the formal discourse context of a worship assembly?" This, of course, was not omitted. It was included when it was shown that she is authorized either to confess the name of Christ (Romans 10:9–10) or to confess her sins (James 5:16; I John 1:9). Now these activities were not part of the singing, the prayers, the Lord's supper, or the contribution. They are rather in connection with the invitation, which is actually an extension of "the formal discourse context of a worship assembly," as our brother describes it. Now this in no way authorizes her to preach to a mixed assembly, nor is it presented as an argument to favor such behavior. But it does prove that there is nothing inherently sinful in her uttering words in and/or before a mixed assembly.

#### THE NATURE OF THE ASSEMBLY IN I CORINTHIANS 14:26–40

Many earnest Bible students whom I esteem highly and who are close personal friends view I Corinthians 14:26–40 as an ordinary worship setting. However, many other brethren, just as earnest and just as highly-esteemed as friends and fellow-workers (and just as able exegetes), view this context as an extraordinary meeting specifically for edification through the exercise of spiritual gifts rather than an ordinary meeting for worship. I arrived at this conclusion years before the "woman translator" issue ever arose among brethren. Again, let me emphasize, I did not arrive at it in view of the discussion of this issue or for that matter "because it was easier to handle in debate." However, realizing that neither view is totally devoid of difficulties, I do not intend to be dogmatic about it. I will now set forth some reasons why I believe this must have been a meeting in addition to and distinct from a regular worship assembly.

1. Apparently everyone present at this meeting had a *spiritual gift* ("...each one hath a psalm,...teaching,...revelation,...tongue,...interpretation," v. 26). Such is impossible today.
2. The purpose of the meeting was edification, learning, and exhortation of the church (vv. 26b, 31) by the orderly exercise of various *spiritual gifts*, especially those of teaching, revelation, and prophecy (v. 26a). (Bear in mind that the gospel was still in the process

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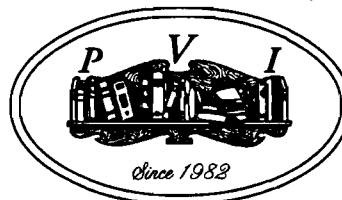
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of being revealed when Paul wrote the Corinthians [I Corinthians 13:8–12]. They did not have a written New Testament to which they could turn for their revelation, edification, learning, and exhortation. However, the Lord was revealing his truth through various oral prophets who then declared it to the brethren. Meetings in addition to the Lord's day assembly for the purpose of receiving truth and delivering it to the infant church were a necessity and must have been frequent.) We neither have nor need spiritual gifts for our revelation, edification, learning, or exhortation.

3. There had to be a minimum of two and a maximum of three men who *spoke in tongues*, speaking only one at a time, and only then if an inspired interpreter (*cf.* 12:10) was present (v. 27). If no interpreter was present, the tongues speaker was to remain silent (v. 28). What is there here that remotely resembles a regular worship assembly?
4. As with the tongues speakers, so with the *inspired prophets*: there were to be two, but no more than three to speak (v. 29). However, if while one was speaking another received a revelation, the first was to stop speaking so the other could prophesy (v. 30). Where can one find an assembly today that features inspired prophets?
5. There was a strict limitation on the speaking of *inspired men* in this meeting (vv. 28–29). If even some *inspired men* were not allowed to speak, then it follows that *uninspired men* could not speak at all in this meeting. Since we have no inspired men today, such a meeting as this would have to be conducted in total silence!
6. Now we come to the instructions concerning certain women: "The women" were to remain silent in this assembly; they were not to utter a word or make a vocal sound (for so the Greek word *sigatosan* means), even to learn something (vv. 34–35). While "women" correctly translates the Greek term *gunaiikes*, "wives" would also have been a correct rendering (the term can mean either as determined by the context). It is immediately evident that Paul is addressing wives due to his references (1) to subjection as found in the law (*cf.*, Genesis 3:16) and (2) to "their own husbands." It seems most likely that the husbands referred to were the prophets discussed immediately before the women (wives) are mentioned (vv. 29–33). It follows that he is saying that the prophets' wives were to be utterly silent to the extent that even if one had some question about the inspired message her husband was delivering in the exercise of his *miraculous gift*, she was to wait till they got home to ask it.

Several elements of contrast between this assembly and any that can be conducted today are found in this injunction to the wives: (a) There are no prophets who can be asked questions by their wives about their inspired messages today. (b) There are no wives of prophets to ask such questions. (c) In regular worship assemblies women not

only have permission to, but are commanded to speak as they sing (Ephesians 5:19), and, when appropriate, to publicly confess their faith in Christ (Romans 10:9–10) or confess their sins (I John 1:9). However, in the Corinthian meeting they are forbidden to speak at all! But the article under consideration says that this prohibition applies only to the "*formal discourse context*" (*i.e.*, the sermon) of a worship assembly, thus freeing her to sing and/or confess at other times in the assembly. However, this is to assume that which Paul does not say. I do not mean to be unkind to my brethren, but those who thus argue seem to want the silence of the women to be absolute only to the degree that it will fit their opposition to women translators. Paul mentions singing at the very beginning of the passage (v. 26), and I am unable to discover anything in the entire context to warrant the conclusion that the ban on all speech by the women was lifted when the singing started. Since women are to speak (in singing, confessing) in regular worship assemblies, but they are forbidden to speak at all in the type of meeting described in I Corinthians 14:26ff, the latter was not a regular worship assembly. Therefore the details governing that kind of meeting have not been applicable since the cessation of the gifts that were peculiar to it.

(d) *Women who were wives* (and likely only the wives of prophets, as discussed above) were specifically forbidden to speak in the Corinthian meeting. (From this fact we may perhaps even infer that other women besides prophets' wives were not present at this meeting, which in itself, would be far different from a normal worship assembly.) Given the fact that the injunction is directed particularly to wives in the Corinthian meeting (for sake of argument I will grant that they were wives "in general" rather than prophets' wives specifically), how can those who insist that this was an ordinary worship assembly apply the injunction to any who are not wives? It would be impossible for a woman who has not married, a widow, or, for that matter, a woman married to an unbeliever or even a woman married to a Christian who is an ignoramus in the Bible to adhere to Paul's instruction! Would they even be amenable to it? This point further demonstrates that this was not an ordinary worship assembly and that the details of this setting therefore do not apply to ordinary worship assemblies.

7. It is undeniable that the first century church conducted other meetings besides the first day of the week worship assemblies. The church in Jerusalem met daily for some period of time (Acts 2:46). There was some sort of meeting in which women could and did prophesy (Acts 21:8–9; I Corinthians 11:5), but it could not have been the regular gender-mixed worship assembly (I Timothy 2:11–12). I believe Paul describes another such extraordinary meeting in I Corinthians 14:26ff.

#### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

If the meeting of I Corinthians 14:26ff was peculiar to the first century age and was not identical with an ordinary worship assembly (and therefore the specific instructions concerning it do not apply to ordinary worship assemblies), does this open the door for women preachers in mixed assemblies as some sincerely fear? I do not believe

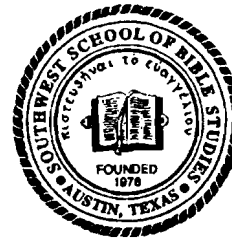
it does. It is generally conceded that the setting of I Timothy 2:8-12 is a regular worship assembly. There is a total absence of any reference to the miraculous element; yet there are references to prayer, learning, and teaching with emphasis upon the respective roles of men and women regarding them (vv. 8, 11-12). Significantly, this passage speaks of "a woman," that is, "any and every Christian woman" (not "the women," i.e., the wives of prophets [I Corinthians 14:34-35]). Paul enjoins all women to learn in a spirit of subjection (to the man who is teaching/preaching, implied). He forbids any behavior in women that would place them in a teaching role in which they "**exercise dominion over a man**" (ASV). Also, they are to demonstrate "quietness." This word (*hesuchia*) is not an absolute ban on speech (as is *sigatosan* in I Corinthians 14:34), but is a much milder term relating more to meekness of demeanor arising from within than to absolute silence. Thus, in these regulations, while the woman is certainly not permitted to preach or otherwise speak in such a way as to exercise dominion over a man (who is her head in God's arrangement), she is not forbidden to sing and make confession, neither of which violate her role of quietness and subjection in the ordinary worship assembly.

I do not believe a woman who translates the live message of a gospel preacher to a mixed worship assembly violates I Corinthians 14:34-35 because I do not believe the injunctions there are applicable beyond the peculiar type of meeting therein described (a meeting that cannot be duplicated today). I do not believe a woman who translates the live message of a gospel preacher to a mixed assembly violates I Timothy 2:8-12. She does not exercise dominion over either the preacher or the men who may be hearing her as she simply delivers the message of the authoritative preacher in the language of the hearers.

Although translation of language was not involved, the relationship between Jehovah, Moses, and Aaron is instructive. After Moses had offered various excuses for not obeying God's commission to lead Israel out of Egypt, he offered one more: "**And Moses said unto Jehovah, Oh, Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue**" (Exodus 4:10). God responded that this would be no problem because "**...I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak**" (v. 12). When Moses was still reluctant, he provoked the Lord to anger and was told that his brother Aaron would be his spokesman:

*And thou shalt speak unto him, and put the words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God (vv. 15-16: emp. DM).*

Notice that (1) Moses received his message from God, and (2) Aaron received his message from Moses. The first application of this arrangement was before the Israelites: "**And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: and Aaron spake all the words which Jehovah had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people**" (Exodus 4:29-30;



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emp. DM). Does anyone imagine that those Israelites ever had a question about whether Moses or Aaron was the human "authority figure"? God was very specific concerning this very issue as it pertained to Pharaoh: "**And Jehovah said unto Moses, See, I have made thee as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land**" (Exodus 7:1-2; emp, DM). When God began sending the plagues on Egypt, Moses not only *spoke* through Aaron, but he *acted* through him as well by telling him to produce the respective plagues (4:30; 7:8, 19; 8:5; *et al.*). It is frequently woven through the entire account of Moses' and Aaron's confrontations with Pharaoh that God was communicating directly with Moses, and Aaron was only a pipeline through which Moses' authoritative message traveled (6:1-2, 10, 29; 7:1, 8, 14, 19; 8:1; *et al.*). Later Aaron (along with Miriam) forgot his subordinate, non-authoritative role and said, "**Hath Jehovah indeed spoken only with Moses? hath he not spoken also with us? And Jehovah heard it**" (Numbers 12:2). God made known to him his grave error in the clearest of terms (vv. 5-10).

While allowing for the fact that God was speaking directly to and through Moses and he speaks today only through his written word, what do we learn from the above? (1) God described Aaron as the "spokesman" and "mouth" of Moses, who was to give Aaron the words to speak. This is what happens in the modern translation set-



ting: The preacher gives the words to the translator and the translator serves as his "mouth" with no authority whatsoever inhering in the spokesman (or -woman). God recognizes that the one who is authorized to deliver his message today (a man preaching before a gender-mixed worship assembly) is his authoritative servant in that setting, rather than one who might be merely speaking the words of his message (a translator, whether male or female). (2) The audiences of Moses and Aaron (*i.e.*, the Israelites and Pharaoh) understood that Moses, rather than Aaron, was the authority figure, even though Aaron acted and spoke before them. Likewise, it should be evident that, when one stands before an assembly and speaks in a language different from that in which a man is preaching, in the very nature of the case the preacher is literally dictating what he or she is to say in translation. *The person being translated, rather than the translator, possesses the authority in this setting.* (3) Aaron (and Miriam) forgot who God's authoritative spokesman was (Moses) and foolishly claimed equal authority for themselves. This insubordination provoked God's intense wrath because it actually represented rebellion against him. If a translator (male or female) should seek authority for the translator role, he/she would be imitating Aaron and would be totally out of order and in rebellion against God. (4) The episode of Aaron's rebellion illustrates clearly that he was not in an authority position over anyone he addressed, whether Israel or Pharaoh. Likewise, a translator (related to the preacher as Aaron was to Moses) is not in an authority, but in a submission/servant, position.

That the authority inheres in the *person with whom the message originates* alone (rather than in its translator) is perfectly understood in every international political or commercial discussion and courtroom when a translator must be employed. I fail to understand how this obvious fact is so easily discarded and denied by some when it comes to translating the gospel of Christ while it is being preached.

From conversations with those who work in foreign areas and from my own experience in those fields it is evident that the use of a woman translator among us is extremely exceptional. I know of none who are eager to use or who are advocating the use of women translators as their first choice. None that I know of has mounted a campaign urging everyone in foreign evangelism to immediately begin choosing women rather than men to translate. I am just as opposed as any (and probably more so than some) to women in the pulpit (or any other place of authority over men in the church). *The crux of the matter is that the woman translator and the woman preacher are not parallel.*

It would be an indescribable tragedy for brethren to refuse to extend fellowship to one another over this matter. I respect those who cannot in good conscience use a woman translator. I plead with those thus minded that they tread very cautiously before deciding that their faithful brethren who disagree with them are apostates and unworthy of their fellowship.

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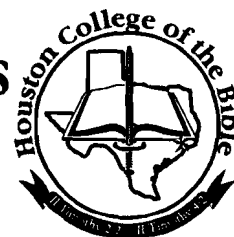


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Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

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FORT WORTH, Texas — An anonymous contributor has committed a \$1 million challenge grant to World Bible Translation Center. The Center must raise \$2 million to qualify.

"This magnanimous commitment will allow the Translation Center to move forward with a program of rapid expansion to do contemporary translations of the Word in many of the world's larger languages," said Dale Randolph, Translation Center president.

"This family has been a great friend of the Translation Center for eight years now," Randolph added. "They've already provided consistent and generous support resulting in new translations being completed and many people receiving Bibles."

"They exemplify Christian service and commitment, and they've been constant encouragers and examples to me."

This \$1 million grant will be given over a period of time as the Center raises \$2 million to qualify. The combined total of \$3 million will allow the Center to do as many as 20 complete Bible translations in languages where there is a need.

Everyone interested in helping the Center receive this grant should contact Randolph or Craig Smith, P.O. Box 820648, Fort Worth, TX 76182 or 817-595-1664.

World Bible Translation Center's mission is to provide easily-understood translations of God's Word in languages throughout the world. More than 1.5 million copies of the Translation Center's contemporary Russian Translation are in print. The Center has produced the *Easy-to-Read English Bible* which is the base text for two of the best-selling Bibles in the U.S.A., the *New Century Version* and the *International Children's Bible*.

Although the scriptures are replete with instructions for us to warn one another of impending peril, how are we to warn those brethren who REFUSE TO BE WARNED?

When Goebel Music brought out his monumental *Easy to Read OR Easy to Mislead* tome in 1994, it was a warning not only against the World Bible Translation Center's *Easy-To-Read Version* as an unreliable translation of the Bible, but an exposé that neither the WBTC nor its president Dale Randolph could be trusted.

Though his warning was documented to a fault, when brother Music's book came out, J. E. Snelsen, Jr.'s woe-folly misnamed *Christian Journal*, of Fort Worth, Texas, was one of two of our supposed-to-be gospel papers who refused to advertise it—whether paid or otherwise—the other one being the *Christian Chronicle*. All he needed to do to know what was happening was read the book! But, like those in Matthew 23:13, he would neither be warned *himself* nor suffer others to be warned.

#### RANDOLPH DESTROYED EAST GADSDEN

What brethren in general seem not to understand is that long before Dale Randolph moved to Texas, he had practically destroyed East Gadsden church of Christ in Alabama. Prior to his preaching there, East Gadsden was doctrinally strong. However, by the time his false teaching finally forced his departure, it took Franklin Camp and others several years to put that doctrinally ravaged church back together again.

That Randolph and the World Bible Translation Center he now heads cannot be trusted is clear on many counts—not the least being what went on in India, where

(Continued on Page 6)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

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

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## Associate Editorial...

# IT IS TIME TO DO IT AGAIN

Those familiar with the history to restore the ancient order of things regarding the gospel and the church are familiar with the year 1906. In his article entitled "RESTORED MEMORIES OF THE U. S. CENSUS OF 1906" (beginning on page 5 of this issue) brother J. E. Choate states: "Similar forces which drove apart the Restoration churches one hundred years ago are presently wrenching apart the traditional churches of Christ. The dividing lines of separation then were the organ and the society. The dividing lines today are postmodern theology, societal, and cultural issues." Furthermore, he writes:

**The traditional churches and their leaders must be prepared to document and to identify by name and location the postmodern churches, and especially their charismatic preachers who mesmerize their gullible congregants. The time has turned full circle to do what Lipscomb did which is to separate the "sheep from the goats"—the traditional churches of Christ from the *avant-garde* postmodern Churches of Christ.**

## LET THE SIGNAL GO UP AND THE CALL GO FORTH

I agree with brother Choate that it is time to "identify" and "separate" "the traditional churches of Christ from the *avant-garde* postmodern Churches of Christ." Now, how are faithful brethren to go about this sad but necessary business? Brother Choate establishes the first necessary step in the process when he points out that "the *avant-garde* postmodern Churches of Christ" must be "documented and identified by name and location..., especially their charismatic preachers who mesmerize their gullible congregants." What, therefore, are some of the key identifying marks of these apostate churches and preachers?

1. They deny that the New Testament is God's *only* Holy Spirit inspired (verbal and plenary) humanly attainable blueprint or pattern; that it is God's *only* absolute objective standard of truth, and that it authorizes *only* by direct statement, example, and implication.
2. They do *not* believe that all of the saved today are found *only* in the church of Christ.
3. They *do* believe that the church of Christ is a sectarian denominational institution.
4. They believe that there are accountable persons in a saved relationship with Christ who have never been baptized (immersed) in water by the authority of Christ to obtain the remission of sins.

5. They believe that it is scriptural for the church of Christ to have fellowship with denominational churches and it is their goal that all churches of Christ practice what they are doing.

While there are other errors that such characters believe, teach, and practice that are equally fatal to the soul, any one point of the previous list is sufficient, to the person who believes and practices it, to send that person to torment forever. *If not, why not?*

**THE CHIEF ERROR IS THE ONE ON WHICH  
ALL THE OTHERS ARE BUILT**

Points two through five of the previous list are based upon point number one. Point number one denies the fundamental manner inherent in the nature of language in general (and the Bible in particular) to communicate and thereby authorize anyone to do anything. Yet, the Bible says that for anyone to be acceptable to God today (the principle of doing only what is authorized in the word of God was true under Patriarchal and Mosaic law as well, Romans 15:4), one *must do only* those things authorized in the last will and testament of Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:17; Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7; John 14:6, 15; I John 2:29; 5:3; Hebrews 5:10; James 2:24; Romans 6:17, 18). However, if point number one in the previous list is true, one is left to do anything that he so desires. Such is exactly what Satan works to accomplish every second of every day. Indeed, this is precisely the reason the information contained in point one begins the list of the errors. It is the most heinous, because on it the other four errors (as well as other fatal errors) are conceived, based, and promulgated. Again, while there are other errors held and advocated by various liberals, those errors enumerated in the previous list are sufficient to send a soul to hell. This is what is meant by fatal error.

Why, you may ask, is such the case? Because every one of the points in the previous list loose men from what God in his word demands or obligates one to do in order to be saved or, having been saved from one's alien sins, to remain saved. I know this to be the case because I can read and understand my own mother tongue into which the original languages of the Bible have been capably and adequately translated, such liberals as **Rubel Shelly** and his "come as you are and do as you please" friends, notwithstanding (John 8:31, 32; 17:17; II Timothy 3:16, 17; I Corinthians 2:9-14; James 1:25; I Corinthians 4:6, ASV—1901; Ephesians 3:4; II Timothy 2:15; 4:6; II Peter 1:3, 4; John 12:48).

**BROTHERHOOD UNIVERSITIES—  
THE BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR LIBERALS**

In the 19th century the base of operations for the liberals (those who loose men from what God in his

word bound upon them in order for them to be saved and remain saved) was the colleges operated by the brethren. In the 20th century history has repeated itself. If it were possible to remove the liberal influence of the universities and colleges operated by the brethren, we would probably remove 95% (possibly more) of the liberal influence over the past 40 years from the Lord's church.

**IN ACTUALITY, WHO REALLY TROUBLES ISRAEL?**

Moreover, the modern digressives love to charge those of us who believe, preach, and write along the lines of this editorial to be trouble makers. Shades of Ahab (I Kings 18:17, 18; 22:8)! It has ever been so with those who love and practice evil. They routinely attack those who examine them in the light of God's word and rebuke them accordingly. I respond to the modern day Ahabs with the good words of faithful Elijah. **"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."** As Ahab, their counterpart of old, they do not love the truth and, therefore, cannot be saved (II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

**"WHAT FELLOWSHIP HATH  
RIGHTEOUSNESS WITH UNRIGHTEOUSNESS?"  
(II Corinthians 6:14)**

The inspired apostles forthrightly declared that a faithful child of God is to separate himself from those who live, preach, and practice doctrines that cause one to violate what God obligates one to do in order to be saved and remain saved. This is exactly the result of the points listed at the beginning of this editorial (II Corinthians 6:14-17; II John 8-11).

**IF IN THEIR DAY LIPSCOMB AND FRIENDS COULD  
DISCERN IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE WHICH  
CHURCHES WERE FAITHFUL TO GOD AND  
WHICH WERE NOT, SO CAN WE**

What happened in listing the Christian Church and the churches of Christ as separate churches in the religious census of 1906 needs to be done today. It certainly will not be easy to accomplish. However, faithful children of God can ask the appropriate questions of elderships, preachers, and members and, on the basis of their answers (or a refusal to answer), we will be able to identify them.

The list given at the beginning of this editorial is sufficient to examine anyone for the purpose of knowing whether he should be fellowshiped or not. However, if one desires to narrow it down to one point the following would serve the purpose.

**Any elder, preacher, member or multiplicity of them who believe that the church is a denomination and that there are accountable saved people in**

**the denominations should not be in fellowship with any faithful child of God.**

I, again, do not hesitate to say that *any one* of the earlier listed five points (though certainly not an exhaustive list of fatal errors) if believed and practiced by persons in the Lord's church today completely alienates them from God. If elders adopt as policy any one of the previously mentioned five points by which they gauge who is a faithful child of God and who is not, the faithful in that church have no choice (if they want to go to heaven) but to leave it and find fellowship with a faithful congregation of the Lord's people.

**THE PREVIOUS LIST DOES NOT  
COVER EVERY FATAL ERROR**

It must be understood that if one holds the truth on the five previously mentioned points, that all is *not* necessarily spiritually well with such a person. Such a one may hold other equally fatal errors. However, anyone believing the points of the previous list to be true is *not* acceptable to God—and that would cover most liberals.

In this editorial I have not concerned myself with those who bind on *themselves* what God has not bound on them. The reason for this is that fellowship is not automatically broken with God and faithful brethren simply by certain ones believing such doctrines. Fellowship is broken with such brethren when they demand that every member of the church agree with them and operate accordingly or they will cease fellowship with them. Hence, brethren may restrict themselves from certain liberties that God in his word allows them without, in doing so, violating anything God obligates them to do in order to be saved or remain saved.

**VIOLATING AN OBLIGATORY MATTER IS FATAL ERROR**

The sentiment of the preceding paragraph is not the case with the liberals with which this editorial has concerned itself. Any one of the points enumerated at the beginning of this editorial, if believed and practiced, will automatically cause one to violate what God obligates a person to do in order to be saved or remain saved. Fellowship, therefore, is immediately broken with God and all those who do *only* what God authorizes in becoming and remaining a faithful child of God. Hence, we conclude with one of Paul's closing statements to the Romans. "**Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses 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**" [innocent, ASV—1901] (Romans 16:17, 18). If we want to go to heaven we will comply with heaven's mandates on this matter. If

we desire to go to hell, we will reject them.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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## Words From the Past

F. B. Srygley

"Fighting for the Truth is almost a lost art. Men who are enjoying the benefits of the gospel, unmixed with human error, are enjoying those benefits because our fathers fought for the Truth. Every inch of ground from that mysterious way of being saved, which was better felt than told, to the plain conditions of pardon, as taught in the New Testament, was fought out for us by our fathers. If someone before us had not fought for the truth, most of us might yet be in the fog of denominational teaching. This is not the time to temporize or make friends with error."

—*Gospel Advocate*, 1928

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# RESTORED MEMORIES OF THE U. S. RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF 1906

J. E. Choate

The Director of the *Census Bureau in the Department of Commerce and Labor* is charged with collecting the statistics and the identifying of all religious bodies in the United States. In the 1906 religious census, **S. D. N. North**, Director of the *Bureau of Census*, listed the Churches of Christ and the Christian Church as two separate bodies.

North wrote a letter in 1907 to the *Gospel Advocate* office seeking a confirmation of his judgment. **David Lipscomb** concurred that North was correct in his assessment. Lipscomb accepted the request from North to assume the official duty to gather a complete set of statistics of churches of Christ.

Similar forces which drove apart the Restoration churches 100 years ago are presently wrenching apart the traditional churches of Christ. The dividing lines of separation then were the organ and the society. The dividing lines today are postmodern theology, societal, and cultural issues.

The machinations of the current “change agents” are neither subtle nor disguised. Such are as obvious as the tracks of an elephant herd across a snowfield. They pose as staunch members of the churches of Christ. We wish this were true and we could believe them.

What they are saying and doing would be ludicrous were it not for the tragic consequences now being inflicted upon the traditional churches of Christ. But the bright side is that the full glare of documented facts is now being fully focused on them.

The traditional churches and their leaders must be prepared to document and to identify by name and location the postmodern churches, and especially their charismatic preachers who mesmerize their gullible congregants. The time has turned full circle to do what Lipscomb did which is to separate the “sheep from the goats”—the traditional churches of Christ from the *avant-garde* postmodern Churches of Christ.

## HISTORY OF CENSUS TAKING IN THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT

The Restoration churches multiplied rapidly after the Civil War. **John Poe** wrote Lipscomb a letter in 1869 of the need to form some kind of system whereby the statistics of the church could be made known. Lipscomb's reply was—“We would like to know why the Lord prohibited the numbering of the Israelites?”

In 1891, Lipscomb reported that the *General Missionary Society* had numbered the churches in the nation identified with the “Stone-Campbell Movement.” The number came to 4,768 churches, and 563,928 members. The reason for the head count by the digressive Disciples at just this time was clear to Lipscomb which was the funding of organized societies and conventions.

David Lipscomb was forced to change his mind about counting churches and members. By 1890, the Digressives had captured the great majority of the *Christian Churches* beyond Tennessee. In 1890, the *Christian Church* leaders deemed the time ripe to push the innovations into the churches of Tennessee and the Southern region.

They formed on October 6, 1890 the *Tennessee Christian Missionary Society* in Chattanooga. On October 18, 1892, the *General Missionary Convention* held their first annual convention in Nashville. But 20 years later, the Digressives had not won over a single traditional church of Christ in Middle Tennessee.

In 1902, **John R. Williams** was already busy compiling an exhaustive list of loyal preachers and churches opposed to the society and organ in the Southern region. **Daniel Sommer** played a major role in causing Lipscomb to re-assess his reluctance to begin a head count of the churches. Daniel Sommer had issued a statement of urgency to the churches in 1892 calling upon the loyal churches to write a restricting clause in their church deeds to keep out the organ and organized societies.

While Lipscomb deplored the need to write such restrictive clauses into church deeds, the takeover by the Digressives of the Newbern, Tennessee church in 1902 changed his mind. Lipscomb wrote afterwards that God never made a deed without writing the creed into it.

## THE FLIP SIDE

What is most surprising of all is that the *Christian Church* leaders in this general time frame were already turning on each other with astonishing ferocity for control of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ. Organized societies do not run on faith and love alone. The fuel which drives their engines is legal tender.

This is the story that **Stephen J. Corey** tells in his book *Fifty Years of Attack and Controversy* (1953). The fact is that the fussing and bickering which started in the 1920s within the ranks of the Disciples never stopped, and the strife inflicted wounds that never healed. The extent of the growing bitterness in the ranks of the Disciples is reflected in the words of **Edwin E. Errett** who wrote in 1924 his severe castigation of the *United Christian Missionary Society*: “I was not bitterly opposed to the United Society in its inception. Having, however, seen its workings, I detest it, I hate it. I would rather see every dollar of its vested interest lost than to have it continue as the one big agency of our people.”

As a matter of fact, the bad blood which was created in the 1917 takeover of the *College of the Bible* sowed seeds of suspicions which multiplied with the continuing high handed methods of the society agitators.

The creation of the *North American Christian Convention* in 1926 to counter the pervasive intrusion of the Disciples into the affairs of the local churches was the Independents' master stroke of genius. Just ten years later, an "Open Letter" was addressed to the Digressives which was read by the Disciples around the world.

## STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

In 1946, the Independents served notice on the society Disciples that they were finished with them. In an "Open Letter," the Independents mounted an unparalleled attack on the Disciples charging them and the UCMS with unvarnished infidelity toward the International Convention. This was the opening shot in the war between the Independents and Disciples which was resolved 22 years later in the 1968 Restructure.

On June 7, 1947, the Independents came out with a devastating editorial, calling on the preachers and churches to "Stand Up And Be Counted." The editor then began an "Honor Roll of the Faithful" requesting all ministers and churches to send a card stating their opposition to the denominational machine.

**Dwight E. Stevenson** noted that future historians may settle on the date June 7, 1947 as the date of decisive separation in the Disciples churches. A veritable flood of cards

and letters flowed into the *Standard* office. Churches pulled out by the hundreds and members by the thousands.

The Disciples would not accept defeat and lacked the judgment to pull back. They set up a ten year study which led to the Restructure of 1968. An unidentified Disciple [**James DeForest Murch**] mailed out documents to all the Christian Churches listed in the Yearbook titled "Freedom or Restructure," and "And the Truth About Restructure."

The call went out to the faithful to pull away from the Disciples, or risk losing their churches to them. And the Independents pulled out in great numbers leaving the Disciples decimated. Today the *Disciples of Christ* are suffering the sharpest decline in membership of American denominations.

## A PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

It should now be clear even to the most sceptical that the traditional churches of Christ are now under growing attack. By way of assurance to the traditional churches of Christ not to be afraid of these sophisticated church bullies, we are as capable, competent, and as well informed. And we are not engaged in the sorry business of wrecking traditional churches of Christ.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

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## Brethren Who Cannot Be Warned

(Continued from Page 1)

he claims the churches received his spurious WBTC translations with enthusiasm.

Having been connected with the modern evangelization of India from its inception, and having myself been in India more than once since those WBTC translations were introduced, I learned that they were not being circulated among *our* brethren, but primarily among the *denominations!* Also that what few preachers who knew anything about those translations from among the churches of Christ had weighed them doctrinally and found them wanting!

### SUNNY DAVID AND RANDOLPH'S VISIT

One of the best-qualified preachers from the churches of Christ in India is brother **Sunny David**, of New Delhi. (I wish I had room in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* to reproduce *everything* that brother David reported of his visit with Randolph when he came there. If you have a copy of brother Music's book, you will find it beginning on Page 1078 and following.)

Brother David tells of how he came to know about the ERV and his experience with Dale Randolph. He had written to Randolph in Fort Worth, saying that he was "working in the Hindi language, the language most people in India speak, that it is my language too, that I speak on the radio in Hindi, hence I would be interested in knowing about the New Hindi translation."

Brother David wanted to know, first of all, why the translation was being done, since "we already had an excellent translation of the Bible in Hindi available, old version, as accurate as the King James Version in English..."

### RANDOLPH WORSHIPS WITH DENOMINATIONS IN INDIA

Growing out of that correspondence, when Randolph came to New Delhi that fall, David met with him at his hotel. "I noticed a man in the room on the bed," he wrote, "and asked Dale who he was. He told me he was from Andhra Pradesh, a southern state in India, and that he was involved with him in the translation work in Telugu language.

"Dale told me that he had come to Delhi before and that he goes to Bombay, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Calcutta and some other places since he was involved in translating the ERV in many Indian languages.

"So, I asked him where he goes for worship on Sundays when he would be in various cities in India. He pointed to the man on the bed (I think he said he was brother Prabhakar) and told me that he worships with him wherever he goes. I asked Dale who this man was and what was his religious background? Dale said that the man belonged to a denomination...

"I pointed out to Dale that in all cities that he visits there are congregations of the Lord's church and he needed to go there and worship with Christians. His reply was: 'I like to worship with these people because they are better Christians than the churches of Christ, in fact, I have problems

### BOUND VOLUMES AVAILABLE

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even in the States with some members of the church.' I was shocked!..."

**SNELSEN NOT SHOCKED**

I should think brother David *should* be shocked. But not J. E. Snelsen, Jr., and his *Christian Journal!* Right there at the top of the front page of his edition for February/1997 he ran the article we are reproducing herewith (*left side of front page*). Rejoicing that "an anonymous contributor" was committing a \$1-million challenge to Randolph's *World Bible Translation Center*, brother Snelsen was encouraging his readers to contribute \$2-million in matching funds to "qualify."

Before any of *our* readers pour such contributions or commitments down this doctrinal rathole, *Contending for the Faith* suggests you send \$6.00 (plus \$3.00 for postage and handling) to brother Music and ask for a copy of his *Easy-to-Read Version—Easy to Read OR Easy to Mislead* exposing Dale Randolph and his World Bible Translation Center for their doctrinal error.

Better yet, since it comes 10 copies to the case, why not send him \$60.00 (plus postage and handling) for a *whole case* of this exposé, so you can help circulate his needed, insightful warning far and wide!

Address him: **Goebel Music, 5114 Montclair Street, Colleyville, Texas 76034.** This comparatively small investment on your part will enormously outweigh any contribution you might otherwise make to Dale Randolph and his World Bible Translation Center.

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# More About The Letter To Brother Sewell

## There Is No Parallel

Wayne Coats

In the December issue of the *Plumblin* I wrote an open letter to brother Milton Sewell who serves as President of *Freed-Hardeman University*. [We reprinted brother Coats' letter in the January 1997 issue of *Contending for the Faith*.—Associate Editor] I want it to be clearly understood that anytime I have something to say with respect to a brother, I do not feel that I have to say it in secret. I am neither afraid nor ashamed to write an "open letter." I do believe backbiting is sinful and I will leave that to brethren who feel disposed to revel in such tripe. Don't speak about a brother to his back, unless you are willing to speak the same to his face. My Lord declared, "**I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; AND IN SECRET HAVE I SAID NOTHING**" (John 18:20).

My Lord was not a member of some secret outfit and neither am I. It is the case that some notable saints serve at their best while speaking secretly.

### MORE ABOUT THAT PHONE CALL TO BROTHER SEWELL

One thing needs to be considered a mite more with reference to that telephone call to brother Sewell of *FHU* from a young preacher. Remember that I have written publicly opposing the notorious *Nashville Jubilee* and I will continue to do so. I have challenged one and all to step forward and make some sort of public defense of the wicked thing. *Jubilee* clowns are as silent as the tomb and I know why.

As long as ignorant brethren continue to support such foolishness, all such ventures will hang like a plague upon us. But if you really want to raise the ire of some of the notable brethren and chief women not a few, print something negative about one of the sacred cow schools or temple of holy monks. We print the facts and do not worry about being black-balled, reviled, rejected and/or despised by men.

In his phone conversation with a young preacher brother Sewell actually compared my operating a Funeral Home with *Freed-Hardeman University* renting a booth at the *Jubilee*. He says I serve people of all kinds at the Funeral Home, and indeed I do. I even work with dead folks.

### IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FUNERAL HOME AND FHU?

As a private, secular business entity, the Funeral Home pays taxes like any other profit making business. It is not tax-exempt. It is not a religious corporation or benevolent non-profit institution.

The Funeral Home is run as a private enterprise and I serve as the President. The Funeral Home is inspected frequently like some other private businesses. It is regulated according to the laws of the State of Tennessee and subservient to the *Department of Commerce* and the *Tennessee Funeral Directors Association*, and the *State Board of Funeral Directors*. It is a secular business parallel to a restaurant or service station. If that is not so, then let some smart

fellow correct me. Maybe brother Sewell will step forward and try.

My Funeral Home was not established in order to educate young people. *Freed-Hardeman College* was started by good, great, and godly men for the express purpose of being an educational institution. It has had a history unparalleled in teaching the word of God for generations. (In days gone by, its Administration would stand squarely opposed to liberalism.) There are some excellent Board members and Bible teachers at *FHU*. My purpose is not to hinder but to help those who would keep the school focused on its original purpose as set forth by its founders. In my humble judgment, brother Sewell has not been concerned with that noble purpose, and I have no hesitancy in so stating. Am I an enemy because I state my deep convictions?

My Funeral Home does not send men and money to the *Jubilee* to help defray a religious corporation which dispenses false doctrine. Every dime which individuals, congregations, schools, and businesses send to the religious corporation called *Jubilee*, is but another dime which helps the devil's cause. A little smirch will not answer this charge. I plead with the liberal supporters of *Jubilee* to come out of their safety holes and let us reason together. To reason against error is different from encouraging error.

I do not beg money from congregations of the church of Christ, individual Christians, and business establishments in order to operate my Funeral Home. Brother Sewell knows this. I do not send employees to set up a booth at the *Nashville Jubilee*, *Tulsa Workshop*, the *Baptist Convention* or holyroller conference in order to solicit business for my Funeral Home. My brother knows this is so. Sure, we might make many contacts, but I never did think the end justifies the means. I'm still learning.

I would simply ask, if people think that the *Jubilee* can be supported financially, at what point and place would one need to cease and desist in supporting false doctrine? How far can we go before we stop? What would cause us to stop such support? As a privately owned secular business my Funeral Home offers goods and services for sale. It must operate without partiality. If I do not adhere to this rule, the business will be closed by legal authorities.

When someone dies I do not ask the families if they are Hebrews, Hindus, or Voodoos. I do not give money to false brethren. If I sold gasoline to an Atheist would I be promoting Atheism? If I sold a sandwich to a Mormon would I be supporting Mormonism? According to this silly assertion, a child of God could not ever own a business enterprise or even work for a secular business. This is too shallow to even think about. Can a brother operate a print shop and print the *Plumblin* paper without sinning? This is different from supporting the *Jubilee*. What do you think?

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
A PET CEMETERY AND FHU?

I own and operate a fairly good sized pet cemetery but I do not think it is parallel to *Freed-Hardeman University*. I never do ask people which kind of "Christian" their cat or dog might be when we bury the animal. Oh, but we serve cats and dogs of all kinds. Now I will admit that there might possibly be some remote chance that there could be a resemblance in taking care of dead dogs and cats and supporting the *Jubilee*—but I will need to think about that a bit further.

What happens when I get ready to sell *my* Funeral Home? May I sell it to some heathen? Will it be all right if I make contact with alien sinners? May I advertise in secular newspapers? Shall I list my business as a "Christian Funeral Home, baptized in order to be a Christian?" I want to think brother Sewell might know better, if not I will be available to teach him.

SUPPORTING THE JUBILEE IS EQUIVALENT TO  
SUPPORTING THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

One could as well support the missionary society of the Digressives as to support the *Jubilee*, and I am willing to meet brother Sewell and reason about this. I sincerely pray that the young preacher who called will be able to see that brother Sewell has no parallel in comparing my Funeral Home to that which *FHU* does in supporting the Jubilee. Furthermore, if this fallacious view is held by brother Sewell, the sooner he is fired from *FHU*, the better. Is he any better than scores of gospel preachers, who refuse to bow before the liberal Baal?

The *Jubilee* wheels invite some of the most liberal, far-out, modernistic, false teachers and church troublers which can be found and these characters are supported in one way or another for the express purpose of spreading their heretical teachings, though they would not admit to being heretics.

My Funeral Home is strictly a secular business. I will give brother Sewell a sort of parallel. The *Jubilee* and the Funeral Home both have presidents. They are alive. They have jobs. One invites false teachers to come, whereas the other does not invite the dregs and scum-balls of a secular society to come by and speak to a gang of nut twisters and church troublers. Oh well, maybe the half has not been told. I'm still learning. Have I overlooked something?

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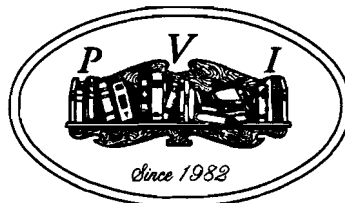
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# Senseless Strife

Lindell Mitchell

*[The following article is used by permission. It originally appeared in the March, 1997 issue of the Firm Foundation. Brother Lindell Mitchell capably addresses a mind-set that purports to be set for the defense of the gospel. In reality it is contrived in selfishness, born of a contentious spirit, and raised to walk a life of jealousy and strife.]*



*The scribes, Saducees, and Pharisees were cut from this same cloth of envy and pride. It is a bad heart condition that has nothing to do with the contending for the faith of which Jude wrote and after which this paper takes its name (Jude 3). Doing only what the New Testament authorizes has never been the goal of the willful spirit, though it may hide behind a facade of the same. It will always be to the left or right of the "Mountain Top of Truth." Thus, with blinded eyes it has veered from the strait and narrow way and finds itself lying prostrate in the ditch of the damned.—Associate Editor]*



I have an interest in "The War For Southern Independence." As a son of the South I am proud of my heritage. I cherish what is best in Southern culture and honor the courageous sacrifices of those who fought against overwhelming power. I have tried to understand how the conflict could have been allowed to erupt, and then continue until more than 600,000 young Americans lay dead. Americans killed more of their fellow-citizens in the conflict than have died in all our other wars combined. It is profoundly saddening to think about the senseless slaughter.

## AFTER THE KILLING CEASED

A federal officer named Joshua Chamberlain conducted the formal stacking of arms at Appomattox when the South surrendered. He wrote movingly of events on that day:

**Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood: men whom neither toils and sufferings, nor the fact of death nor disaster, nor hopelessness could bend from their resolve; standing before us now, thin, worn, and famished, but erect, and with eyes looking level into ours, waking memories that bound us together as no other bond....**

Without official sanction, and all unplanned, Chamberlain suddenly gave the command for the Union soldiers to "order arms" in that deepest mark of military respect:

**Gordon (Confederate officer) at the head of the column, riding with heavy spirit and downcast face, catches the sound of shifting arms, looks up, and, taking the meaning, wheels superbly, making with himself and his horse one uplifted figure, with profound salutation as he drops the point of his sword to the boot toe.**

Gordon had ordered his men to respond in kind:

**Honor answering honor. On our part not a sound ... an awed stillness rather, and breath holding, as if it were the passing of the dead! As each successive division masks our own, it halts, the men face inward towards us across the road, twelve feet away; then carefully "dress" their line. ... They fix bayonets, stack arms; then, hesitatingly, remove**

**cartridge boxes and lay them down. Lastly, reluctantly, with agony of expression—they tenderly fold their flags, battle-worn and torn, blood-stained, heart-holding colors, and lay them down. ... What visions thronged as we looked into each other's eyes! Here pass the men of Antietam, the Bloody Lane, the Sunken Road, the Cornfield. ... The men who swept away the Eleventh Corps at Chancellorsville; who left six thousand of their companions around the bases of Culp's and Cemetery Hills at Gettysburg; these survivors of the terrible Wilderness, the Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania, the slaughter pen of Cold Harbor!**

**[W]hat shall we give them for greeting that has not already been spoken in volleys of thunder and written in lines of fire on all the riverbanks of Virginia? ... met now, so thin, so pale, purged of mortal—as if knowing pain or joy no more.**

**How could we help falling on our knees, all of us together, and praying God to pity and forgive us all!**

The cost of conflict is too great to be entered when other options are available. The casualties are too devastating to continue a war flippantly. The aftermath is too overwhelming to engage in battle foolheartedly.

## PAUL WAGED NO UNNECESSARY SPIRITUAL BATTLES

Most readily agree with these sentiments regarding carnal conflict. But spiritual war is viewed differently. Sadly, some are eager to make a name for themselves as great warriors for truth. They are so intent on establishing themselves as heroes of the faith, that they engage in devastating battles unnecessarily.

Next to Christ, no leader in the ancient church was more vigorous in his defense of the faith than Paul. None resisted error more tenaciously. He never retreated from false teachers, never backed down from troublesome charlatans, never compromised with evil. At no time did he debase his character by appeasing the wicked. Not once did he compromise his convictions because of cowardice.

Paul upheld truth and waged total war on error. But he did not squander precious Christian fellowship in sense-

less strife. His battles were strategic. They were necessary for the church's security, essential to preserving the faith delivered once and for all to the saints.

Paul did not relish controversy. He was not spoiling for a fight. He had no desire to make a name for himself. Paul understood that the war with wickedness would be lost if brethren became belligerent, embroiling the church in silly squabbles over stupid questions.

He knew factious men in positions of authority threatened the existence of the church. When the Spirit moved him to record the qualifications for elders, those qualifications were overwhelmingly concerned with temperament:

[N]ot accused of riot or unruly ... not self willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre ... sober, just, holy, temperate (Titus 1:6-8).

#### MORE EGO THAN ABILITY

Every generation produces men with more ego than ability who covet power. If they possess it, great harm results from their abusiveness. Their coarse character and shallow thinking are manifested through juvenile self-assertion. They embroil the church in an endless series of asinine conflicts.

Paul ordered Titus to maintain good works that were profitable (Titus 3:8). He strictly forbade involvement with foolish questions, genealogies, and contentions about the law, because they were unprofitable (Titus 3:9).

Cretan churches were threatened by foolish bickering. They were not alone. Paul expressed concern over this problem in several places (I Timothy 1:4; II Timothy 2:23). Congregations were more acutely threatened by senseless controversies than outside agitators or even government persecution.

Titus was ordered to avoid such questions, not because there was no truthful answer, but because they were "unprofitable and vain." Titus was to exercise authority admonishing Cretan Christians regarding proper conduct. He was to exert equal authority in refusing to pursue stupid squabbles.

#### ADMONISH AND REFUSE— BUT DO NOT BECOME ENTANGLED

Some have been led to misapply Titus 3: 10 because of the *KJV's* rendering *hiretikon* as heretic. Modern usage of the term *heretic* would suggest that Titus determine the correct position and enter the fray on the side of right. But Paul specifically forbade any participation in the controversy. Some of the Cretans refused to avoid foolish questions accompanied by strife. Titus was ordered to admonish them for persistently pursuing useless controversies. Their sin did not grow out of their doctrine (though it may also have been sinful), but out of pushing the controversy to the point of division.

After two admonitions, Titus was to "refuse" such a man. This is not withdrawal of fellowship (though it was potentially the ultimate result) but a refusal to continue the discussion. Whenever any Christian proves himself factious, brethren must refuse to participate in his controversy, deny him a hearing, and avoid him as you would old wives' fables (I Timothy 4:7) and stupid questions (II Timothy 2:23). At least two participants are required to en-

gage in a senseless controversy. When Christians allow an overbearing blowhard to entangle them in a silly spectacle, they are participating in the degradation of the Lord's church. When she is thus debased, no participant is innocent.

Paul practiced what he preached. Whenever a matter of indifference arose with the potential for causing controversy, Paul deferred to the sensibilities of weaker brethren. He required that faithful Christians follow his lead (Romans 14). He was unwilling to risk Christian fellowship by insisting on his own way regarding inconsequential matters.

Let us be resolved to contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3). But let us be sure the faith is in jeopardy before we disrupt the harmony of a congregation. We must refuse to grant factious men a hearing. Where there is no fuel the fire of controversy dies. As soldiers of Christ we must avoid having to fall on our knees, all of us together, praying to God to pity and forgive us all!

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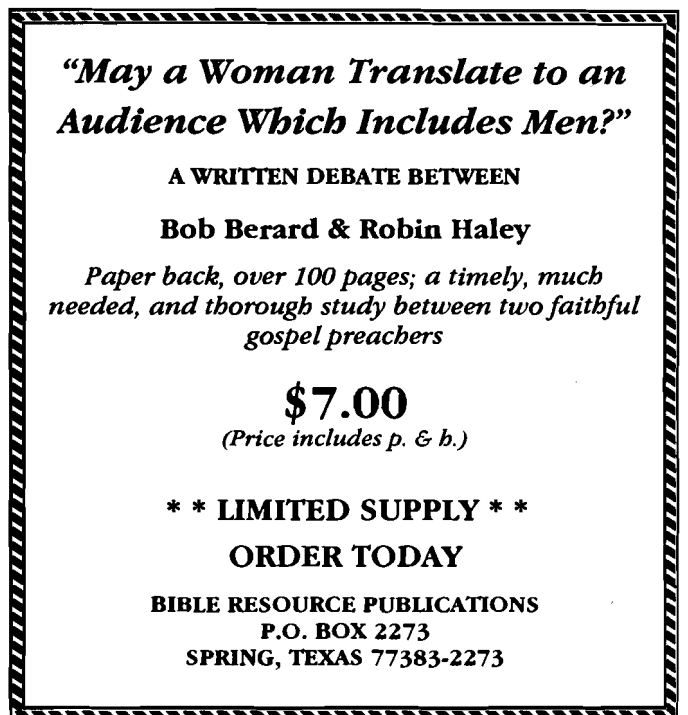


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# HEADSTRONG AND WRONG

W. Kent Graham

We tend to respect those who have strong convictions. People who hold to their religious beliefs regardless of the temptations to compromise their beliefs are deserving of any accolades they might receive for their steadfastness. Especially worthy of recognition are those who have great conviction for their religious beliefs and are capable of defending what they believe. The apostle Peter admonished, **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and 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).

The command is that we stand ready to **“give an answer”** for our beliefs and convictions, and that we do so with a **“Christ-like”** attitude. If we possess a biblical faith, along with a biblical conviction for that faith, we will then be willing to defend our position with firm resolve, tenacity, and steadfastness. In this sense it is good to be stubborn and headstrong, because you are firmly grounded in the bedrock of truth!

## DENOMINATIONAL OBSTINACY

The problem is that so many people with strong convictions are **“Headstrong And Wrong!”** Many very sincere people in the denominational world possess incredible conviction for their religious beliefs, but are unwilling to examine these beliefs to insure that they are in conformity with the word of God. Instead, they will quote their human creeds and disciplines as justification for what they wish to believe.

The Bible says, **“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves.”** (II Corinthians 13:5). If we do not possess the humility to **“examine ourselves”** to see if we are in the faith of Christ, then we ought to be able to see that being **“in Christ”** is not all that important to us after all. Our true loyalties are to something or someone other than the Saviour. Many who are **“Headstrong And Wrong”** are blind to the fact that their allegiance is not to Christ and his truth. They desire only to be left alone and unchallenged in their beliefs simply because they are **“Headstrong And Wrong!”**

## HOBBY RIDERS IN THE CHURCH

Sometimes we meet those who swing to the other end of the pendulum and stay camped on certain **“hobbies.”** They completely disregard the **“weightier matters of the law,”** those of **“judgment, mercy, and faith”** (Matthew 23:23). These individuals are often members of the Lord's precious **“body,”** and suffer from the same spiritual malady for which Christ condemned the Pharisees: hypocrisy and legalism. These Christians are not only **“Headstrong And Wrong,”** but they cause division and contention within the church. The first and foremost matter of their concern is their particular **“hobby.”** They are more concerned with winning an argument regarding a **“favorite”** doctrinal point than they are with winning a soul to Christ, or with converting an erring brother in Christ from his error. These

**“brothers”** need to read Jesus' fleshly brother's advice in James 2:19-20 the next time they are tempted to clobber someone with their warped **“understanding”** of God's most precious and holy truth! Should they consider such a perception of their **“efforts”** to **“do the Lord's bidding”** as being judgmental, they might consider if they use such an approach so that they will not actually have to examine and defend their beliefs and convictions. After all, who wants to talk with someone who approaches us with the temerity of a tyrant? The very attitude these divisive **“brethren”** portray by their actions shows that they are only interested in **“putting another notch on their battle-scarred Bibles.”** Oh, so very **“puffed up”** are the **“Headstrong And Wrong!”**

## WE CANNOT “BULLY” PEOPLE OUT OF ERROR

We cannot bully people around and expect them to always react magnanimously. It is a rare exception to the norm when they respond contrary to our approach. If we truly believe that we have the truth, let us realize that we must approach those whom we believe to be **“Headstrong and Wrong”** as we would want to be approached. We cannot escape the fact that in our zeal for truth we shall at times become very convicted in our beliefs, and in our actions approach the border of indiscretion. Let us consider how our efforts might be perceived by others and see if we are exemplifying the love of Christ. Yet, let it not be said that we can ever compromise on the truth of God nor on our efforts to expose religious error.

It has been said, **“There are many ways to skin a cat, but there is no way that the cat will like it!”** Realizing this, we must stand ready to accept our share of religious persecution, always remembering to **“speak the truth in love”** lest we unduly bring the persecution showering down upon our haughty heads!

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# CHANGE AND RENEWAL

Steve Miller

The words "change" and "renewal" are popular words to those advocating change in the church! A casual glance at some of the papers being written today, will find these two words are being used often.

In the first issue of *Wineskins*, the editors stated "Wineskins is committed to the stimulation of bold but responsible change in the church of God." (Vol 1, No 1, p. 4). In the same issue, **Rubel Shelly** used the word change 25 times in an introductory editorial on page 3. The article is just one page long!

In the purpose statement of this same paper, the editors also wrote, "*Wineskins* is essentially a magazine devoted to reform and renewal in the church ... it is designed to be a theological publication whose goal is to foster renewal in the church by sharpening its attention on Jesus as Lord." (p. 4). Renewal means "to make new or as if new again: make young, fresh, or strong again; bring back into good condition: to give new spiritual strength to; make better in spirit. to cause to exist again; re-establish." (**Webster's New World Dictionary**, p. 1232).

Do the advocates of change among us really believe that the church needs to be re-established? How do you go about giving "new spiritual strength" to the church? An article entitled, "fire or ashes?" by **Lynn Anderson**, in the June, 1992 issue of *Wineskins*, gives some insight of the change-happy modernists who really want to restructure the church of Christ to suit their own desires!

## WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE CHANGE?

Anderson writes "...responsible change may be one of the most helpful words for the future vitality of our fellowship." What is responsible change? The liberals among us are saying we need to change our beliefs on unity, and adopt the false teaching of "unity in diversity." We are told that women should be allowed to have leadership roles in the worship. Is this responsible change, brother Anderson?

After he discusses his father's life, he compares human life to the life of churches. He states, "So just because some older or more traditional congregations may not be able to change enough to connect with the mainstream of current American culture, I'm not ready to write them off. I believe that attitude is both wrong-headed and wronghearted."

Brother Anderson, what is your definition of a "traditional congregation"? Many today view a "traditional congregation" as one that partakes of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week, has congregational singing only, preaches the gospel, gives of its means, prays, and follows the New Testament pattern for everything it practices and believes? He goes on to state "As churches age, however, they tend to become less goal-oriented, less evangelistic, less focused." A congregation that is patterned after the New Testament church which was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, has a goal of remaining faithful, practices evangelism, and is focused on Christ who has promised them everlasting life in heaven. Brother Anderson is gracious enough not to condemn all the "traditional congregations." "Some old churches will be able to change approaches, re-connect with the culture, and grow again."

Brother Anderson, what is an "old church"? Is it a "traditional congregation"? Is it one that is dedicated to the old paths?

## THESE NEW YOUNG CHURCHES MUST "LOOK, DRESS, AND PERFORM DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PARENTS"

Next, brother Anderson states the common goal of liberals in the church. "And we must be planting some new, young churches that look, dress, and perform different from their parents, so that they reach the unchurched of our constantly changing world."

Brother Anderson, what are you going to call these "new, young churches"? Will they be known as the local "community church" that is open

to all faiths and that worships to accommodate all denominations? Will the gospel of Christ no longer reach the "unchurched world"? Are you going to bring the instrument in, add unscriptural choirs, solos, partake of the Lord's Supper on Saturday, have plays instead of scriptural worship, all of which you will gladly change to reach the "unchurched"? Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "**I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.**" (I Corinthians 9.20-22). Did Paul pervert the gospel or change the law of Christ to reach the unsaved?

Paul did not preach man's commandments or change the gospel to please his hearers. "**But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" (Galatians 1:11-12).

Brother Anderson, your statement implies that the "new, young churches" that will "look, dress, and perform different from their parents," will not follow the pattern of the New Testament for the work, worship, and lifestyle of the New Testament Church of which Christ is the head and has all authority and power! These "new, young churches" will operate differently from their parents and therefore forsake God's way for the church of Christ. This is an excellent example of "bold and responsible" change for the church!

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## WHAT WILL THIS "NEW" CHANGED CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

"Yes! We must change—significantly—to reach major segments of our culture. Even to keep our own children. But then, is change anything new?" Brother Anderson is obsessed with change. He proposes a question to himself, "Well then, Lynn, what changes do you mean? What exactly will this renewed, changed, culturally up-dated church look like? I cannot tell you—specifically. Unless you tell me a lot about where you want to plant this church and who you want it to reach. It may wear a number of different faces."

You cannot state the desire of the liberals any plainer than brother Anderson's statement. They will build and form a church to suit their wants and wishes. The advocates for changing the church are doomed to fail. **"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it:"** (Psalm 127:1).

### ANDERSON REJECTS THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN

Notice how Brother Anderson rejects the New Testament pattern: "But, someone asks, does not the Bible describe an eternal and universal pattern for the church? Well, 'yes' and 'no.' No. The New Testament does not blueprint one way of expressing the church to be bound in all times and in all cultures. Yes. The Bible describes how church was done—but in many different ways fitted to a variety of cultural settings." Does not Colossians 3:17 blueprint a principle that the church must be bound to in all settings? **"And**

**whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."**

Our brother closes out the article by suggesting that congregational singing is permissible for some, while others might rather have a worship team "(with occasional special solos or groups)." He has a problem with consistency. He says we must change, and then he states, "Although many external factors must vary from place to place, eternal issues and foundation values are never to be compromised. The message of the cross, the plan of salvation, scriptures, the call to holiness, love, worship, and service." On one hand he says we must change the worship, on the other he says that worship is never to be compromised. Which side of Lynn Anderson should we believe?

We must be on guard against these people who want to change the church. **"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."** (Romans 16:18).

—507 30th Street  
Vienna, West Virginia 26105

*[Well do I remember in the early 1970's when Lynn Anderson, from the Highland Church of Christ pulpit in Abilene, Texas, called the church of my Lord a "big sick denomination." To emphasize his point he went on to say "I mean 'big,' 'sick,' and 'denomination.'" When his remarks were chal-*

*lenged at the "Memphis Meeting" (this was a meeting in September, 1973 that assembled to examine the doctrinal soundness of the "Herald of Truth" as well as the "shenanigans" surrounding the firing of brother E. R. Harper from his position with the program) Lynn Anderson tried to explain away the meaning of his words.*

*Obviously, the intervening 24 years have not changed his ungodly view of the church. Yes, he meant what he said about the church in 1973. Then, when his remarks were called in question, he simply did not have the honesty to admit that he meant what he had said and said what he meant. Moreover, he lacked the courage to defend his accusations against the blood bought body of Christ. Indeed, we understood what he was saying about the church then and we understand what he is saying about the Lord's church now. And, today, as in 1973, he continues to hold that view of the church. Furthermore, his remarks about the church were false then and they are false now. However, one thing about our erring brother has not changed—he continues to be the same coward that he was in 1973. Today, two words, "Polemic Platform," continue to be very nasty words with brother Anderson as well as all such characters.*

*Rubel Shelly opposed Anderson in those days. Of course, some years ago Rubel repented of such opposition. Now he agrees with that which he once opposed and opposes that with which he once agreed. Time, however, does not alter truth.—Associate Editor]*

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## ARE THERE ANY AMBASSADORS NOW?

**Brother Sewell:** *Has Christ any ambassadors on earth? If so, who are they? I understand the apostles to be the last ambassadors. Am I right?*

You are certainly right about the apostles being the last ambassadors from God to men, and there will certainly be no more. The apostles gave fully the conditions of pardon, upon compliance with which we can have peace with God, and the conditions upon which eternal life can be obtained. We have all these conditions on record, and do not need any more ambassadors now. What we need now is for men to repeat the conditions of salvation the apostles gave. But the trouble with the religious world now is that there are men who think they are ambassadors, and they give differ-

ent conditions from those the apostles gave, and thus turn the ears of the people away from the conditions the true ambassadors gave and turn them to the doctrines and commandments of men. There are no conditions of salvation now from God to men except those given and left on record by the apostles. All others are conditions given by uninspired men to men, and all of these combined cannot save one sinner. Let all those, therefore, that propose to labor for the conversion and salvation of men see to it that they repeat the terms of peace and redemption that the apostles gave under guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then all will preach alike, and all can be saved if they will comply with the terms. (*Questions Answered by Lipscomb and Sewell*, McQuiddy Printing Company, 1921.)

# MAX AND "CHURCH OF CHRIST DOCTRINE ON THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM"

Lester E. Kamp

This summer one of the preachers for one of the churches of Christ in Aurora, Colorado, stated eight reasons for attending the *Promise Keepers* meeting in Denver. He was trying to persuade others to attend. I was appalled that he would even state one "reason," much less eight reasons. *Promise Keepers* is an inter-denominational group which teaches doctrines contrary to God's Word and promotes false worship. Though the *Promise Keepers* organization certainly encourages men to assume their God-given role in the family, fellowship with this group is clearly forbidden in the Scriptures; and Christians have the Scriptural obligation to reprove them (Ephesians 5:11).

"PROMISE KEEPERS"—

## A HODGEPODGE OF SECTARIANS

*Promise Keepers* is interdenominational, all denominational, accepting all the divergent doctrines and practices as if they are approved by God. *Promise Keepers* teaches a plan of salvation which is contrary to the gospel plan of salvation found in the New Testament. They teach that salvation is obtained by receiving Jesus into one's heart and life by praying: "Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I

believe You died for my sins and rose from the grave. Right now, I turn from my sins and open the door of my heart and life. I receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. Thank You for saving me. Amen." When the "altar call" is given at the *Promise Keepers* meetings, those who respond are given these instructions. Those following these instructions will not be saved, though they may think they are saved. *Promise Keepers* meetings offer to God worship which God has not authorized. The *Christian Chronicle* (August, 1995) stated that those who attend *Promise Keepers* meetings sing, stomp, and clap to the beat of instrumental music. *Promise Keepers* meetings use instrumental music in their worship and claim direct readings of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word of God. *Promise Keepers* strive for unity in diversity. This is union, but not the unity for which our Lord prayed in John 17 based upon his inspired Word. These and other reasons should cause Christians not to be involved in the *Promise Keepers* and to oppose the involvement of others in this organization (II John 9-11).

The *Promise Keepers* sponsored "Fan Into Flame," the

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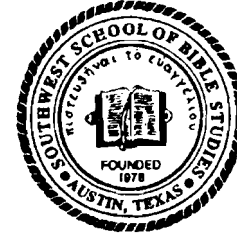
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first "Clergy Conference for Men," in February (1996) at the Atlanta Dome. According to the Woodmont Hills bulletin, **Rubel Shelly** and "the entire male ministry staff" joined "over 42,000 ministers from all denominational backgrounds" for this meeting at which Max Lucado was one of the speakers. Rubel stated, "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" (emphasis his, LK). Rubel further states, "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.'" This kind of "unity" is all too familiar to those who have observed the "change agents" at work among us. The "unity" promoted by these men suggests acceptance of doctrines and practices contrary to God's word as long as we all believe in Jesus. Another from Woodmont Hills said, "God was in this event and the author of this event!" And Rubel agreed. What blasphemy to blame God for this travesty of truth!

**"...I WANT TO STAND WITH MY BROTHER MAX..."**

I was particularly interested in what the local preacher stated as his first "reason" for going to Promise Keepers. His first "reason" was: "I am called to love the Brotherhood. I love Max Lucado and the Oak Hills Church of Christ. God has gifted our brother with a blessing for writing that is useful and upbuilding. He has written several books and has now launched a national radio ministry to tell people about Jesus and simple New Testament Christianity .... I want to stand with my brother Max who is being attacked by many so called 'Christians' both in and out of the Brotherhood." The presence of Max Lucado and his involvement in the program of the *Promise Keepers* should cause every faithful Christian to stay away from such an event. Max Lucado is widely known and very popular as a speaker and writer in the religious world, but Max is a *false teacher*. Those who would uphold him and his work are bidding him Godspeed and become partakers "of his evil deeds" (II John 11).

**Goebel Music** thoroughly documented Max's false teaching and his endorsement of every false way in *Behold The Pattern* (pages 113-127). Brother Music lists Max Lucado first in his list of false teachers which are exposed in that book. Max has gone even further in his activities since brother Music wrote that book in 1991.

#### DOES LUCADO PREACH THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM?

In connection with the first "reason" given by this local preacher for attending the *Promise Keepers* meeting, he referred to a statement made by a "conservative denominational group telling their members not to go to *Promise Keepers* because Max Lucado would be there preaching his Church of Christ doctrine of the necessity of baptism into Christ as a part of the gospel." I personally wish that this accusation were true. I wish that Max Lucado would preach "the necessity of baptism as a part of the gospel," but such is not the case. I have listened to the tape of Max Lucado's sermon at the Trinity Baptist church (April 2, 1995) in San Antonio entitled "Life Aboard the Fellow-Ship" in which he clearly teaches denominationalism; namely, all good, sincere folks going to heaven regardless of religious affiliation. He states that those who believe in the necessity of baptism and those who do not believe that baptism is necessary are on the same "Fellow-Ship" on their way to heaven. Those who believe that they are the only ones saved (ridiculing the church) are on the ship with those who believe that salvation is broader based. Max Lucado's most recent book, *In the Grip of Grace*, states his grace only concept of salvation, "Please understand. Symbols are important. Some of them, like communion and baptism, illustrate the cross of Christ. They symbolize salvation, demonstrate salvation, even articulate salvation. But they do not impart salvation .... Our God is abundant in love and steadfast in mercy. He saves us, not because we trust in a symbol, but because we trust in a Savior." (page 50). "Please understand, it is not the act that saves us. But it is the act that symbolizes how we are saved!" (page 115, compare to I Peter 3:21).

It is difficult for me to understand why anyone who claims to follow the New Testament and to be a member of the New Testament church would want to stand with Max Lucado and not stand against him. Given his views, it is not difficult to understand why Max Lucado would be involved with the *Promise Keepers*, but it is difficult to understand why others would be encouraged to attend simply because Max Lucado is one of the speakers.

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# The Word of God is Alive!

Tim Nichols

For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 11:4, ASV).

All words, in a sense, are alive. They contain ideas. Only rational creatures have ideas. Words contain the ideas of the rational creatures who uttered them.

## GOD'S WORD IS SPIRIT AND LIFE

All words, in a sense, have a spirit. It is the spirit of the one whose ideas are expressed by the words that they have spoken or written. Words, sentences, paragraphs, and books do not exist without an originator. It is the nature of living things to have "spirits" (James 2:26, Ecclesiastes 3:21), and so it can be said that words are alive and have spirits (Proverbs 1:23). The spirit of the false teacher is in his words and the Spirit of God is in his word.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already. Ye are of God, my little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they as of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. (I John 4:1-6, ASV - 1901).

No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us: hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. And we know and have believed the love which God hath in us. God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him (I John 4:12-16, ASV—1901).

## SPIRITS ARE PROVED BY EXAMINING THE WORD

John, along with the other apostles, was bearing witness to the gospel by the Holy Spirit's power to search the deep things of God and then to reveal them in words that are better than those of human wisdom (I Corinthians 2:10-16).

The human spirits, according to John's inspired prescription, were to be proved in the same way that God's Spirit was to be proved: by examining the words that they produced. When the words were tested, the "spirits" of those who spoke them were tested. If John was comparing "apples with apples" then the "spirits" (whether evil or holy) were those who originated the words. In this connection the spirit that is in the world is in the words that expressed the idea that Jesus did not come in the flesh and the Spirit that is in us is in the words that express the idea that he did come in the flesh.

Paul used similar language when he wrote: "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit, which ye did not receive, or a different gospel, which ye did not accept, ye do well to bear with him" (II Corinthians 11:4, ASV). The "lies" and "doctrines of devils" spoken by false teachers were, and are, "seducing spirits" (I Timothy 4:1, 2). Although the words of the false teachers of the first century may have had a lasting effect, the false teachers themselves are dead and gone. The words inspired by the Holy Spirit continue to have a powerful effect upon men, and the Spirit himself is yet alive and active.

## WE ARE MADE SPIRITUALLY ALIVE BY THE WORD

We are made spiritually alive by the reception of the living word of God (Psalm 119:50, 93). And yet it is the Holy Spirit who makes us spiritually alive (John 6:63; I Peter 3:18). It is God who makes us spiritually alive (Ephesians 2:4,5; Colossians 2:13). We are not made spiritually alive more than once or through more than one agency. Deity makes us spiritually alive, or puts his spirit within us by means of the word. "I will never forget thy precepts; For with them thou hast quickened me" (Psalm 119:93, ASV). "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6:63, ASV). The Spirit's sword, as we have already shown, is alive, active, and sharper than any physical sword. It is so closely connected with the one who acts through it that it can accurately be said that "it" is able to discern the very thoughts and intents of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12). The Holy Spirit is searching your heart (Romans 8:27) and addressing its every need—by means of his word.

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# TRADITION OR TRUTH?

Michael Light

In recent years there has been a consistent charge leveled against the churches of Christ that we have been too "traditional." The charge implies that what we have taught and in many places are still teaching is simply our tradition and not necessarily based on scriptural truth. It need also be said that most of our accusers are themselves members of the church. Men like **Max Lucado, Rubel Shelly, Marvin Philips, Jeff Walling** and a host of others bemoan the fact that we will not turn from our traditional teachings on a number of subjects.

They say that we are too traditional in our worship. The men who level these charges would like to introduce innovations into the worship and refashion it along the lines of more spontaneous or "Pentecostal" styles. Is their criticism warranted? Have we in the church become too traditional in our worship?

## TWO KINDS OF TRADITION

The Greek word, *paradosis*, translated "tradition," means literally "a handing down or passing on" (W.E. Vine). It refers to anything (teaching or ordinance) that is handed down from generation to generation.

The New Testament refers to two kinds of traditions. The first is the traditions of men, which if taught as doctrine will keep men from heaven and render their worship vain (Matthew 15:9). Jesus strongly condemned the false religious leaders of his day for this very thing (Matthew 15:1-9). The second is the traditions of God, which are to be believed, taught, practiced and adhered to (II Thessalonians 2:15; I Corinthians 11:12).

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS

### THE ONLY CHURCH THAT WORSHIPS GOD CORRECTLY

If the charge has reference to the traditions of men, the answer is no. In fact, the church of Christ (as set forth in the New Testament) is the only church in the world that does not believe, teach and practice the traditions of men in worship. There is New Testament authority for every act of worship one finds in the Lord's church (Colossians 3:17). In fact, the faithfulness in adhering to the pattern set forth in the scriptures is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the followers of Christ (John 14:15; Matthew 7:20).

The *change agents* (those who encourage us to leave the scripture's way for some other [nonscriptural] way) must be vehemently opposed. They would become the very thing they say they oppose. They would leave the traditions of God for the traditions of mere men. If we follow their godless lead (II John 9-11) our worship will become vain (Matthew 15:9).

If their charge has reference to following the apostolic traditions, the answer is still no. How could the church be guilty of being too faithful to God's divine form, pattern (II Timothy 1:13). The Bible teaches us that those who do not abide (remain) in the doctrine of Christ are without God (II John 9). Living without God is precisely what the denomi-

national world has done for years, and now many who once were of us have forsaken the truth and are now also living without God.

## "THEY WENT OUT FROM US"

In I John 2:19, we have some great insight into what we now see of our digressive brethren (those who want to change the nature [the acts themselves] of our worship). The passage says, "**They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us.**" Until we see these people for what they are (false teachers, who have left the way of God) we will never understand why they do what they do.

When a man no longer views the Bible as anything but a "love letter," (and as such not authoritative) the door is wide open for him to go far afield on any or every subject, including worship. God said in the above passage that their going out from us is a result of their leaving the truth. Mark it down, one who is pushing for change, or mocking the *old way* (God's way is as old as man) has lost his/her conviction for the truth and is moving toward traditions of men.

## PROPER SPIRIT OF WORSHIP = SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE

It is true that many in the church are simply going through the motions (correct form but wrong attitude) of worship. But this is not an indictment against the prescribed form of worship; it is a problem of the heart. The acts of worship as God gave them are perfect for the expression of love, devotion, and gratitude of the human heart. For our worship to be acceptable it must be done in spirit (proper motivation, a sincere heart, and directed to God) and in truth (according to the divine record, the Bible).

It is impossible for our worship to be acceptable if we have the proper form but our hearts are not in it. Likewise, it is impossible for our worship to be in the proper spirit if we do not follow the directive of God (Matthew 7:21; Leviticus 10:1, 2). Many today are more interested with pleasing the worshiper than the God we are supposed to be worshipping. God has clearly told us what he wants. It is simply a matter of us deciding to whom we will submit—God, or men (Joshua 24:15).

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# IS IT LATER THAN WE THINK?

J. C. Bailey

[NOTE: Thirty-five years ago, in 1962, upon learning that preachers from the British Commonwealth could go to India as missionaries (though Americans, per se, could not), I asked brother Bailey to check it out. He did so, confirmed the report, and, the following year (after some cajoling), went. As a direct result of his going, **more than a million** Indian souls have responded to the call for plain, simple, New Testament Christianity. He, more than anyone I know, is qualified to write this article.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor]

I have read the October issue of the *Gospel Advocate* and I paid much attention to the editorial by brother Kearley. He quotes from a survey made and the results were published in the *Christian Chronicle* showing the error by some preachers in the church. If these errors exist in the church then the elders are at fault for retaining such preachers.

We are to contend for the faith that was *once* delivered. Our last instructions were that we are not to add to or take from the scriptures. Early New Testament reformers used the phrase, "*Speak where the Bible speaks; be silent where the Bible is silent.*"

## A CHALLENGING COMMANDMENT

Every commandment is important, however, preaching to the world was so urgent in the years that Christ was on this earth, and it is today, that "**Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations,**" was indeed a challenging commandment.

It was not that many years ago that it was said that the First Baptist Church in Dallas supported more preachers overseas than all the churches of Christ combined. Space forbids to expose the errors of the Baptists, but this is all the more reason we go into all the world.

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH CAUSED DIVISION

The Khasi tribe in India thought they could establish a church of Christ. In a providential way this work became known to some churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Two Americans spent three months, and the church became more scriptural.

The Christian Church learned of this effort by the Khasi people and sent men into the area. This caused division among these people. I was contacted to go and help these people because of the division.

## HOW SOUTH INDIA WORK BEGAN

In the meantime I had a contact in Madras, but the man proved that he was not converted. While I was there, three men came to see me who had a falling out with the Christian Church preacher. These men began working with me to establish the New Testament church in South India. From that humble beginning the churches of Christ have grown in South India.

The first trip I made to Kakinada just happened to be at the same time the Baptists were having a convention there. During the convention there were some serious disagreements among those gathered.

I had planned to stay at a hotel, but a man and wife invited me to stay at their place. Both man and wife were doctors.

A man came to the doctor's house next morning saying he had problems. She told this man that there was a man upstairs that might be able to help him. I remember this event as if it were yesterday. I greeted him and he replied, "I am the pastor from the Baptist Church at Anakapalle and I am not happy." After about 30 minutes or so discussion he left even less happy.

However, three days later he wrote and said he wanted to be baptized. There were 67 or 68 preachers in the Telugu Baptist churches and more than half of them obeyed the gospel.

## CHRIST FOR INDIA—INDIA FOR CHRIST

When I went to India I had printed on a card, "*Christ for India—India for Christ.*" Wherever I went I pleaded for a return to New Testament Christianity.

About this same time a school teacher came to see me. He had heard of the call to return to New Testament Christianity. He had joined the Lutheran Church. He was converted and has become one of the most influential preachers in India. He is Dr. Ratman, highly educated with a number of degrees after his name. He didn't neglect his education and he hasn't neglected his spiritual work for the establishment of churches of Christ in India.

## 48 MEETINGS; 9,204 BAPTIZED

He recently had five American preachers come over to help him at West Jamari. Dr. Ratman helped, and these preachers preached in 48 different places, 99 denominational preachers were baptized, 20 congregations were established, and 9,204 were baptized by the end of those meetings. Just a few days ago I learned that a man high in the Hindu faith had become a Christian.

The plea to restore New Testament Christianity left Europe for America years ago. Will our lack of faith hinder our work to further establish the New Testament church in India?

Does the article in the *Gospel Advocate* show what is happening in India? A denominational preacher said that Africa would be the world's Christianity capitol by the early 2000's. Will it not be India?

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# THE VERSIONS REVISITED

Mark K. Lewis

I recently had a short visit with someone who has a slight disagreement with my love of, and praise of, the old King James Version of the Bible. When I asked which version this person favored, the answer was the New International Version. The individual had read my recent manuscript on the versions and wished to discuss the topic at a future date, a meeting which I sincerely hope takes place.

Let me make some brief additions to my earlier thoughts on the versions.

1) The King James Version of the Bible is not a perfect translation; I have never claimed so and will never do so. There are a few passages in it that tend toward Calvinism. Yet, on the whole, with its few errors, it is still an accurate, reliable translation of the Bible, produced by men who had respect for the integrity of the word of God, and far superior to the New International Version or any other modern translation, save, perhaps, the New King James Version (see discussion of the ASV below). That the King James Version is not written in modern English, and thus is difficult to read at times, I hold to be wholly irrelevant. I would rather have the truth of God written on a rag in hieroglyphics than error on golden tablets in Faulknerian prose. It is

my job—and your job—to find out what God said; it is extremely dangerous to accept the interpretations of man.

2) Just because the King James Version has a few errors in it does not justify the use of a much inferior translation. There is no single church of Christ on this earth that is perfect; but does that mean we are thus free to attend the Baptist Church? That, of course, is good liberal doctrine; which version do you think *they* favor?

3) On the whole, the most accurate translation of all English Bibles is probably the old American Standard Version of 1901. It is generally acknowledged to be a little better than the King James, though there is not much to choose between them. The reasons I use the King James in my preaching and teaching are twofold: one, it is an accurate translation, and two, it can be obtained in large print for ease of reading for those who, like myself, have weak eyes. It is certainly a sign of the times, and an indication of the utter lack of respect for the integrity of the Word of God, that it is extremely difficult even to obtain a copy of the ASV today, and no large print edition is available. If it were, I would preach from it.

4) The New International Version, and other such modern renditions, do have their uses. Since most of them are not faithful translations but simply loose paraphrases, they can serve as commentaries, and, at times, shed light on the meaning of passages. It is simply important that the user understand that what he is reading is not a word-for-word translation of the text but an author's *own idea* of the meaning. Use it as you would any other commentary.

There is one other reason I use the old King James Version: it has been successful. It was the Bible used by the great 19th century pioneers who preached the truth of God and restored New Testament Christianity. They whipped denominationalism up and down this great land with the King James Version, converting multitudes of precious souls to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no doubt that, in the past 170 years, more people have been saved through the use of the King James Version of the Bible than any other version—there are none even close. Having said that, let us admit that the NIV has also been successful. It is, far and away, the favorite Bible of the *liberals* in the church who are leading the current digression away from New Testament Christianity—and they have been very successful.

Pardon me if I stick with my old King James.

—3104 Oliver

Bossier City, Louisiana 71112

## Denominational Doctrines

by Jerry Moffitt

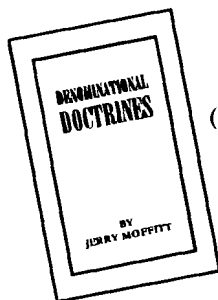
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# N. B. Hardeman on Mechanical Instruments of Music

God through Paul gave exactly that with which and by which we should worship the Lord. He said in Ephesians 5:19, "Speak to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody," where? Now, if he had not said where, it would have been left up to us, but God said, "making melody in your heart unto the Lord". Hence, the heart is represented as a musical instrument with which we must accompany singing... What is the instrument? God says it is the human heart, and for that reason every child of God on earth can worship acceptably. But if it has to be a man-made device that would let me out. I would have to worship God by proxy. If I could do that, I could stay at home and read Maggie and Jiggs, Dagwood and Blondie, and worship God through one of the brethren. Don't you see that such won't do?

"But David had mechanical instruments." Yes, I know he did, and he also burned incense, and had a number of wives. He kept the passover and did many things that you would not. But I am told again that such instruments were back there and that there will be instruments in Heaven. Yes, and thank God, there will be babies in Heaven, and therefore to be consistent we ought to have them in the church.

I read the almanac. It is a good book. Studebaker Brothers used to put out an almanac, and down under the calendar there were fine statements, practical suggestions and good stories. I remember one. A man came up into the Blue Grass region of Kentucky and wanted to buy a horse. He went to an owner who said, "I am glad to see you". So he told his servant to bring out "old John". He led out an old horse, fox-eared, grey-haired, ewe-necked, and so poor you could decipher his anatomy a city block away. He then made a speech about "old John." He said, "I want to tell you, sir, that has been the best horse this country has ever had. My entire family has been reared on him. You can't hook him up wrong. He is absolutely safe for Sally and the babies. He is all right in every respect."

The fellow that wanted to buy looked at him and said, "I guess that is all so." Now, the owner said to his servant, "Bring out that yearling." He brought out a year-old colt and said, "Now, sir, look him over; commence at his muzzle, look at that long neck, sloping shoulders, short back and long belly." He said, "I want to tell you, there is going to be the best horse Kentucky ever bred. He has every mark of a fine animal. He is going to be a wonderful horse." The man who wanted to buy said, "That may be so, but I'll tell you, you have shown me a *has been* and you have shown me a *going-to-be*, now bring out your *is-er*." The fellow said, "I am not back in old John's day and this colt is not ready yet. I want one now."

To apply that, I can say, "I am not living back in the days of David; I haven't yet laid aside this mortal coil and plumed my pinions for the heavenly region, but I live in the church of the Lord. Where is the authority now?" And the answer is absolutely wanting. Now, what is all the trouble that hinders our getting together? Simply this: we need to

accept God's word, to recognize that the Patriarchal and the Jewish ages are gone and that in the Christian age God is speaking to us by his son. When we do that, the prayer of Christ and the pleading of the apostles will bring us together into a solid phalanx. [N. B. Hardeman, *One Dozen Sermons*, 1956, pages 21-22.]

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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.

### —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

### —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.

### —Missouri—

**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.

### —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. **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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# NOTES & QUOTES

Gideon C. Rodriguez, Quezon City, Philippines: "The Capitol City brethren have been very much energized by your coming (and Bob Berard's) in the last lectureship. That spiritual feast set the brethren's hearts on fire for the gospel. Two days from now we will go house to house. Everyone is excited to go. Only the sick and those baby sitting won't be able to go.

"I hope you can encourage other sound brethren to come for the 2nd Capitol City Lectureship..."

Roy Deaver, Editor Emeritus, *Biblical Notes*, Austin, Texas: "We are right now in process of making some significant changes in the *Biblical Notes* work. This work consists actually of two divisions: that is, (1) the paper itself (and all relating thereto), and (2) writing and publishing much-needed books..."

"Mac Deaver is now the Editor of *Biblical Notes*. Weylan Deaver is now the Associate Editor. Thomas Warren and I will contribute as needed. I (Roy Deaver, now Editor Emeritus) will devote my time to the writing and publishing of much-needed books. I am so grateful to be given this tremendous opportunity to do this work which for so, so long I have desired to do on full-time basis.

"My wife (Wilma Ruth) and I (in a few months) will be moving to Longview, Texas (where we grew up), and will be working from our home/office there. We can't begin building there until we sell our home here in Austin (Dripping Springs area). Mac and June (his wife) will be getting back into full-time preaching work, but will make time for their work with *Biblical Notes*. June, too, is much experienced in the *Biblical Notes* work. We will let everyone know the new addresses and new phone numbers when these changes become reality.

"The Deaver Support Fund (under the direction and oversight of the Dripping Springs elders) will continue as it is. Mac's support, when he gets settled, will be taken care of by the congregation with which he labors. My financial support will continue to come from wonderful, concerned fellow-workers, through the Deaver Support Fund..."

"Your checks for this fund (as in the past) should be made to Dripping Springs Church of Christ, marked for Deaver Support Fund, but mailed to Roy Deaver/Biblical Notes, 7401 Glenhaven Path, Austin, Texas 78737...We keep the records, place the funds into the Texas Bank at Dripping Springs, and one of the Elders (brother Grady Moore) issues me a check each week (unless there are not sufficient funds to cover the check). This has not happened often, but it does happen. Mac's getting back into full-time local work will help this situation tremendously..."

Curtis A. Cates, Director, Memphis School of Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee:

"You will rejoice to know that the Memphis School of Preaching and the Knight Arnold Church of Christ are going to sponsor the Joe Gilmore, Jr., Appreciation Dinner on Monday of the Thirty-First Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, March 31, 1997.

"Brother Joe, with his faithful companion, have been and are a strong influence for truth and right not only in California but also throughout the brotherhood. He preaches locally and also speaks in countless lectureships and gospel meetings throughout the United States."

[NOTE: Some folks, when they pass, it is like putting your finger in the ocean, pulling it out, and saying, "Where's the hole?" Not so in the case of Joe and Joy Gilmore. Over more than half a century, they have made a real difference in the kingdom of our God. IYR Jr.]

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Illustrating his declaration that "something worth having and worthwhile is always costly," Steve Ellis, at the morning service, February 9, 1997, of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, Memphis, cited David saying, "...neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing" (II Samuel 24:24).

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Danny Bennett, Madison, Alabama: "Satan is very active and skilled in utilizing numerous methods by which to destroy the Lord's church. Three very destructive methods are: 1) the numerous versions (actually perversions) of the Bible; 2) positioning advocates of higher/destructive criticism in positions of leadership within our Christian colleges, universities and pulpits; and 3) subverting our youth..."

"If Satan destroys our youth, there is no future for the Lord's church, the church of Christ!..."

"Jeff Walling has been scheduled to appear at two local congregations this Spring (Twickenham and Monrovia)."

[NOTE: Since Jeff Walling no longer either believes or preaches the truth of the gospel, why do supposedly sound, faithful congregations continue to invite him? IYR Jr.]

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"You're either a sheep or a goat, and there is nothing in between. Yet we have brethren who make their living trying to blur the difference between the two." — Jerry Moffitt, January 26, 1997, Portland, Texas.

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Charles E. Stovall, Nashville, Tennessee: "I want to thank you and the other writers for your publication, *Contending*

for the Faith, for the courageous manner in which you are combating the error of the liberals in the church today. My heart is broken over the divided condition of the church, and especially over the universalism which is coming into the church. Without doubt, the devil must be rejoicing over the fact that the identity of the New Testament Church is being rapidly destroyed.

"It is obvious to me that many do not understand what the church of the New Testament is. If they did, they would understand that there are no saved people outside of the church into which penitent believers who have confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God are baptized to come into Christ.

"We understand that all—and that is ALL—spiritual blessings are IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:3). Since we are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27), it is obvious that those in other religious bodies who have not been baptized into Christ are depriving themselves of the great spiritual blessings (of which salvation is one) which are in Christ. When these liberal preachers in the church talk about saved people in other churches (who have not been baptized into Christ), it only signals the fact that they don't yet understand what the church is.

"In my opinion, it is time to speak out against those who are not really of us in what they believe—though they are still among us and unhappy to be so—just as you are doing in your publication. Keep calling their error what it is—ERROR! And may we all pray with sincerity and fervor that the truth will again come to be upheld by all members of the body of Christ, and that unity based upon the steadfast teaching of God's word will be restored.

"May we all understand that peaceful co-existence is not the unity for which Christ prayed, but rather that he prayed that we might all be one as he and the Father are one, and that we must seek and keep the unity of the SPIRIT in the bond of peace. Surely the 'unity of the SPIRIT' (Ephesians 4:3) is the unity which is possible when we follow—and only when we follow—the message of the Bible which the Spirit gave.

"The problem of liberalism plaguing the church today is most certainly the result of following opinions rather than following the teaching of the Spirit-inspired word of God, in personal quests for popularity, social acceptance, and preacher-ego fulfillment. Isn't it time that preachers get their head back into the Book (the word of God), and realize that the best thing they can do is learn and respect what the Bible teaches, and then be content to tell others with conviction what the message is that is the power of God to save? This is a far more urgent need than playing follow-the-leader in the latest change or fad that some acceptance-hungry preacher has come up with..."

"Always know that anything I write you, as I have in this letter, I am not ashamed to have it printed if it will do good and better serve the eternal purpose of God. August of this year marked 53 wonderful years for me of preaching

the gospel of Christ.

"Keep looking up until we hear the trumpet blow and hear the final shout of victory!"

**Jesse Mercer**, Pikeville, Tennessee: "Please put me on your mailing list. I appreciate your publication and would enjoy having it come to my home."

**Cliff Wilson**, of Denton, Texas, subscribed for three more years, saying, "Keep up the good work. We are getting in bad shape, aren't we."

**W. H. Hopkins**, of Lewisburg, Tennessee, sending in his new subscription, said, "A friend gave me a November '96 paper where brother Choate wrote about the 1997 Jubilee. I don't want to miss others he may write. Thank you for exposing them."

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"Someone asked what does ERA mean? One person said it means 'Enough Really Already.'—**Bob Patterson**, April 17, 1996, Southwest School of Bible Studies Lectureship.

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**Noel Davis**, of Manchester, Tennessee, sent "extra" with his renewal, saying, "Use the rest for spreading the gospel."

**Jerry C. Brewer**, Clinton, Oklahoma: "Thank you for your fidelity to the truth of the gospel."

**Gladys McGechie** expressed appreciation for our article on "Abounding Rumors" in the September issue, saying, "I always look forward to receiving the paper."

**A. T. Pate**, Nashville, Tennessee: "I appreciate your good work...May we ever strive "to Christ be loyal and be true!"

**Harold Heath** renewed, saying, "I sure enjoy *Contending for the Faith*. I pray for you and it."

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On Judgment day what would you give to save a soul? Then you will stand by with helpless hands. Why not help now while you can!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Reg Rogers**, old-time gospel preacher, Tulsa, Oklahoma: "I hasten to answer your letter about Garnett. My late brother Tom was a member out there. He told me about **Al Eagles** placing membership at Garnett from the Christian Church. I went out there to see first-hand. Tom introduced me to Al, and I asked Al if he had repented or made confession of error when he came for membership in Garnett. He was a little indignant that I should ask such a question. Of course he did not confess error; he did not know he had done any sin. He told me that when he was back home he worshiped with the Christian Church and sang with the instrument and there was nothing wrong with doing so. They put him into the Gar-

nett eldership.

"When **Jay Utley** led a group away to worship under a name other than the church of Christ in Holland Hall, Al went with Utley. Sad to say, Al was diagnosed with cancer and has since passed away. I called Utley and left a request for a return call on his answering machine. I guess he is away in a meeting: I have not heard from him.

"Utley is still the preacher in the Holland Hall faction, under the name Christ Community Church. I carried a notice of this in my *WAIT A MINUTE*, June, 1996, page 10. At the time I did not know for sure this was the group from Garnett; but I got a call through today, and it IS Utley's group. He, I was told, is "on a sabbatical."

"Also, I learned today that **Randy Moody** has been hired to preach at Garnett and that he has sent a letter to the churches with a hope to work with area brethren...

"The Christ Community Church is friendly with Pepperdine U and Sweet Publications. Ira, we are in dark days, but never did the light do more good than when the night was the blackest."

[NOTE: "With **Al Eagles** being received into membership—and even made an elder at Garnett Road—coming in from the Christian Church without correction of any kind," I replied to brother Rogers, in part, "this explains just a whole lot about **Marvin Phillips** and **Garnett Road**.

"And the fact that he would return to worship with the Christian Church, singing with the instrument, and think there was nothing wrong with that—well, that tells us a lot more.

"And then to go off with **Jay Utley** under a name other than the church of Christ in Holland Hall—that tells even more.

"I do not know this **Randy Moody** whom Garnett has hired to preach for them. We'll know more soon.

"You are so right that we are in dark days—but let's keep on shining the gospel light in dark places."

An esteemed brother, who signed his name, but whose name I shall withhold, wrote: "My career is in field service and engineering and I say that only to help explain that I spend considerable time away from home and my home congregation... During the week of the 'Nashville Christian Jubilee, Inc.' meeting, I happened to walk by a table in the foyer of my home congregation and noticed that a sign-up sheet with several names of our senior high school group and the youth director were on it. This was a sign-up sheet for those who wanted to go to the above noted function in Nashville, Tennessee. Well, needless to say, I was rather perplexed to know that the elders of my congregation had given approval to this attendance of several of our youth and their youth director. It was too late to voice my objections. I am almost certain that they are simply ignorant of the situation revolving around **Rubel Shelly** and the Jubilee meeting.

"Now my special request is this: that you include on your list of "special mail-

ings" the enclosed list of elders at the \_\_\_\_\_ church of Christ. I am enclosing \$35.00 to help defray the added expense. If this is not enough, please let me know and I'll be glad to provide the required additional amount."

[NOTE: "I was particularly pleased to have your letter and to note that you wanted us to add the six addresses you sent to our list for 'Special Mailings.' I replied, in part. Same is being done.

"It never ceases to astonish me that elders in the Lord's church studiously neglect to check out something before sending their young folks to participate. From what you say, I am almost certain that the so-called Nashville Christian Jubilee, Inc. stands for something entirely different from what the \_\_\_\_\_ elders supposed when they were signing up the senior high group to go.

"If those brethren are ignorant of what the Jubilee stands for and represents, it should not take very many issues of Contending for the Faith to disabuse their minds. Much appreciation." IYR Jr.]

#### IMPLICATIONS OF MISCONDUCT IN WORSHIP

Perhaps many people do not realize the implications of their talking, laughing, writing notes and playing while services are in progress. The following points should be impressed upon their conscience:

1) It shows grave disrespect for God in whose presence we are appearing. He who takes the Lord's supper in an unworthy manner eats and drinks damnation to himself (I Corinthians 11:27). Would not this principle also apply to other worshippers who are unable to concentrate on their worship and study?

2) It shows lack of consideration for other worshippers who are unable to concentrate on their worship and Bible study.

3) It shows disrespect for the song director and the minister who is speaking. In these two areas it violates the "Golden Rule" of Matthew 7:12.

4) Noisy disturbance in services may distract a lost person who needs to learn the truth that he may be saved. Because of distractions, his mind is kept away from the lesson and he goes away still unsaved. Perhaps we shall never have the opportunity to teach him again.

5) It is a sin, for it is an offense against both God and one's fellowman.

6) It reflects on their parents who have reared and trained them.

7) It reflects on themselves as being uncouth and ill-mannered.

May the Lord help us realize the serious importance of proper behavior and conduct that our worship may be a blessing to all.

—Via Christian Messenger  
Allgood, Tennessee

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sam J. Howell**, of Memphis, Tennessee, in sending \$100.00 to help with our "Special Mailings," wrote, "Glad to be a part in your Special Mailings. Keep the faith."



It's time to mark your calendar for the Fifth Annual:  
**Houston College of the Bible Lectures**

• June 15 - 18 •

—Theme—

• **PREMILLENNIALISM** •



**SPEAKERS**

Tim Ayres  
David Baker  
Bob Berard  
Billy Bland  
Tom Bright

David P. Brown  
Curtis Cates  
Frank Chesser  
Roddy Covington  
Carl Garner

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Lester Kamp

Mark Lewis  
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Tom Wacaster

Don Walker  
Eddie Whitten  
Royce Williamson  
Tyler Young

*For Ladies Only—Corinne Elkins*

**TOPICS**

"What does the Bible Teach Regarding..."

"...The Land Promises God Made to Israel?"

"...Prophecies of the Kingdom?"

"...Christ's Mission?"

"...The Church and the Kingdom Being  
Two Separate Institutions?"

"...The Rapture?"

"...The Tribulation?"

"...The Second Coming of Christ?"

"...The 1,000 Year Reign of Revelation 20?"

"...The Resurrection?"

"...The Judgment?"

"Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong: A Study of  
'Armstrongism'"

"A Study of Matthew 24"

"What is the 'Battle of Armageddon'?"

"What is 'The Millennium'?"

"A Study of II Peter Three and Christ's Second Coming"

"The Basic Message of the Book of Revelation"

"What is the Day of the Lord of Joel Chapter Two?"

"What is 'Anglo - Israelism'?"

"An Exposé of Popular Premillennialists and their Doctrine"

"What is the First Resurrection?"

"Is the Doctrine of Premillennialism 'Fatal Error'?"

"Who are the 'Man of Sin' and 'the AntiChrist'?"

"'Jehovah's Witnesses' and Premillennialism"

"What is the Meaning of 'the Last Days'?"

"What does the Phrase 'When the Books are Open' Mean?"

"Pertinent Passages from First and Second Thessalonians  
Misused by Premillennialists"

"Pertinent Passages from Daniel Misused by Premillennialists"

"What is the 'Binding of Satan'?"

"Is Premillennialism a System of Infidelity?"

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS



**JAMES ALVIS BROWN**  
[1928-1997]

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVIII, No. 4

April/1997

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. Tele- phone: (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.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH, P. O. Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383-2273.

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## Editorial...

### Faithful Defenders/Confirmers of the Gospel Keep On "Going Down the Valley" One By One

Of course, "the Lord knoweth them that are his" (II Timothy 2:19), however, at least in some instances, their lives in Christ are so manifest even while they live that fellow Christians can know it, too. Such was the life of James Alvis Brown—simply Al Brown to his friends—who went to be with his Lord on February 12, 1997.

Just when I personally became keenly conscious of the worth of this fellow defender/confirmer of the gospel, I cannot say. He was not the sort who overwhelmed others with his personality; rather Al Brown sort of "grew" on you.

#### A WAY WITH WORDS

Hearing him often on Bible lectureships—particularly in Texas, California and Washington—each time I was impressed with his extraordinary command of the English language. Being of kind and gentle mien, the strength of his preaching always came as a surprise.

But any lectureship director who wanted something said on a given subject—and said right—all he needed to do was assign that subject to Al Brown, and he would take care of it.

#### FELLOW-WORKER WITH ASSOCIATE EDITOR

When considering whom to appoint as Associate Editor of *Contending for the Faith*—who, in all probability, one day would accede to the Editorship of this paper—it did David Brown no harm that he was yoked together with another Brown, called Al, of Spring, Texas.

For many years it had been obvious that Al Brown was someone you could depend on. So much in harmony with what we were doing to preserve the truth of the gospel for this generation and beyond, that he persuaded as many as he could to subscribe to this paper.

#### AL SERVED FROM THE HEART

You don't do such things if your heart is not it! Just like Paul wrote to the Philippians, we could say of Al Brown,

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you...for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: even as it is meet for me to think this of you..., because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye are partakers of my grace" (Philippians 1:3, 5-7).

Or again, as Paul wrote,

**“Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel”** (Philippians 1:15-17).

#### HE ALWAYS PREACHED THE TRUTH

Brother Brown was the latter kind, preaching Christ, not of contention, but of good will, sincerely of love; but he always, always, always preached the truth of the gospel, no matter what.

He was of the same sort as **Andrew Connally, Bill Jackson, Foy Smith, Bill Cline** and that host of other true yokefellows in the gospel who keep on “going down the valley (of the shadow of death) one by one.”

Now that he is gone, we shall miss Al Brown. But what a blessing it is having the assurance that on that resurrection morning we shall meet him in the air and ever be with him and the Lord!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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### *Associate Editorial...*

## These Things I Remember

For the past four years I worked with brother **Al Brown**. Along with his good wife, **Marilyn**, he labored into his fourteenth year as the evangelist of the Spring Church of Christ before he entered eternity.

#### TRUE FRIEND OF THE LORD

He was a true friend to the Lord and his gospel. I witnessed him cease fellowship of long standing with a brother who had been his friend for many years because that brother was overtaken in a trespass and refused to repent.

A preacher of righteousness? Indeed so. A flawless preacher? No. (But which one of us is?) A faithful preacher in fundamental obligatory matters of the truth? Yea, verily. He loved the label “gospel preacher.” He longed for the reward of the faithful. Knew he well the need of us all for the grace and mercy of God. Well did he hide himself behind the cross of Jesus. Who has not heard him quote Isaiah 53 and not heard his voice break while tears came to his eyes as he uttered the following words:

**He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every**

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one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:3-6)?

We shall not quickly forget the thunder of his voice when he opposed error, ungodly members, and false teachers. And if at times his obstinancy seemed overly bold, then with longsuffering we bore with him even as he bore with the weak and fickle church members whose faith was no stronger than thin ice. These are they who expect preachers to tolerate their sins, but who extend no longsuffering toward the preacher of truth as he labors in word and doctrine. We know such characters all too well, and we have set our face against them! The church at Spring, Texas owes more to Al Brown for her faithful condition today than she fully realizes.

#### EXCELLENT WRITER

Al was an excellent writer. He knew how to write. In all of my travels brethren constantly commended his bulletin articles. This is the reason that we have included one of his articles in this issue of *Contending for the Faith*. His “*Wise Ol’ Al*” comments were the favorite of many who read the Spring bulletin, *The Better Way*. Because of his love of writing, his failing eyesight of recent years made it very difficult for him. However, he bore it with dignity and hope.

Fun—yes, brother Al knew how to enjoy himself. Since I have been known to engage in the lighter side

of things, from time to time we tried to out-“silly” one another. I do not know who won the prize, but we had a good time in the competition. If God's children cannot play together, it is a sad thing indeed. I miss him.

**LAST MEETING**

The day before brother Al had his surgery I left to preach and teach in **Murmansk, Russia** for a little over two weeks. He died two days after his surgery. I was very glad that we were able to visit with one another before I left.

It was comforting to be with good and faithful brethren and gospel preachers, **Billy Bland, David Jones, and Sean Hockdorf**, my fellows in travel as well as **Bob Hawkins** and **Cliff Lyons**, resident American gospel preachers in Murmansk, when I heard of Al's demise.

Though I fancy myself no poet, I have attempted to capture my thoughts of brother Al's departure in the following poem while on a distant shore, in a cold clime, far away from home. For reasons that will be obvious, I have called it **“RIGHT OF PASSAGE.”** It is in memory of the **“Wise Ol' Al”**

—David P. Brown,  
Associate Editor

# RIGHT OF PASSAGE

## In Memory of the “Wise Ol' Al”

*We clasped our hands together—fellow gospel preachers, co-workers, and friends;*

*Once more heard I his baritone voice and beheld his toothy grin.*

*Farewells heart felt were spoken, our petitions laid before God's throne.*

*Parting came with the closing of a door, hoping for reunion at home.*

*Each with his journey before him; each with passport in hand;*

*Each with right of passage to a far distant but different land.*

*Long traveled I to reach the “Russias,” a land frozen in Arctic cold;*

*Seeking a people in the grip of Satan, man's arch enemy of old.*

*Freedom in Christ was our battle cry, the gospel we did preach;*

*And wielding the Sword of the Spirit, sin's battlements were breached.*

*Each with his journey before him; each with passport in hand;*

*Each with right of passage to a far distant but different land.*

*What message is this that now finds me on this long Polar night?*

*Is it news that a soldier has departed; has he entered his eternal delight?*

*For when I received the black crêped missive, knew I his spirit had taken flight,*

*For laying aside his battle scarred armor; Al Brown now rests in Paradise.*

*Each with his journey before him; each with passport in hand;*

*Each with right of passage to a far distant but different land.*

*Now sitting here on this lonely Russian night,*

*Spellbound by the shimmering emerald green of Aurora Borealis' light.*

*A passport hold I within my hand, opening my nation's portals to me;*

*Wishing for hearth, home, and family lying far across the icy sea.*

*Each with his journey before him; each with passport in hand;*

*Each with right of passage to a far distant but different land.*

*When in the land of my nativity, I unite with kith and kin;*

*I will wait for my right of passage into that better Promised Land.*

*For a passport my Lord has given me, resting secure on his promises grand;*

*The right of passage into glory, 'tis for all his faithful band.*

*Each with his journey before him; each with passport in hand;*

*Each with right of passage to a far distant but different land.*

*By faith's eye I now can see him, Gabriel blowing the horn of my Lord;*

*Then all of God's obedient children will enter their eternal reward.*

*With all tears wiped from our eyes, the sorrows of the world all past;*

*We shall fall before the throne of the Almighty and worship him perfectly at last.*

*Al with right of passage claimed, I with passport forever turned in:*

*All of God's redeemed before his gracious throne; never, never more to sin.*

—David P. Brown

**A WORD TO THE WISE  
FROM THE  
WISE OL' AL**

“We always agree with people when they admit they're wrong.”

“Tact is merely the art of saying nothing when there is nothing to be said.”

“Sometimes the narrowest minds are in the biggest heads.”



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# AL BROWN GOES HOME

Bob Berard

In the early morning hours of February 12, 1997, Al Brown, husband of our sister Marilyn Brown and beloved preacher for the Spring Church of Christ, departed this life. He was 68. Battered with debilitating health problems for several years and in intensive care following heart surgery for the previous two days, Al succumbed. Surely, the miseries of this life were a relief to leave behind as his spirit departed the flesh for higher ground (James 2:26; Ecclesiastes 12:7). He often had contemplated Paul's words in Philippians 1 of being "in a strait betwixt two" and was overjoyed finally to go to the "far better" state of being with Christ.

Among the nearest of his surviving family are two daughters, Jennifer, of Austin, Texas; Elise, of Houston, and his mother-in-law, Bessie Lumbley, who lived with Al and Marilyn. Al is survived by two sisters: Mary Gorby, who lives in Tampa, Florida, and Betty Stone, of Brandon, Florida. Not of blood kin, but of the greater tie that binds, are a host of brethren who will mourn his passing. Those at the Spring church are joined by many others in the brotherhood who have either heard Al's preaching or read his writing.

This is not to say that everyone who knew of Al Brown's preaching thought fondly of him. He was, no doubt, a thorn to those advancing a course other than God's. No one could rightly declare "Woe" unto Al on the grounds of all men speaking well of him (Luke 6:26). Those, however, who knew him and his work and who love the truth, loved him for his "like precious faith" and will sorely miss his pointed preaching and kindly ways.

James Alvis Brown, known to friends as just Al, was a Floridian by birth, but very much at home in Texas, and particularly, Spring, Texas. Al and Marilyn labored together for and with the church at Spring for over twelve years. Marilyn tirelessly served in a secretarial capacity for the church and Al faithfully preached and taught the Bible during those years. Together they consistently produced one of the finest church bulletins to be found. "The Better Way" was an extension of Al's other teaching and preaching and the words he employed were of the sort most needed by those trying to live right in a largely wrong world (I John 2:15-17). Al reproved, rebuked, and exhorted with all long-suffering and doctrine; warned, warned, and warned regarding the devil's devices; and encouraged and consoled regarding the bountiful blessing God affords the faithful (II Timothy 4:2-4; Acts 20:31; Ephesians 1:3).

One regular feature of his bulletin included pithy sayings under the heading, "A word to the wise from the Wise Ol' Al." Here indeed was wisdom—usually with a humorous twist; wisdom and humor which shall be missed. Al was an exceptionally good writer and ably used this skill as

he did his preaching, to declare the whole counsel of God and its joyous message of salvation.

Al's labors at Spring have been an invaluable contribution to the cause in general and to the Spring church in particular. While many churches in the Houston area have flirted with or gone wholesale after liberalism, Al Brown steadfastly and boldly preached the unadulterated gospel of Christ. It was in recognition of his faithfulness as a herald of God's word that the 1994 Houston College of the Bible lectureship book was dedicated to him by the Spring eldership.

In addition to his regular work with the church, Al served as a faculty member of the Houston College of the Bible since its inception in 1993. His service in the kingdom extends back over 40 years with local works in five states. He was on the advisory staff of *Firm Foundation* and preached in gospel meetings and lectureships with frequency prior to limitations imposed by health problems. Al has influenced the world and the church for good and his influence lives even though he now rests from his labor (Revelation 14:13).

Over the last few years, as Al's health problems began to noticeably hinder his ability to walk and see, he was distraught about not being able to do more in the Lord's vineyard. Tears of mixed sorrow and gladness readily came to his eyes as the various preaching and teaching works of the Spring church were discussed. As he expressed his fervent desire to be a part of these planned works which he knew he just was not able to do, he would add his whole-hearted commendation of those who would be able to do them.

In spite of his trials, Al's love of God and truth was not diminished, and his eye did not divert from the mark (Philippians 3:13-14). He often was heard to smilingly comment about what he knew to be near, his going home.

—Post Office Box 39  
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[The preceding article was written a few hours after Al Brown departed his life on earth. It and an article and selected "Wise Ol' Al" sayings in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* are presented as a tribute to our much beloved Christian friend and evangelist. —Associate Editor]



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# AL BROWN—A MAN OF GOD

The Elders, Spring Church of Christ

What kind of preacher was Al Brown? If you never heard him preach, you could easily answer the question just by looking to God's word. If ever there was a man who sought to pattern his life's work according to God's plan, surely it was Al Brown.

There's no telling how many times he quoted it. It was his credo—"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Al loved the word of God and loved to preach it. It wasn't that he thought that others couldn't do a good job, it was that preaching was what he dearly loved. He truly studied the word. He analyzed it. He meditated upon it. He sought to understand it. It was his life.

## A STUDENT OF GOD'S WORD

You could tell that Al was a diligent student of the word if you only listened a little while. He had memorized large sections of scriptures and his sermons always were generously sprinkled with biblical quotes. A person simply cannot attain the mastery of the scriptures that Al had without spending untold hours studying them.

Al knew that in his preaching he should "speak as the oracles of God." He understood that the power of God to salvation is the gospel, and this knowledge gave him tremendous courage. He never ever backed down when he knew the word was clear on any matter. He was often outspoken and this rankled some folks. But it was clear that his intentions were not to offend but rather he was willing to do whatever was best for anyone, even if it meant preaching a "hard" sermon or attacking some of our "sacred cows."

## HIS COURAGE WAS CONTAGIOUS

Al's courage was contagious, especially to newly appointed and inexperienced elders. It is a whole lot easier to hold your ground when you know that you have a soldier like Al standing with you. And it sure was good to have Al's years of experience and his wisdom always available.

Was Al the perfect preacher? No. But the only time that we ever had to express any concerns to Al was when he crossed over into the area of opinion or if he got a little overly vocal in defending his position. But even then Al demonstrated his humility and would quickly make the necessary corrections.

## HE RESPECTED THE ELDERS' AUTHORITY

Al's deep regard for the word was always evident in the respect that he had for the Eldership. He never assumed any authority and often sought the Elders' decisions on even the smallest matters. Had the Elders ever asked him to leave, surely he would have quietly accepted their decision. Thankfully, the Elders always stood with Al even when things got a little rocky.

Now what do we do? We carry on. Love the word just like Al did. Support **David Brown** just like we did Al. Continue to stand for the truth. A faithful congregation will be Al's legacy.

—6214 Old Spring Cypress  
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## A WORD TO THE WISE FROM THE WISE OL' AL

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# ELDERS ANNOUNCE NEW APPOINTMENTS

The Elders, Spring Church Of Christ

The memory of the righteous is blessed. The elders of the Spring Church of Christ feel a profound sense of blessedness from the memory of our dearly departed **Al Brown**. The firm conviction and steady resolve of the Lord's church here is due in no small part to the uncompromising preaching of Al Brown "in season and out of season." His legacy serves us even now as we draw the circle together to fill the void. The reputation so obtained by the Spring church has allowed us in the recent past to secure the extraordinary talents of certain faithful men, solid in the faith, who will be able to carry on not only the good works of Al Brown, but the many good works that they have been doing many years previously. It is with joy then that the elders make the following appointments.

**David P. Brown** is hereby appointed as *Evangelist* of the Spring Church of Christ and **Robert F. Berard** is appointed as *Director* of the Houston College of the Bible. Although to his great satisfaction Al was able to preach to the very end of his earthly life, David, and, to a lesser extent, Bob, "filled in" at Spring on those occasions when Al's declining health required relief.

Brother David will continue to serve as an instructor in the College and will be available to assist Bob in fulfilling the duties of the Directorship. The elders expect and encourage both David and Bob to continue their missionary trips since it benefits the Lord's church universal; in their absence Spring suffers no lack of capable gospel preachers. Please join us in invoking God's blessing on these men that their good works may continue and their efforts may glorify God.

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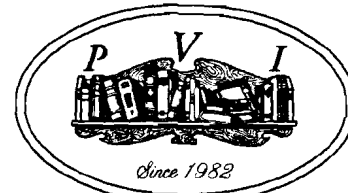
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# TRANSITION

David P. Brown

When I resigned my last work it was with the full intention of going back into "local work," i.e., preaching for a congregation. At that time I had been out of "local work" for about eleven years. However, when the opportunity availed itself through the Spring elders, **Al Brown** (their preacher at that time for about ten years), and the Spring church to begin a full time school of preaching, I decided to alter my original plans and do what I could to help in this giant undertaking. Having worked in two gospel meetings with the Spring church, the elders, brother Al Brown (though we were no kin to one another except in Adam), and I were no strangers to one another.

## TAKING A GIANT STEP

I say it is a "giant undertaking" to begin and carry on a preacher training school successfully because it taxes all of the determination, strength, and stamina (spiritually and otherwise) of a congregation twice the size of Spring to attempt such a tremendous work. One need only to note the faithful churches that have operated successful preacher training programs to see that such is a rather elementary reality. Hence, for it to succeed, a full time preacher training school *must* be the singular and foremost work of a congregation. To attempt such a monumental task otherwise would be parallel to shooting at the moon with a BB gun and expecting to hit it.

It is a fundamental biblical principle that one should count the cost of a project before attempting it (Luke 14:28-33). If one is unwilling to pay the price to get the job done correctly, it should never be begun. If later that singular aim is altered, the preacher training school should be forgotten, for it will not succeed as it should and could when a church's finances are, as my grandmother used to say, "stretched from A to 'Izard'." I am constantly amazed at how brethren can readily see this fundamental principle in secular matters, but are blind to it when it pertains to the Lord's business. With like sentiments expressed to the Spring elders and church, we began *Houston College of the Bible* in September of 1993 with my services as director.

During the last year or so brother Al and I did most of the preaching. Then, the time came for him to lay his battle-scarred armor down. Thereby, his desire to go home to be with the Lord, which sentiment he expressed most often and with greater frequency as his health continued to decline, was granted. To me brother Al Brown is a most happy memory.

Brother Berard has been with *HCB* from its inception. In recent months, as assistant director, he has taken on more and more of the administrative work as well as teaching his full load of classes. I, therefore, was very glad for him to become the new director. I believe that he will do an excellent job in this capacity. Please remember him in your prayers.

## THANKS TO BROTHER BERARD

Brother Berard has asked me to serve in the less de-

manding position of **Academic Dean** with **HCB**. I will continue to teach in the college and remain the director of the annual **HCB** lectureship.

As the evangelist of the Spring congregation, I am thankful to be able to build upon a foundation so well laid by brother Al Brown. The elders, **Peary Brackett**, **Kenneth Cohn**, and **Buddy Roth** will be the first to tell you that without the great work done by brother Al Brown the Spring church could very well be in the liberal ranks today. Our aim and prayer are that the Spring church will continue to ask for the "Old Paths" that they might walk therein. Such a sentiment will continue to characterize my preaching and other work in Spring and the world.

I love and appreciate the Spring elders, and wish for them every good thing as they work to superintend the Lord's church at Spring. As they labor faithfully in the Lord my support for them will not waver. I am thankful to be a part of the Spring church and to work therein. Please remember the elders, the Spring church, brother Berard, **HCB**, and me in your prayers as we continue to serve the Lord.

—25403 Lancewood Drive  
Spring, Texas 77373

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## Questions About Eternity

Answered by Guy N. Woods

### What Is the Third Heaven?

The word "heaven" is used in at least three different senses in the sacred writings. Occasionally it describes the atmosphere about us where birds fly (Luke 9:58), in other instances where the sun, the moon and the stars are (Psalm 19:1-6), and in some occurrences the abode and throne of Jehovah (Deuteronomy 4:39). Thus, the "third heaven" to which Paul alludes in II Corinthians 12:1-4 is undoubtedly that region which surrounds the throne of God—the ultimate home of the soul.

### What Is Paradise?

"Paradise," etymologically, is a "pleasure garden," and is used in the scriptures to denote a place of great blessing. As in the case of the word "heaven," the context must be noted in order to determine its meaning since it is used, as is the word heaven, to signify several places of bountiful and great blessing. For example, the original paradise was the garden of Eden, the blissful abode of our first parents (Genesis 2:28); it is applied to that bourne of the blessed dead who rest from their labors (Luke 23:43), and it is also used to describe the heavenly city (Revelation 2:7). Because it denotes the *state* of things existing it is thus variously applied in the Bible. (*Questions and Answers, Vol. II, Gospel Advocate*, Nashville, 1986, p. 112.)

# WHAT IS THE WILLOW CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH, AND WHO IS BILL HYBELS?

J. E. Choate

Who is in a better position to know what the *Willow Creek Community Church* and who **Bill Hybels** are than **Max Lucado**? After all, Lucado, one of the best selling authors on the American religious scene today, was the first to introduce Willow Creek and Hybels to the churches of Christ. In the January-February issue of the 1993 *Wine-*

*skins*, Lucado tells us all we need to know about the boundaries of his undenominational faith. He tells us how deeply he values his church of Christ heritage. And why not, since the church has cradled and nurtured him since birth? And it was at the expense of the churches of Christ that he was launched into his present religious profession.

He no doubt finds his royalty check to be a healing "balm of Gilead." Perchance he should have a troubled conscience for his abandonment of the churches of Christ which put bread and butter on his table in other days. He also tells us about the well-springs of his present faith:

A Brazilian taught me about prayer. [How about Jesus teaching his disciples to pray in Matthew 6?] A British Anglican by the name of C. S. Lewis put muscle in my faith. [How about Paul in Romans 10:17?] A Southern Baptist helped me understand grace. [How about Paul in Ephesians 2:8?] ...A Catholic, Brennan Manning, convinced me that Jesus is relentlessly tender. I'm...a better preacher because I listened to Chuck Swindoll and Bill Hybels... [What about the preaching of Peter and Stephen?] [Questions in brackets by J.E.C.]

We have Lucado's mention and personal commendation of Bill Hybels. But what about the church in South Barrington, Illinois that Hybel built, and which Lucado apparently favors above the church that Jesus Christ built in Jerusalem? We are not left guessing on this one either.

In the January-February 1993 issue of *Wineskins* Lucado has another story to tell about his speaking engagement with the *Willow Creek Community Church*, which he described as an immense non-denominational fellowship. Before the evening assembly, he would meet with the elders to pray. He asked them to tell about themselves. One would say, "I was once a Methodist, but now a believer, or just a Christian." Lucado's *Wineskins* response was—"That's our line! That's what we in Churches of Christ are supposed to say, 'We aren't the only Christians, but we are Christians only.'"

## WHAT CHURCHES OF CHRIST SHOULD KNOW ABOUT WILLOW CREEK

Now that Max Lucado has put Bill Hybels and Willow Creek Church out on the table for us to examine, let's take a look at them. What is there about this church that he favors above churches of Christ? (Before we get too far along in our examination of Willow Creek, there is one other crucial bit of information to keep in mind. The elders of the *Donelson Church of Christ*, sponsors of *Jubilee '97*, have selected Max Lucado as the keynote speaker.)

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The *Willow Creek Community Church* is the fastest growing and most popular church in America today. What makes Willow Creek such a phenomenal church spectacle on the American religious scene?

An article printed January 23, 1991 in the *Christian Century* written by **Anthony B. Robinson** titled "Learning from Willow Creek" tells a part of the story. The Willow Creek Community Church is located on a 120 acre campus in South Barrington, a "lace curtain" Chicago suburb. The low-lying buildings look like a prosperous corporate headquarters. There are no crosses or religious signs to suggest a church.

*Willow Creek Community Church* began in 1975 in a rented theater, with an unpaid staff, borrowed equipment, and a vision for reaching unchurched people in the Chicago area. Bill Hybels and a few associates conducted an informal house survey in the Chicago suburb to locate and identify the unchurched in the area, and to learn why they did not attend a church.

Hybels and his associates, with a list of the unchurched, started the *Willow Creek Community Church*. The first Willow Creek meeting took place in the rented Willow Creek Theater located in Palatine, Illinois. This was the church Bill Hybels built designed for people who did not go to church because of indifference or suspicion. The first gathering numbered 125 people. Today some 20,000 attend the midweek and Sunday services of the church at Willow Creek church.

The services which take place at Willow Creek church today are unlike all other church services on American soil. The well-lighted and spacious auditorium with glass ceilings looks like a plush theater with theater seats and wide aisles. As the people file into the auditorium for the weekend "seeker services," a band is playing subdued contemporary jazz or rock. The worship service begins with the drawing of curtains across a huge stage while the tempo of the lively upbeat music gradually engages the audience.

The worship services gets underway. The band plays contemporary rock and jazz with religious lyrics flashed on a wide video screen accompanied by 16 vocalists and dancers. Actors stage dramatic skits. The performance has all the pizzazz of a professional stage show. A thunderous applause greets the conclusion of the entertainment phase.

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The mission of Willow Creek is to reach the unchurched and turn them into fully devoted followers of Christ, and to make them feel good about themselves. One will not find the weird and bizarre scenes that exist in a *Vineyard* charismatic church. Therein the worshippers are "seized by the Holy Spirit," fall into prolonged fits of uncontrollable laughter, bark like dogs, and roar like lions. They also engage in "healing the sick," "raising the dead," and "exorcising demons."

## THE WILLOW CREEK ASSOCIATION

The *Willow Creek Association* was created in 1992 as the larger parachute organization of the *Willow Creek Community Church* to form a voluntary mega-denominational association to attract churches who looked with favor on the Willow Creek church model. The annual membership fee in *WCA*, which is separate from the *Willow Creek Community Church*, is \$199. The *WCA* is in no sense a structured denomination with a central authority.

Currently some 1400 churches are members of this trans-denominational Association scattered across North America and 18 foreign countries. 65 percent of the *WCA* affiliates are denominational, and 35 percent are non-denominational. The *WCA* offers advice and instructions in their Annual Church Leadership Conference where they tell the associate leaders of membership churches how they get the job done at Willow Creek.

## CHURCH OF CHRIST CONNECTIONS

That the *Hendersonville Community Church of Christ* is a satellite of Willow Creek is evidenced in their logo. It is not known, but a growing list of symptoms suggest that the *Woodmont Hills Family of God* is a closet member, or a sympathizer of the Willow Creek paradigm.

If the only connections with Willow Creek came from the pronouncements of the likes of Max Lucado, we could take it with a grain of salt. But this is not the case. **Gary Holloway**, the *Director of Graduate Bible* in *David Lipscomb University* offers the Willow Creek model to replace the New Testament pattern of the church.

A paper co-authored by Gary Holloway and **Michael Weed**, entitled "The Gospel in Urban Vessels: Churches of Christ Face the Twenty-First Century," was read May 1995 before a meeting of the *Disciples of Christ Historical Society* in Nashville.

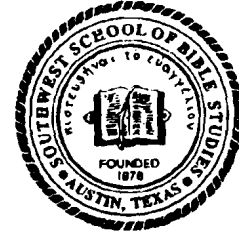
Both Holloway and Weed subscribe to the view that the churches of Christ have a sectarian beginning which they allege are the creation of societal influences. Holloway and Weed offer two clearly definable optional replacements

for the New Testament pattern for the faith, worship, and practices of churches of Christ. They write:

Two models for worship changes are most evident among Churches of Christ. One is the seeker service model of the Willow Creek Community Church...The other model influencing Churches of Christ is third wave charismatic worship described by church growth expert Peter C. Wagner and others. [Holloway and Weed have in mind here the Vineyard Movement and the Kansas City Prophets. —JEC]

Some readers of this article will hardly believe their senses, much less their minds, when it finally sinks in that supporters of the Willow Creek pattern would drive from the face of the earth the very presence of the conservative churches of Christ.

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# GOD DID PREDESTINATE!

Bill Jackson

In such passages as Romans 8:28-30 and Ephesians 1:3-12, we find the doctrine of "predestination" mentioned by inspired writers. We have before us one other illustration of how God can be so plain as to his meaning regarding a word or doctrine, and how confusing and difficult men make it when they put their hands to it. There has been a general abuse and misuse of such words as "predestination," "foreordination," and "election." In the misuse, men have concocted doctrines, and in so doing they never can be right!

## WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES

So men took the view that God, before the world was made, looked down the stream of time and saw you and me, individually, and pre-determined our destiny—heaven or hell—prior to our even being in this world. Having thus declared, they then came up against the doctrine of man having free will, and, true to the hold that man-made systems have on men, they rejected free will in order to hold to their own created doctrines. That is how sectarian systems are created in order that the doctrines can be spread abroad.

## THE HARMONY OF TRUTH

But man does have freedom of will, as seen first in Genesis 2:16-17, and in 4:7. Then, if man has freedom of will, how is it that God did predestinate? Whatever the answer is, it must be compatible with free will, and we do indeed find it so. Two points help us: (1) God can, and did, predestinate by CLASS (the wicked going to torment, the righteous to bliss), leaving freedom of will to work in every individual. Then, (2) the texts themselves, Romans 8 and Ephesians 1, indicate that involved in God's work was the providing for the Christ, the gospel, the gospel's call to man, man's hearing and responding obediently or man's refusal to hear and/or respond in obedience. In Romans 8, it is made clear that God did call (verse 30) and justify. God predestinated that men could be like his son (verse 29)—and how is that done? By man's obedience to, and living by, the gospel! The same in Ephesians 1, where Paul speaks of God choosing, predestinating, that we should be his own, living godly lives, and being his children. How is that done? He continues to speak of God's working, providing us the GOSPEL OF OUR SALVATION (verse 13)!

## SAVED WITHOUT GOD'S POWER TO SAVE?

If what men have said about "predestination" were so,

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then men would be saved long, long before any gospel was provided. Yea, saved by God's decree toward the individual, even before the creation of Adam! Once more, man has made the matter difficult, by his perversions!

—Deceased

# 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.

## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

## —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.: 7:00 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.

## —Missouri—

**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.

## —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. 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.

# Leadership

## Twenty-second Annual Bellview Lectures

### June 7 - 11, 1997

<b>Saturday, June 7</b>						
7:00 P.M.	Tending The Flock	James Rogers	7:00 P.M.	Elders And Church Discipline	Garland Elkins	
8:00 P.M.	The Spirit Of Obedience	Joe Galloway	8:00 P.M.	History Of Departure In Leadership	Bobby Liddell	
<b>Sunday, June 8</b>			<b>Tuesday, June 10</b>			
9:00 A.M.	Elders' Duty To Members	David Brown	9:00 A.M.	David—Great Example Of Leadership	Steve Ellis	
10:00 A.M.	Members' Duty To Elders	Eddie Whitten	10:00 A.M.	Qualifications Of Elders And Deacons	Wayne Coats	
11:00 A.M.	<i>Lunch Break</i>		11:00 A.M.	Joshua—Great Example Of Leadership	Noah Hackworth	
2:00 P.M.	Moses—Great Example Of Leadership	Michael Hatcher	12:00 P.M.	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
			1:30 P.M.	Goal Setting In Leadership	Gary Summers	
3:00 P.M.	Exposition Of 1 Peter 5:1-4	Stanley Ryan	2:30 P.M.	Women As Elders And Deacons?	Flavil Nichols	
4:00 P.M.	Elder—Elder, Deacon, Preacher Relations	Billy Bland	3:15 P.M.	Open Forum: Women's Role	Flavil Nichols	
5:00 P.M.	<i>Dinner Break</i>		4:00 P.M.	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 P.M.	Work Of Deacons	B. J. Clarke	7:00 P.M.	Qualities Of A Leader	Harrell Davidson	
8:00 P.M.	How To Handle Criticism	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.	8:00 P.M.	Nehemiah—Great Example Of Leadership	Clifford Newell	
<b>Monday, June 9</b>			<b>Wednesday, June 11</b>			
9:00 A.M.	Elders As Watchmen	Joel Wheeler	9:00 A.M.	Congregations Without Elders	Jerry Martin	
10:00 A.M.	Qualifications Of Elders And Deacons	Wayne Coats	10:00 A.M.	Qualifications Of Elders And Deacons	Wayne Coats	
			11:00 A.M.	Reevaluation/Reaffirmation Of Elders?	Dub McClish	
11:00 A.M.	Eldership And Old Testament Concepts	Joseph D. Meador	12:00 P.M.	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
12:00 P.M.	<i>Lunch Break</i>		1:30 P.M.	Jesus—Great Example Of Leadership	Joe Gilmore	
1:30 P.M.	Lording It Over The Flock	Buster Dobbs	2:30 P.M.	Decision Making In Leadership	Curtis Cates	
2:30 P.M.	Authority Of Elders	Bobby Duncan	3:15 P.M.	Open Forum: Qualifications	Wayne Coats	
3:15 P.M.	Open Forum: Authority & Lording	Buster Dobbs, Bobby Duncan	4:00 P.M.	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
4:00 P.M.	<i>Dinner Break</i>		7:00 P.M.	Elders And The Stewardship Of Souls	Jerry Moffitt	
			8:00 P.M.	Inspiring Brethren To Good Works	Guss Eoff	

## Bellview Lectures Information

### HOUSING

Free housing in the homes of Christians will be provided on a "first come, first served" basis (call our office at: 904/455-7595, or write at: 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, FL 32526). The following motel is available nearby and is providing a *special rate* for individuals attending the *Bellview Lectures*. Hospitality Inn (4910 Mobile Highway.) offers the following price (tax not included) \$45—1 to 4 people per room; a restaurant is located in the motel. Their phone number is 904/453-3333. When calling for reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the *Bellview Lectures*. For those who have R.V.s, 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 recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians, *Richard Parker* or *Bill Crowe*, in the recording room.

### BOOKS

The Lectureship book, "*Leadership*" will be available during the *Bellview Lectures* and afterwards by mail. It will contain thirty-three chapters and approximately 440 pages. Everyone who attends the *Bellview Lectures* will want to purchase a personal copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

### 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.

### 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.

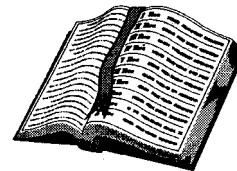
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# Houston College of the Bible Lectures



## “Premillennialism” June 15 - 18, 1997



David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

### Sunday, June 15

- 9:30 A.M. ....“A Study of Matthew 24” .....David P. Brown  
10:30 A.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Regarding the Judgment?” .....Ira Y. Rice, Jr.  
**FOLLOWING WORSHIP: BARBECUE DINNER SERVED AT THE BUILDING**  
3:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning ‘The Tribulation?’” .....Barry Hatcher  
4:30 P.M. ....“Is the Doctrine of Premillennialism Fatal Error?” .....Andy McClish  
7:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Regarding the Church and the Kingdom?” .....Bob Berard

### Monday, June 16

- 9:00 A.M. ....“II Peter 3 and Christ’s Second Coming” .....Roddy Covington  
10:00 A.M. ....“What is the ‘Day of the Lord’ of Joel Chapter 2?” .....Carl Garner  
11:00 A.M. ....“What is the First Resurrection?” .....Lynn Parker  
1:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning Christ’s Mission?” .....Billy Bland  
2:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning ‘The Rapture?’” .....Don Walker  
\*\*2:30 P.M. ....Ladies Class — “The Ultimate Spiritual Diet” .....Corinne Elkins  
3:30 P.M. ....“What is the Millennium?” .....Bob Sweeten  
6:30 P.M. ....“What is the Battle of Armageddon?” .....Tyler Young  
7:30 P.M. ....“The Basic Message of the Book of Revelation” .....Oran Rhodes

### Tuesday, June 17

- 9:00 A.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning the Resurrection?” .....Pat McIntosh  
10:00 A.M. ....“A Study of ‘Jehovah’s Witnesses’ and Premillennialism” .....Michael Hatcher  
11:00 A.M. ....“Is Premillennialism a System of Infidelity?” .....Frank Chesser  
1:30 P.M. ....“What is the Binding of Satan?” .....Noah Hackworth  
2:30 P.M. ....“What is the ‘1000 Year Reign’ of Revelation Chapter 20?” .....Eddie Whitten  
\*\*2:30 P.M. ....Ladies Class—“Christian Virtues” .....Corinne Elkins  
3:30 P.M. ....“A Study of the Prophecies of the Kingdom of God” .....Tommy Hicks  
4:30 P.M. ....**HCB BANQUET AT THE BUILDING**  
6:30 P.M. ....“Who Are the ‘Man of Sin’ and ‘The Anti-Christ?’” .....Mark Lewis  
7:30 P.M. ....“Examining Certain Dispensationalist Preachers and Their Doctrines” ..Lindell Mitchell

### Wednesday, June 18

- 9:00 A.M. ....“Has God Kept the Land Promises That He Made to Israel?” .....Tom Bright  
10:00 A.M. ....“What is the Meaning of the ‘Last Days?’” .....Lester Kamp  
11:00 A.M. ....“A Study of ‘Armstrongism’ in the Light of the Bible” .....Michael Light  
1:30 P.M. ....“What Is ‘Anglo-Israelism?’” .....Tim Ayers  
2:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Phrase ‘When the Books are Open’ Mean?” .....Royce Williamson  
3:30 P.M. ....“Passages from I and II Thessalonians Misused by Premillennialists” .....Tom Wacaster  
6:30 P.M. ....“Passages from the Book of Daniel Misused by Premillennialists” .....Curtis Cates  
7:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach About the Second Coming of Christ?” .....Dub McClish

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# THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME

Al Brown

Looking at man's long history, one thing stands out: nothing is permanent. Man, like all living things, dies and goes to corruption. His great empires, built to last a thousand years, for all their glory and splendor, pass into oblivion and are remembered only on the pages of history books. His magnificent cities, and the monuments he builds to praise his great achievements and feed his ego lie moldering in the dust and ruins of forgotten centuries.

## ONE THING IS CERTAIN

The one thing upon which he can count (as could the people of all ages) is sorrow, pain, heartache, vexing problems—and death. Wealth or poverty show no favorites in this respect. The problems of the ghetto-dwellers are never-ending vexations. Yet, the happiness of the rich is just as illusive, their maladies are just as aggravating, and death is just as certain even though their doctors, advisors, and counselors are renowned specialists. Their funerals may be filled with great ceremony and praise, but for all that, they are still dead. This is the lot of the educated and the illiterate, the mighty and the weak. All men are under the consequences of the curse (Hebrews 9:27).

The number and size of the problems individuals, families, governments, et al., have defies description. Men at every level continually fight to find answers—only to face

new problems. This is why the preacher asked: **“For what hath a man of all his labor, and of the striving of his heart, wherein he laboreth under the sun? For all his days are but sorrows, and his travail is grief; yea, even in the night his heart taketh no rest. This also is vanity”** (Ecclesiastes 2:22f). Again, he asked: **“For who knoweth what is good for man in his life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? For who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun”** (Ecclesiastes 6:12)? Paul also said that **“the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain”** (Romans 8:22)—and we do. We look for something better—a way of escape—a better lot than we have. Can we expect it? Perhaps a little better—sometimes, but a life free from cares and problems and sickness? No! We will never have such bliss in this world. This is one reason why the hope of immortality is so strong in all who have seriously pondered this.

## WHAT SHOULD MY ATTITUDE BE?

Since these things are true, what attitude should a person have toward existence in the flesh? What answers should he give to the greatest questions of life: who am I; where did I come from; why am I here; where am I going? Do you, dear friend, have the courage to seriously and honestly answer these questions? There are only two alternatives.

On one side is atheism, humanism, and agnosticism—all of which amount to the same thing. Atheism holds that man is only a blob of matter, produced by blind chance, the victim of the irresistible forces of an indifferent universe; death ends it all. Redemption, reconciliation with God, and the hope of eternal life is a myth because there is no God. Only the fittest can survive, so might really does make right. Since everything is destined to extinction, Bertrand Russell's extreme pessimism was right: **“Only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built”** (*Mysticism & Logic*).

This is not a new answer. The preacher pointed out that many of his day thought the same thing. **“Then I returned and saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead that have been long dead more than the living that are yet alive; yea, better than them both did I esteem him that hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun”** (Ecclesiastes 4:1-3).

Thank God, there is another way; an option that radically changes a person's entire attitude toward sorrow, misery, sickness, all his other problems, including death. Of course, that alternative is belief in God. In contrast to infidelity, how satisfying are the answers it gives to those basic questions of life. Man came from God and was made in the image of God. His purpose for being is to glorify his

## Denominational Doctrines

by Jerry Moffitt

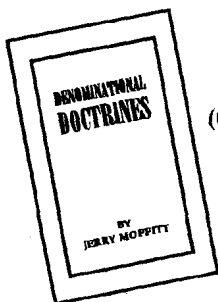
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maker. One day he will return to his God.

This does not mean that all the sorrows and pain and problems will vanish, but they are put in a new perspective which allows us to rise above them. Pessimism, despair, fear, despondency, and hopelessness are eliminated because we can confidently say, "This world is not our home; we are here for just a little while, and then we will go home." Our faith is comparable to those spiritual giants of

old about whom it is said: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. And if indeed they had been mindful of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:13-16). It is said concerning one of them: "He looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10).

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"An egotist thinks there is  
no satisfactory substitute for himself."

"Some people have a mouth big enough to sing a duet."

"Christianity helps us face the music  
even when we don't like the tune."

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## [PARADIGMS OF PREFERENCE:] Willow Creek, the Vineyards, and the Kansas City Prophets

J. E. Choate

Gary Holloway (Lipscomb Director of Graduate Bible) and Michael Weed proposed in their 1995 *Disciples of Christ Historical Society Paper* two models as viable options to replace the biblical pattern of the New Testament church: the *Willow Creek Community Church* and the *Vineyard Church Fellowship* ("Third Wave"). They do not refer to the *Kansas City Prophets* who are members of the *Vineyard Association* network of more than 300 churches.

It is an absolute imperative to keep in mind that there are cross pollinations of the influences of the designated models (paradigms) as they are brought to bear on churches of Christ. And each can be isolated and addressed in the name of the genius (?) who created the particular model.

*The Community Church:* Bill Hybels is the key man in the *Willow Creek Community Church*. The theology is of the popular brand which appeals mostly to unchurched "baby boomers," and their children the "busters," and their children the "X-rated generation." The controlling doctrines and practices of the Willow Creek model are being adapted by the mainline Protestant churches who would become "friendly user churches," and who would satisfy the spiritual needs of the "seekers" who come to them for spiritual solace.

This is the model being adopted overtly or covertly by liberal churches of Christ. The names of Max Lucado and Jeff Walling pop up as the leading promoters of the "Willows."

*The Vineyard Church Fellowship:* This church fellowship is a whole new ball of wax. The person in sole control of the "Vineyards" is John Wimbel. He is not the creator

of the *Vineyard Fellowship*, but he has defined every aspect of the movement. Wimbel is a consummate "show biz" religious promoter. He is the genius who adopted and gave form and substance to the charismatic theology popularly termed the "Third Wave."

*The "Third Wave":* The only way to understand the operations of John Wimbel and the "Vineyards" is to command a knowledge of the "Third Wave" which in fact is not a church model, but a new Pentecostal charismatic theology alleging that the Holy Spirit is making a third appearance in this century and his last prior to the Second Coming in this generation.

The whole enterprise of John Wimbel in the Vineyard churches is driven by C. Peter Wagner. He is Professor of Missions in *Fuller Theological Seminary* in Pasadena, California. He authored a book which has gained enormous popularity in the larger charismatic community. The book was published in 1988, and is titled *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*.

The thesis of the book maintains there have already been two previous distinct waves of the Holy Spirit in this century: the rise of classical Pentecostalism at the turn of the 20th century, and the charismatic movement of the 1960s which brought Pat Boone a measure of notoriety.

The emphasis of the "Third Wave" is on miraculous "power healing;" the exorcising of demons; raising the dead; and God conversing directly with man. Don Finto, et. al. would have us to believe that God talks directly to them, and not to us "second class" Christians.

This is what Wimbel calls "power evangelism," and he contends that the age of apostolic miracles has not ended.

(Continued on Page 3)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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May/1997

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Editorial...

## Is Rubel Crossing The Rubicon?

Ever since his notorious speech at Centerville, Tennessee, back in 1983, **Rubel Shelly** has edged closer and closer to inter-denominationalism, each time stopping just short of the "point of no return."

The two major newspapers in Nashville, Tennessee—*The Tennessean* and *The Nashville Banner*—have documented voluminously each apostatizing step that Rubel has taken away from the restoration principle, much of which we have photographically reproduced on the pages of *Contending for the Faith*.

### SOME COULD NOT BE WARNED

Rather than being warned of the clear and eminent danger to the churches of Christ that was taking place, many naive and gullible preachers, elders and others have charged us with "seeing things" that did not really exist and have followed his doctrinal depredations wherever they led.

Over and over again they have led to fellowship with the so-called *Christian Church*, the *Assemblies of God*, the *Pentecostals*, the *Methodists*, the *Baptists*, the *Presbyterians*, the *Catholics*, and other religious bodies outside of and contrary to the word of God.

As recently as within the current calendar year, Rubel has taken up with **Don Finto**, from whom most of the churches of Christ in Nashville long ago felt impelled to withdraw, not only for his own brand of Pentecostalism and other false teachings but also for usurping unto himself the *apostleship* of Jesus Christ!

### "JUBILEE" NOW GOES INTERDENOMINATIONAL

As incredible and reprehensible as these many violations of sound doctrine and practice have been, easily self-deceived brethren and churches have continued following Rubel's lead as if he could do no wrong.

Under date of March 11, 1997, however, he may, at long last, have so "crossed the Rubicon" that those who follow him now will have no way to remain in fellowship with *faithful* churches of Christ *anywhere*. On that date, he mailed a general letter not only to some of his own brethren but to preachers and pastors of denominations throughout middle Tennessee. The letter reads, as follows:

March 11, 1997

Dear [Whoever]:

Best-selling author Max Lucado will be in Nashville on Tuesday, April 22, and I want you to have the chance to meet him. Max will speak at a dutch-treat luncheon for area ministers that day at the Sheraton Music City.

To make the experience even better, Christian recording artist Wayne Watson will perform at the luncheon and lead a period of praise and worship.

Max will be speaking at the new Nashville Arena on July 2, 3, and 4 this year. He will be the nighttime keynote speaker at Jubilee '97, an annual event sponsored by Churches of Christ. But we want to spread the word by means of this luncheon that Jubilee '97 is intended for the larger Christian community of Nashville.

No one is doing a better job of communicating the basic message of Christ to this generation than Max Lucado. I want you to hear him, meet him, and receive a personal invitation to help us let Middle Tennessee know about his presence here this summer. His theme in July will be "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus."

Because of limited seating, we would like to have your reservation in hand by March 24. If you want to be part of this special noon to 1:30 p.m. event, please return the enclosed form and your check to "Woodmont Hills Church of Christ" for \$20 per person and put it in the mail today. Please feel free to send in reservations for others on your church staff, for seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Be sure to give us their names so we can have name tags ready as you arrive for the luncheon.

Yours in Him,  
[Signed]  
Rubel

#### MAX LUCADO REPRESENTS SOMETHING —BUT NOT THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST

What a travesty even to *suggest* that Max Lucado is "COMMUNICATING THE BASIC MESSAGE OF CHRIST" to this generation. Rather than communicating *Christ's* message, Lucado preaches and writes his *own private interpretations*, contrary to II Peter 1:20.

As for Jubilee '97 no longer being limited to churches of Christ, per se, but now being "INTENDED FOR THE LARGER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY" of Nashville, this can mean only that the *sponsoring* churches are abandoning the restoration principle entirely and are going back into the very interdenominationalism from which the true church was restored 200 years ago.

#### THE RUBICON—ONCE CROSSED— NO TURNING BACK

In the title of this editorial, we asked if Rubel now is "crossing the Rubicon." This refers to a small river of northern Italy rising just north of San Marino and flowing 15 miles northeast to the Adriatic Sea. Once Caesar crossed that river with his army in 49 B.C., this constituted an illegal entry into Italy and thereby initiated civil war. From that day to this, the phrase "crossing the Rubicon" has signified embarking on an undertaking from which one *cannot turn back*.

It may mean nothing to *some* of the brethren and churches now following Rubel's Nashville "Jubilee" into participation and fellowship with the denominations (Lamentations 1:12); however, to many of us, it means that a line of fellowship is being drawn all the way across this brotherhood. Once Rubel crosses *this* Rubicon, there will be *no turning back*.

If the import of his above letter holds true, July 2, 3 and 4, 1997, will prove to be the time when the long-anticipated division of the body of Christ over doctrinal liberalism came to pass—and that it will be caused by Rubel Shelly and those who followed him and his "Jubilee" into what he calls "the larger Christian community of Nashville."

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## PARADIGMS OF PREFERENCE

(Continued from Page 1)

He claims that the Holy Spirit today performs the same miracles that Jesus performed, and that this generation can and indeed must perform identical miracles. Wimbel calls this the "Signs and Wonders" movement. The "Third Wave" is based on the superstition that the age of miracles has never ceased.

The acquaintance of members of churches of Christ with this phenomenon comes through the ministry of Jack Deere and his book *Surprised by the Power of the Holy Spirit*. Jack Deere, former professor at the *Dallas Theological Seminary* and associate with John Wimbel, is the "scholar in residence" with the *Vineyard Fellowship*.

David Lipscomb University's professor Randy Harris introduces and commends Jack Deere to us in a recent *Wineskins* article. Randy Harris is a master in the art of evasive rhetoric who stops short of making clear what is uppermost in his mind. Harris says he grew up with an impoverished view of the Holy Spirit. This is an odd statement in view of his commendation of Jack Deere.

*The Toronto Airport Blessing*: This new charismatic rage is the unintended weird offspring of the "Vineyards" church. In January 1994, the *Vineyard Fellowship Church* launched a four day meeting in Toronto. During the first evening of the worship, waves of "holy laughter" swept the congregation and many swooned "in the Spirit." The laughter and swooning continued nightly thereafter. Wimbel has since expelled the *Toronto Vineyard Church* because of animal sounds, e. g., the roar of a lion and the barking of a dog filled the assembly hall.

The whole thing is now out of hand to the extent that it threatens to split the Vineyard churches. The "holy laughter" phenomenon has reached Hong Kong and London where the people are laughing their heads off. What do Holloway and Weed have in mind when they propose this model as a viable option for churches of Christ?

*The Kansas City Prophets*: Except for a handful of "our scholars," little is known about the *Willow Creek Community Church*, the *Vineyard Fellowship* ("Third Wave"), and hardly anything at all about the *Kansas City Prophets*.

The principle that the sum of the parts equals the whole takes on special meaning in trying to understand the relationship between the *Vineyard Fellowship* and the *Kansas City Prophets*, and their connections with churches of Christ.

A brochure was mailed out in the spring of 1996 advertising the "Mid South 1996 Conference of Spiritual Renewal" which was held April 18 through April 20 at the Florence [Alabama] Conference Center. The conference theme was "Preparing the Bride." Rubel Shelly was invited to speak along side of Mike Bickle who founded the *Kansas City Prophets* in 1984.

This fact establishes Shelly's endorsement, however remote, of the "Third Wave" contemporary Pentecostal movement. This fact is further undergirded in that Rubel Shelly has teamed up with Don Finto to conduct planned devotionals in Nashville with other denominational preachers.

Since this article addresses the major paradigms (models) suggested by Holloway and Weed to replace the New Testament pattern of the apostolic church, there is the demanding imperative to identify and explain each paradigm. The *Kansas City Prophets* have received the least attention of all, and very little is known about them. This must be corrected.

Who are the real *Kansas City prophets*?

In May 1990, John Wimber announced that the *Kansas City Prophets* had become a part of the *Vineyard network*

of more than 300 churches. The *Kansas City Prophets* form a group of evangelistic preachers who claim to have the same miraculous gift of prophecy for our time as did the Old Testament prophets in their age.

They eschew the label "prophet." They prefer the expression "prophetic gifted minister." These men, Pastor Mike Bickle, and prophets such as **Bob Jones, John Paul Jackson, and Paul Cain** are creating a stir in charismatic circles. They claim that prophetic gifts can be restored to the churches today, and that prophecy is a natural biblical means for God to speak today to his people. These prophecies are regarded as apocalyptic signs that we are living in the "last days," and the "Second Coming" will come in this generation when the church will be victorious.

#### Postscript:

Are their liberal scholars so blinded by their academic attainments that they do not know that our conservative scholars have matriculated in the same divinity school seminaries who can turn up the information in college or university library computers with the tip of a finger? We know what the liberals know, and how to deal with the information. They should not reason as did Elihu that their scholarship is too heavy for us to handle. Holloway and Weed can't get this cat back in the bag.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard  
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## SHOULD WE TRY TO PLEASE THE CRITICS?

Gary Stanton

It is really hard to be consistent especially in religious matters. Some will affirm with all confidence that they know that no one can know anything for sure. Some will condemn anyone who is so bold as to condemn a practice as being wrong. Some will judge it is wrong for a person to judge another person. Some will criticize no one except the critics with whom they do not agree. Surely we see how inconsistent the above examples are. How utterly absurd are some of the comments made by men, even brethren.

Someone said that the critics only seek to control others. The examples of such are many in the scriptures: the Pharisees, Sadducees, high priests, even some of the apostles at times. But it seems hasty and unfair to say that every critic is seeking undue control over other people. For one thing it is to impugn the motive of the critic, and unless the critic himself has told his motive, we cannot know the motive behind the criticism.

Not all criticism is wrong for, you see, Jesus was critical of people and the things that people did. Jesus' first recorded words at the age of 12 were of a critical nature. After being found by Joseph and Mary in the temple Jesus said, "**How is it that you sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?**" (Luke 2:49). Was not Jesus critical of Peter when He told Peter, "**Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things of God, but those that be of men**" (Matthew 16:23). Jesus criticized the Sadducees and their de-

nial of the doctrine of the resurrection saying, "**Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God**" (Matthew 22:29). Jesus gave a scathing criticism of the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23, hypocrites, blind guides, fools, serpents, and a generation of vipers (Matthew 23:13-33).

Jesus was not killed because he refused to be controlled by the critics. Jesus was killed because the critics refused to be in subjection to the will of God. Jesus criticized those whom he criticized in order to wake them up to the errors of their way so they would repent and do God's will. Therefore, all criticism is not bad, and in fact is commanded by God of man. "**Preach the word; be instant in season, Out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine**" (II Timothy 4:2). Jesus did not nor did he exemplify by his life that man is never to criticize. Sin must be criticized at every turn so that the guilty will leave it.

Should we try to please the critics? No, not for the sake of pleasing the critics, we should never seek to please man (I Thessalonians 2:4). But, on the other hand, if the critics are speaking in accordance with what God's word says, then we should heed them because they speak "as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11).

—2707 Mount Holly Road  
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# HARVARD VERSUS HEAVEN

Marvin L. Weir

Harvard's *Plummer Professor of Christian Morals*, Peter J. Gomes, says, "They have patented the notion of Christian morals, but it's not theirs to coin or mint" (*The Dallas Morning News*, Religious Section, Saturday, January 11, 1997 article entitled: "Old book, new spin"). Even one not a graduate from Harvard can see a problem with the statement Gomes made and the title he wears. If the concept of Christian morals is only a "patented notion," why would one claim to be a professor of Christian morals? Is he guilty of "coining" or "minting" something not substantiated by God's Holy Word?

Gomes has written a book entitled *The Good Book: Reading the Bible With Mind and Heart*. The book, as most books of this nature, contains some truth mixed with error. This makes the book doubly dangerous for those who do not seriously study the Bible. Gomes states that throughout history some Christians have manipulated the Bible to oppress Jews, women, blacks, and homosexuals. Please note that he takes three legitimately titled groups of people and lumps them with an illegitimate group that is condemned by God. This is the sneaky thing that false teachers do to try and prove their false doctrine! It is true that some who profess to be Christians have twisted and perverted the holy scriptures in an attempt to oppress or discredit women, men, or those of a certain race. What makes such wrong is that the Bible does not select men, women, or certain races to oppress or discredit. The Bible does, however, forbid and condemn the practice of homosexuality, and it matters not whether the offender is male or female or black or white!

Let us acknowledge several other statements from Gomes and then we will offer biblical proof that he is a false teacher.

I wanted black people, women, and homosexuals, among others, to see and to hear that the Bible was both for them and with them....those who use the Bible to denigrate homosexuals have taken the book's words out of its historical context...the biblical writers never contemplated a form of homosexuality in which loving, monogamous and faithful persons sought to live out the implications of the gospel with as much fidelity to it as any heterosexual believer....

Here we go again with the never-ending merry-go-round of worldly reasoning! To imply the Bible is "for all" regardless of one's actions is false. And, to imply that ho-

mosexuality was forbidden in one historical setting but is condoned in today's society is equally false. Look at the glowing words Gomes used to describe his form of homosexuality—"loving, monogamous, and faithful persons seeking to live out the implications of the gospel." Where does the Bible describe homosexuals as such? The situation is clear even for a country boy—it is simply Harvard verses Heaven!

The Bible does indeed portray homosexuality as a moral issue. In Genesis 19:4-5 the men of Sodom wanted the men in the house brought out so they could know them! The word "know" is used as a euphemism for sexual activity and Lot knew that such was wicked (19:7). God described the Sodomites' sin as being "very grievous" (Genesis 18:20) and destroyed these people because of their "lascivious" lifestyle (II Peter 2:6-8). The Law of Moses was clear regarding the sin of homosexuality:

"And if a man lie with mankind, as with womankind, both of them have committed abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). And, in the New Testament, homosexuality is also condemned: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due" (Romans 1:26-27).

There is an old adage that says the "hit dog hollers." Would it surprise you to learn that Gomes is a homosexual? In 1991 he finally made his sexual preference known because he wanted to demonstrate "that there was more than one way to read the Bible." Gomes wants the option of reading into the Bible everything he wants included. Such convenience is not permitted by God! There is a **right** way and a **wrong** way to read the Bible (II Timothy 2:15)!

The truth of the matter is that Jesus gets to the heart of the problem by going back to the beginning with God's law of marriage—marriage is only for male and female (Matthew 19:4-6). This is an eternal principle applicable to all. When it comes to the word of a Harvard professor versus the word of God—I'll stand for the word of God!

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# MUST READING FOR ALL CARIBBEAN BRETHREN

## When Silence Becomes a Sin

*There is "a time to be silent and a time to speak;" (Ecclesiastes 3:7b)*

W. Douglas Harris

[NOTE: The following article is reproduced by permission. Brother Harris is the editor of *The Caribbean Messenger*. This article was his editorial in the January, 1997 issue. We highly commend brother Harris for his love for the truth and his willingness to expose the heinous inroads made by the liberals in the *Caribbean Lectures*. As hard as it is to get brethren to see what is happening in the States, it is sometimes even more difficult to expose fatal error outside the country. Regarding fatal error, too many have been too silent too long. We trust that their self-inflicted "lockjaw" will soon end. We trust that others will take note and act accordingly.—Associate Editor]

Silence can be either a virtue or a vice, depending on what is at stake. This is what the wise man meant in our text. If brethren differ about matters of human judgment, it may be wise to remain silent for the sake of peace. If, however, the differences involve fundamental and fatal error, silence becomes a sin. We have come to a time in the Lord's church when its distinctiveness and exclusiveness are threatened by liberal and fatal error in doctrine and in practice. To remain silent and fail to have the courage to express our convictions amounts to a betrayal of the cause of Christ and a surrender to those who would destroy the Lord's church by turning it into a denomination. To ignore such doctrines and practices by our silence would be an enormous sin with incalculable destructive consequences to the Lord's Church in the Caribbean, and would show a lack of respect for being accountable for our actions. "As we must render an account of every idle word, so we must of our IDLE SILENCE." (Ambrose).

### FATAL ERROR ADVOCATED BY LIBERALS

Some of the fatal errors being taught today by liberals in the church include women in "leadership" roles, salvation by faith only, baby dedication services, community worship with denominational groups, drama presentations (this puts women in the position of teaching over men), special music (solos, quartets, and choirs), special observance of Easter and Christmas, mechanical instruments of music in worship, "contemporary worship styles" (entertainment), and changes in preaching styles. Documentation could be given for all these fatal errors if space permitted, and will be done on request.

### HOW THIS AFFECTS THE CHURCH IN THE CARIBBEAN

These liberal doctrines and practices are being introduced into the churches in the Caribbean by means of the *Caribbean Lectures*. Liberal teachers and speakers are being featured on the lecture programs. We have informed certain key brethren in the Caribbean of whom they are. When the program for the '97

Lectures comes out, it may be necessary for us to identify by name who some of these liberals are. Unfortunately, we are not informed who will be on the program until the day for the Lectures to begin. Last year copies of a liberal paper, *IMAGE*, were distributed at the Lectures on Grenada. This paper has contributed immeasurably to the apostasy that is taking place in the churches in the States today. Publications of another rank liberal, **Max Lucado** have also been given as awards.

There is also some talk among brethren in the States of boycotting the Lectures as long as these liberals continue to be used. In fact we personally know of some former speakers who are already doing this. And when sound, conservative supporting churches learn of what is taking place we can expect more support to be withdrawn. Caribbean brethren, the Lord's church is at the crossroads. Which course are you going to pursue theologically—the liberal road to apostasy and non-existence as New Testament churches or the undenominational, conservative churches that are patterned after the New Testament? If you love the church (the wonderful, magnificent bride of Christ), to be silent now would be reprehensible. The Bible says, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Ephesians 5:11).

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# DISNEY'S DEGENERATE DETERMINATION

Gary W. Summers

For quite a while now the *American Family Association Journal* has been warning about the Walt Disney company under the leadership of its president, **Michael Eisner**. According to the brochure on the bulletin board from Florida's *American Family Association*:

Gay Day patrons have demonstrated and promoted same-sex behavior to a captive audience of over 100,000 children at *Disney World of Florida* over the past six years. Disney allows and assists over ten thousand homosexuals to hold a "coming out party" in the midst of tens of thousands of children each year during the first week of June. Homosexuals are promoting Gay Day at Disney for June 1997.

Disney protests that they have nothing to do with this event, but the evidence indicates otherwise. *Disney* owns ABC. Is it just coincidence that they are airing *Two Mothers for Zachary*, a movie about two women falling in love, starring **Valerie Bertinelli** and **Vanessa Redgrave**? And what about all the hype about **Ellen DeGenerare** (oops), Degeneres coming out of the closet on her ABC television sitcom? ABC also does the controversial *NYPD Blue*, which features a homosexual secretary.

And is it a further coincidence that Disney's Children's Book Division is publishing *Let It All Hang Out* by **Ru-Paul** and *Growing Up Gay* by three homosexual comedians? It seems pretty obvious that *Disney* has committed themselves to a homosexual agenda.

Letters or postcards of protest may be sent to:  
**Michael Eisner, Chairman**  
**Walt Disney Company**  
**500 South Buena Vista Street**  
**Burbank, CA 91521**

A Fax may be sent to **1-818-560-1300** or **1930**.


Each person should send such a message, even though it will probably not do any good. There is probably only one thing that would do any good, and that would be the boy-

cott against Disney that some are calling for. Such a decision would mean: 1) no more planning vacation trips to Disney World; 2) no more attending Disney movies or buying videos. It is doubtful that enough people would participate in such an endeavor, but what other leverage is there?

There is already too little wholesome entertainment, and if we quit viewing some of the best things done for children, then what? Well, but what is the choice? Keep supporting with our dollars an industry that is pushing the homosexual agenda? Or deprive ourselves of a few enjoyable moments of entertainment? Surely, if we must have movies, this nation's 60 year history is not so impoverished that we cannot find materials already produced to use—not to mention documentaries, historical productions, and even BOOKS. [How many young people have read *The Chronicles of Narnia*?]

Perhaps it would be better to use our imagination—instead of Disney's. Who knows where they will go next? According to the *American Family Association Journal* (April 1997), *Disney* is producing a movie about a brother and sister who are incestuous twins. Where will it all end?

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Mark: 16: 15

*Earnestly Contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints"*

Jude: 3



# CHURCH OF CHRIST IN PAKISTAN



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EVANGELIST**



Head of the Church of Christ and Evangelist of the Holy Bible; Professor B.M. Sabir is a prominent Christian scholar and the senior teacher of theology. Professor B.M. Sabir is a prestigious personality. He communicates difficult points of the Holy Scripture to his audience or listeners so easily. This is the reason that people are found so anxious to listen to his interesting message of the salvation of our Lord Jesus

through him in order to have fulfillment of their thirst. He had an authority and talent to focus all the secret points and views of the Holy Bible through our enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, there are so many servants of God who are used to come to him for the Bible Study and several pupils of Prof. B.M. Sabir are well known servants at present in our country.

Hence, we are quoting as follows some of the information focusing the spiritual and social aspects of Prof. S.M. Sabir in different times for our Readers:

Prof. B.M. Sabir was born in January, 1936 in Sahiwal. In 1952 he passed Matriculation Examination from Rinsen High School. In 1962, he completed Religious Education from the Theology Seminary at Gajrauwala and from 1961 till April, 1964, he rendered remarkable services in U.P. Church Faisalabad. (Former Lyallpur) He also remained Moderator of the presbytery since 1962 till 1964. He secured graduation degree in 1966 from the Panjab University.

Since 1964, he rendered Church services in A.R.P. Church of Pakistan in Sahiwal and since 1966 till 1969 he

remained Moderator of the presbytery in A.R.P. Church Sahiwal.

He held an office as General Superintendent in A.R.P. Church of Pakistan affiliated with ICC since May 1969 till April, 1973. On the basis of capability and experience of Prof B.M. Sabir, the West Minister of Biblical Mission appointed him as Professor in Theological Seminary, Lahore since 1973 till April 1980. He continued this assignment till 1980. From 1981 to 1986, he served in A.R.P. Church as an independent Moderator. In July, 1986, he left for Amsterdam a city of Netherlands in order to participate in the world conference of the world renowned Evangelist of the Holy Bible; Mr Billy Graham. Because of participation in this world conference, he got opportunity to see the Christian scholars and also to spend a lot of time with them, where he learnt and understood more about the Holy Bible. Since 1986 by now, Prof. B.M. Sabir is supervising more than 80 preists and also providing them spiritual aid for the further promotion in Evangelism.

together with Religious services Prof. S.M. Sabir is also

# LITTLE POPE ARISES IN PAKISTAN

Asqhar Ali & Jim Waldron

known as a popular social personality. In 1967 due to his utmost endeavours the Christian Welfare Society (Regd) came into being at Chichawatni, for which, Prof. B.M. Sabir was elected as president. He made every possible effort to reform the social set up without any distinction of Christians and Muslims and also established a Technical Training School for women under the auspices of this Christian Welfare Society, through which, dozens of women have now been educated and trained, who are serving other schools as teachers, where as some of them are performing their domestic responsibilities accordingly. Keeping in view the remarkable services of Prof. B.M. Sabir, he has been nominated life president of the Christian Welfare Society. Besides he also helps the flood-affected people through this society. He has been aiding the flood affected people of Bangladesh and Afghan Refugees with the collaboration of other social welfare departments.

Professor B.M. Sabir keeps on viewing the social stability and development of the mankind along with their spiritual uplift. The spirit and his deeds towards betterment of the human beings are seen and known as a venerable task by the Religious and Social Masses.

As the Pope of Rome claims to be the head of the Church of Christ on earth, just so B. M. Sabir, of Sahiwal, Pakistan, is laying claim of being head of the church in that country. Not only so, but he is said to be supervisor for "80 priests" for the church.

Reprints from the denominational magazine *Khurooj*, Bahar Colony, Kot Lakhpat, Lahore-54770, Pakistan, show that in several issues (Volume I, Nos. 2-8) this man is continually held up to the denominational world as "Head of the Church of Christ" in Pakistan.

## NOT JUST BAD WRITING OR EDITING

This is not a case of bad writing or editing by denominational people, for various issues over a period of six months or more proclaim him "Head of the Church of Christ," also during this period the magazine carried articles by Sabir.

In the December issue, Sabir is shown sending "Happy Christmas" greetings to the "Christian community," that is, the denominational world—and this in an Islamic country where the nation does not observe Christmas and the Lord's people have continually opposed such celebrations as no part of the religion of Christ or of the activities of the church.

## CONVERSION LEFT UNTOLD

Not only are these things true, but the large article shown from the October 1996 issue of *Khurooj* carries an outline of Sabir's life and work with two branches of the Presbyterian denomination. These were the United Presbyterian (U.P.) and subsequently the American Reformed Presbyterian (A.R.P.).

However, not one word is said about his acceptance of immersion by one of our brothers in 1990. Can anyone imagine Paul telling his life in Judaism and then failing to tell of his conversion?

## FAITHFUL BROTHERS WARNED

Faithful churches of Christ across

America who are supporting work in Pakistan directly or through another congregation should quickly ascertain if their funds are going to this man and to the preachers he is supervising. Good brethren in that country are being led into compromise because of the great amount of American money behind this man.

On April 11, 1997, from Lahore, Jim Waldron spoke by phone with B. M. Sabir at his home in Sahiwal. Sabir stated he had "40 men on the payroll and ten volunteers." He also admitted that he was supporting the publication of the magazine called *Khurooj* and distributing it among our brethren.

[NOTE: Further confirming the foregoing report by brethren Asqhar Ali and Jim Waldron, please read carefully the accompanying article on page 8 from the *Khurooj* magazine. For further information, please write or telephone these two brethren, as follows: Asqhar Ali, Allama Iqbal Road, Quaid-E-Azam Park, Kot Lakhpat, Lahore 54760, Pakistan (Phone: 011-92-42-588-1081) or Jim E. Waldron, Post Office Box 123, Dunlap, Tennessee 37327 (Phone: (423) 949-3286).

The true church of Christ has existed in Pakistan at least since 1961 and only the Lord Jesus Christ himself is its head—not B. M. Sabir or any other merely human being. JYR Jr.]

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## TRADITIONALISTS

It is popular in some liberal circles to speak of those who preach the gospel without fear or favor, as "traditionalists." It is meant as a term of condemnation and reproach. Yet, Paul said: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." (II Thessalonians 2:15). In the sense the apostle used the word, we are happy to be dubbed "traditionalists" (B.C. Goodpasture, *Gospel Advocate*, Volume CXVI, No. 21, May 23, 1974, page 322).

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# SUPPORT FOR LYNN PARKER'S WORK AT HCB

Bob Berard

The **Houston College of the Bible (HCB)** has enjoyed having several faithful and experienced gospel preachers in the Houston area who are willing to teach at least one class a week at HCB in addition to their normal duties as evangelists. Our part-time Bible faculty includes **Tom Bright, Roddy Covington, Barry Hatcher, Andy McClish, Pat McIntosh, Tom Wacaster, and Royce Williamson**. In the four years of the school's operation, such preachers, coupled with those men supported by the Spring church, have been sufficient to conduct all of our full-time and part-time classes.

However, as a new school year approaches (July 28, 1997 begins the first quarter of our 1997-98 school year), we were facing a teaching-overload until we happily discovered that brother **Lynn Parker** was interested in moving back to Texas from Alabama. His wife, **Mary Ann**, has a very ill mother here and, additionally, Lynn had for some time desired to work in a preacher training situation. His desire coupled with our need for instructors made for a good match with one major obstacle, financial support.

Both Lynn and we knew that the **Shiloh** church in nearby Conroe needed the help of a regular evangelist and that the brethren there were agreeable to provide what they could by way of support. All that remained was making up the difference in what Lynn needed and what they could supply. This has been accomplished to some extent by the Spring church and several individuals and congregations; still, adequate support is lacking for Lynn, Mary Ann, and their three

little ones. Also, some of the support promised is only committed for a limited time period.

Lynn is zealous for the truth and has done some remarkable work with local churches. We believe that his future efforts will accomplish much good in both preaching and teaching in the Houston area. If you are able to help in any way please contact **Bob Berard** at (281) 353-2707 or write Post Office Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383 or [BobBerard@juno.com](mailto:BobBerard@juno.com).

Additionally, regarding brother Parker's life and preaching work, please read the following letter of commendation by brother **Garland Elkins**.

April 2, 1997

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to commend unto you brother **Lynn Parker**. I have known brother Parker for a number of years and I rejoice to commend him in an unreserved fashion. Lynn knows, loves, and preaches the truth. He not only possesses the above mentioned characteristics, but he also possesses a proper Christian attitude. He not only preaches the truth, but he preaches the truth in love. He also practices what he preaches.

If space permitted, I could call attention to many great works in his local work with various congregations. He has a wonderful wife and children. He and his wife have good judgment even in the naming of their children. They named their little boy **Garland Lynn Parker!** Seriously, brother **Lynn Parker** is worthy of support, and I sincerely recommend him.

[signed]

**Garland Elkins**

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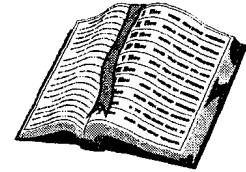
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# Houston College of the Bible Lectures



## “Premillennialism”

June 15 - 18, 1997



David P. Brown, Lectureship Director

### Sunday, June 15

- 9:30 A.M. ....“A Study of Matthew 24” .....David P. Brown  
10:30 A.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Regarding the Judgment?” .....Ira Y. Rice, Jr.  
**FOLLOWING WORSHIP: BARBECUE DINNER SERVED AT THE BUILDING**  
3:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning ‘The Tribulation?’” .....Barry Hatcher  
4:30 P.M. ....“Is the Doctrine of Premillennialism Fatal Error?” .....Andy McClish  
7:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Regarding the Church and the Kingdom?” .....Bob Berard

### Monday, June 16

- 9:00 A.M. ....“II Peter 3 and Christ’s Second Coming” .....Roddy Covington  
10:00 A.M. ....“What is the ‘Day of the Lord’ of Joel Chapter 2?” .....Carl Garner  
11:00 A.M. ....“What is the First Resurrection?” .....Lynn Parker  
1:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning Christ’s Mission?” .....Billy Bland  
2:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning ‘The Rapture?’” .....Don Walker  
\*\*2:30 P.M. ....Ladies Class — “The Ultimate Spiritual Diet” .....Corinne Elkins  
3:30 P.M. ....“What is the Millennium?” .....Bob Sweeten  
6:30 P.M. ....“What is the Battle of Armageddon?” .....Tyler Young  
7:30 P.M. ....“The Basic Message of the Book of Revelation” .....Oran Rhodes

### Tuesday, June 17

- 9:00 A.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach Concerning the Resurrection?” .....Pat McIntosh  
10:00 A.M. ....“A Study of ‘Jehovah’s Witnesses’ and Premillennialism” .....Michael Hatcher  
11:00 A.M. ....“Is Premillennialism a System of Infidelity?” .....Frank Chesser  
1:30 P.M. ....“What is the Binding of Satan?” .....Noah Hackworth  
2:30 P.M. ....“What is the ‘1000 Year Reign’ of Revelation Chapter 20?” .....Eddie Whitten  
\*\*2:30 P.M. ....Ladies Class—“Christian Virtues” .....Corinne Elkins  
3:30 P.M. ....“A Study of the Prophecies of the Kingdom of God” .....Tommy Hicks  
4:30 P.M. ....**HCB BANQUET AT THE BUILDING**  
6:30 P.M. ....“Who Are the ‘Man of Sin’ and ‘The Anti-Christ?’” .....Mark Lewis  
7:30 P.M. ....“Examining Certain Dispensationalist Preachers and Their Doctrines” ..Lindell Mitchell

### Wednesday, June 18

- 9:00 A.M. ....“Has God Kept the Land Promises That He Made to Israel?” .....Tom Bright  
10:00 A.M. ....“What is the Meaning of the ‘Last Days?’” .....Lester Kamp  
11:00 A.M. ....“A Study of ‘Armstrongism’ in the Light of the Bible” .....Michael Light  
1:30 P.M. ....“What Is ‘Anglo-Israelism?’” .....Tim Ayers  
2:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Phrase ‘The Books were Opened’ Mean?” .....Royce Williamson  
3:30 P.M. ....“Passages from I and II Thessalonians Misused by Premillennialists” .....Tom Wacaster  
6:30 P.M. ....“Passages from the Book of Daniel Misused by Premillennialists” .....Curtis Cates  
7:30 P.M. ....“What Does the Bible Teach About the Second Coming of Christ?” .....Dub McClish

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# THANK YOU WAL-MART

Gene Burgette

The following paragraphs appeared recently in the *New York Times*:

Wal-Mart is the single largest seller of pop music in the country, accounting last year for sales of an estimated 52,000,000 of the 615,000,000 compact discs sold in the United States. Its refusal to stock albums with lyrics or cover art it finds objectionable has long been a frustration for some customers, musicians, and recording industry executives.

What is harder to spot, many in the music business say, is the way the discount chain's distribution decisions are affecting the production of music. Because of Wal-Mart's clout, record labels and bands will design different covers and booklets, omit songs from their albums, electronically mask objectionable words and even change lyrics to gain a place on Wal-Mart's shelves.

Needless to say, Wal-Mart's policy does not sit well with those in the media. You know, the ones who cry "Censorship" every time someone objects to the filth they produce. This is what director **Oliver Stone** said about Wal-Mart and other companies who refuse to sell pornographic music and videos.

"This is a new form of censorship that's come into being in this country," said Stone, whose director's cut of *Natural Born Killers* was banned by Blockbuster, K-Mart and Wal-Mart. "Essentially it's the sanitization of entertainment. Studios like Warner Brothers won't even release a film rated NC-17. They point to economic pressure from Blockbuster and Wal-Mart, who won't carry those videos. People don't understand how much power these corporations have."

A Wal-Mart spokesperson stated:

Producers of music know up front that Wal-Mart is not going to carry anything with a parental advisory on it, and that's something they're going to have to factor in when they produce the product. Our customers understand our music and video merchandising decisions are a common-sense attempt to provide the type of material they might want to purchase.

When I read these quotes, I felt like going out to Wal-Mart and buying something, anything, just out of gratitude for their marketing policy.

Now, let's make a few observations. In case you hadn't noticed, censorship is a word used in a very biased manner by those in the media. Censorship is a dirty word as far as they are concerned. It's not that they themselves do not practice censorship; they just don't call it that. Some of you may remember a few years ago when we approached the public library about the reasons why they accepted or rejected certain books. They said that making such choices was called selection. Mmm, I'll have to think about that one.

Second, the next time you hear a spokesperson for a company that has been threatened with a boycott because of their practices say, "Boycotts don't work," or that they "will not be pressured into giving in," don't believe them. The above quotes make it clear that the decisions of Block-

buster and Wal-Mart are having a positive impact in the movie and music industries. Also, when each of us as *individuals* refuse to buy from concerns that contribute to the moral decline in our society, we are making a difference.

Third, Wal-Mart's policy runs counter to the cry of many retailers who claim they must sell certain merchandise if they are to compete in the market place. It is interesting that the *New York Times* article stated that Wal-Mart's policy has been a source of frustration for "some customers, musicians and recording industry executives." Since they are the leading retailer of compact discs in the country, it certainly doesn't sound like their customers are feeling frustrated. I strongly suspect it is the musicians and music executives that are really feeling the frustration.

Finally, we should all let Wal-Mart know that we appreciate their policy. We should be as quick to express appreciation as we are to condemn. It would be great if you sent a quick note to Wal-Mart expressing your gratitude. You can write them at:

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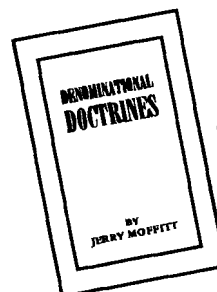
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## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

## —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.

## —Missouri—

**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.

## —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. **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.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."

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# THIS IS THE '90s?

Brian W. Jones

In Willowick, Ohio, Fire Captain **Garry Edward Strater** is now Fire Captain **Megan Elizabeth Parsons**. That's right, he is now a she. The new Parsons claims that she (?) is, "happier living as a woman."

On August fifth the 46-year-old veteran fire-fighter took on the new identity after hormone treatment, make-up, and a name change. Parsons had previously been married twice and has a daughter. The former male plans to eventually have a sex-change operation and get a divorce from his/her current wife.

Fire Chief **Harley Rudersdorf** insists that the change has brought little opposition in the department. Rudersdorf went on to say, "This is the '90s, and you have to accept things."

The preceding story immediately caught my attention when it was published in the morning paper. The whole story is rather weird and unnatural. The most intriguing part of the story to me is the quote by Chief Rudersdorf, "This is the '90s, and you have to accept things." My personal response is, "So what if this is the '90s, some things are just plain wrong no matter what age we happen to be living in."

What frightens me most is that this message of tolerance is slipping through the door of the church. The word tolerance carries the following ideas: to not interfere with; allow; permit; to bear; to put up with (someone or something not especially liked). Granted, there are times when Christians are not tolerant enough. Especially in regards to personal matters. However, we're seeing more and more Christians who are accepting doctrinal and moral changes that once sent chills up the spine.

Instrumental music in worship? "It's a matter of opinion." Pornographic movies (really most R-rated)? "It really doesn't affect me any." Social drinking? "Oh, just when I go to a fancy restaurant." Cheating on income taxes or on tests in school? "Everyone does it." Speeding down the interstate? "Hey, I'm in a hurry." Homosexuality? "Well, I don't care for it, but to each his own." Government leaders involved in sex scandals? "That's a private matter." Lying to my boss or my parents? "I was in a tough bind." Baptism for the remission of sins? "You know we really put too much emphasis on that subject."

It's these types of attitudes that are hindering the church today. Are some things acceptable in the '90s which were not acceptable a few years ago? Test it against the Bible. The words within it are timeless.

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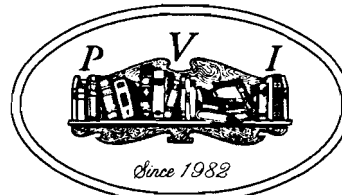
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## NOTES & QUOTES

Eusebio M. Lacuata, Cerritos, California: "We are behind you and others in fighting against false teachings. These brethren who are dividing congregations of the Lord's Church will lose in the end provided their errors are constantly exposed to the brotherhood because they can't be successful against the truth (II Corinthians 13:8)...So continue the fight..."

"It seems the 'Jubilee' brethren are getting farther and farther from the truth, and [it is] becoming harder for them to acknowledge their errors. The job of faithful Christians, if they can't influence them to repent, is to weaken their grip on other Christians with the Sword of the Spirit. The cry, 'Noisy Bunch of 'Right-Wing Radicals' comes from those who are being pushed hard against a corner!"

"Again, we are behind you and all others who are contending for the faith."

[NOTE: Thanks for letting us know that you are behind our efforts for truth. We knew you were, but it always encourages us to see it in writing. IYR Jr.]

Steve Fishel, of Bradford, Tennessee, upon returning from a trip with the Truth For The World Team in Africa, wrote, "We had a very successful work, baptizing 67 and restoring 115. We also set up many Bible Correspondence Courses...Keep up your good work."

### SOUND DOCTRINE

Jesus said, "Go...and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that is commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul said, "Until I come, give attention to the reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching" (I Timothy 4:13). "And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). "As for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).

Preaching that does not strive to communicate God's truth is not sound preaching. The preacher who avoids doctrine because he thinks it is impractical shirks his biblical responsibility. He is to speak with the authority of God, and no one can do that who is not an expositor of God's Word. Moving stories, moralistic advice, psychology, comedy and opinion all fall short. Only the authoritative proclamation of the Word fits the intent of God. Those other things are tools for the kind of ear-tickling preaching Paul cautioned Timothy about.

"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their

ears tickled, they will accumulate to themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (II Timothy 4:1-5).

He commanded Timothy to stick with the confronting preaching of the powerful word, whether convenient or inconvenient, popular or unpopular. There is no closed season on the Word. We are to proclaim it constantly and incessantly.—Tom Kelton, as quoted in the Olathe, Kansas, Church Bulletin.

[NOTE: If there is anything contrary to sound doctrine that we have seen of recent date it has to be a bulletin someone sent us published by the Jenks Church of Christ, of Jenks, Oklahoma. Under the anomalous heading, "DRAMATIC CHURCH GROWTH," this bulletin starts out by asking, "How do we (God and Me!) grow the church in the 90's? Great question but what is the answer? Four years ago the church of Christ in Jenks, Oklahoma, (Southern Tulsa), implemented contemporary Praise and Worship as a means to lead people to Jesus. The result has been tremendous growth... just ask us! Our Sunday Praise and Worship has soared from 100 to 400 and is continuing to experience explosive growth. Lives are being changed and friends are being led to JESUS! Many of you have come to the Work-

shop looking for tangible ways to reclaim the daily growth of the church. We invite you to participate in the next step of our church growth...

Among Jenks' offerings for "church growth" were something they called "Praise and Worship Easter Service" to be held at Jenks Performing Arts Center, "Contemporary Music" featuring "New Creation" and "Jenks Family Singers, "Believer's Communion," "Kid's Praise" program, and such like.

"Easter Service"? Such may grow something; but it won't be the church according to sound doctrine! Where, in the Bible, does God's word authorize an "Easter Service"? Such is but a figment of Catholic/Protestant denominationalism. If you want to know the origin of such, look it up in the Catholic Encyclopedia. You will find it there; but you will not find it in the word of God! IYR Jr.]

A sister in Christ, of Abilene, Texas, who

signed her name (but we are withholding it), wrote: "Today I received my first copy of 'Contending for the Faith.' I'm requesting that it be my last. Out of curiosity, I read some of the articles and could not believe that so many spend such time and money on such drivel. After seeing for myself the malice you brethren (yes, we do serve the same God) are capable of, the more thankful than ever that people like Mike Cope urge us to restraint and compassion for those who have nothing better to do than claw at Christ's bride, his church."

[NOTE: How strange! Here we are trying to prevent Mike Cope and others from leading the church away from the truth, and all this sister sees (or thinks she sees) is that we are clawing at the church! Just the opposite. IYR Jr.]

John Shafer, of Kearney, Nebraska, wrote, "We have been trying to get support for a full time preacher and help with purchasing a building, but with little support or interest shown. Out of 80 letters sent, one responded. [NOTE: Anyone interested in helping this small congregation, please address brother Shafer at Post Office Box 643, Kearney, Nebraska 68848-0643. IYR Jr.]

Evidently, there are two congregations in Kearney. The other congregation, he continued, was bringing in John Clayton. "Doesn't surprise me...Reuel Lemmons, Ben Zickefoose and others, including Jeff Walling have been there in the past. Please keep us in your prayers."

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# What Is A "Church of Christ" Position?

Neal Pollard

Sometimes a new or weak Christian, still learning, says, "The church of Christ believes such and such." Such a statement is dangerous if the person making the statement has the concept that the beliefs and teaching of the church of Christ are merely part of a man-conceived system peculiar to the group of which he now is a part. Proper teaching should change that mind set through the course of time. Perhaps, positively, one who speaks of a "church of Christ position" speaks of the distinctiveness of the Lord's church on a Bible matter as contrasted to how the world and denominations stand on such.

It is disturbing to think, however, that some within the body of Christ who speak of a "church of Christ position" speak disparagingly of some of the doctrinal stands gospel preachers and godly elders take on issues like modest apparel, mechanical instruments in the singing portion of worship, woman's role in the worship and leadership of the church, marriage, divorce, and re-marriage, along with a host of other moral and doctrinal "positions." There are several unfortunate implications stemming from a statement like the one under consideration.

## Is It Implied That One View Is As Good As Another?

One viewpoint on a matter of judgment may be as good as another, but the examples given above do not fall within the realm of judgment. For example, it is not scriptural to teach that immodesty is acceptable to God. It is dangerous to limit a biblical matter to a "church of Christ position" as if it were a single stance among several other, equally acceptable positions. The net result of such tolerance is the religious confusion that exists today. No rational person would say, "It is his position that an untreated rattlesnake bite will kill the one bitten." It probably is "his" position, but what other position would one take? In the same way, when the gospel preacher preaches "one husband, one wife, for life, except for spousal fornication and death," that is clearly "his" position because he derived from the correct study of the Bible that it is the only one authorized by the scriptures. What other position could one hold and continue to please the Lord? And, it is the same with every matter of faith within the Bible.

## Is It Implied That The Bible And Belief Therein Is Purely Subjective?

In a cultural climate that is openly tolerant of diverse views and expressions, some religious people may feel the pressure to be as tolerant with every religious view and conclusion. Yet, it is

important to see that the Bible is an objective standard rather than a subjective suggestion. Such attempts to dilute the pattern of scriptural authority opens the door for any "position" to be true. If there is no set right or wrong on a matter, is everything right? The Bible teaches that there is a "form of doctrine" to be obeyed (Romans 6:17). "Truth" sanctifies (John 17:17), but if there are a hundred truths, which one should be believed? The Bible commands that one "hold fast the form of sound words" (II Timothy 1:13). God and Christ expect religious unity (*cf.*, John 17), and one can be confident that they have made it possible for unity to exist.

## Is It Implied That Erroneous Views Will Not Be Condemned?

If the church of Christ holds the "position" that baptism is essential for salvation and the Baptists believe that faith apart from baptism saves, will both be saved? Can it be said that those who believe, teach, obey, and thereafter live according to error will be lost? Of course, no one desires to be offensive in teaching the Bible, and one should never be unnecessarily offensive. However, moral courage must cause Christian teachers to identify sin and its wages (Romans 6:23). The Bible teaches that many will be condemned (Matthew 7:13-14). Those who stand condemned are those who are disobedient and who walk contrary to the will of God (*cf.*, Matthew 7:21-24; Hebrews 5:8, 9; II Thessalonians 1:8; I Peter 4:1). Certainly Christ will be the Judge before whom every individual stands (Matthew 25:31-34). But, as certainly, he will judge justly—according to the written word of God (John 12:48). If he will save those who lived contrary to his will, who will be lost on that day? Will anyone be lost?

One should never accept anything simply because a church of Christ preacher, teacher, elder, or other members say it! The standard of right will always be the Bible. Whatever is done religiously must be according to the authority of Christ (Colossians 3:17). May one never dismiss Bible teaching in confusing and crediting the stand as only a "church of Christ position." May our every position, as God's people, be what God teaches. Let us stand boldly thereon (*cf.*, I Corinthians 3:10-12)! Then, the position one holds can confidently be believed and practiced by every member of the Lord's church and taught to a world lost in sin.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## IS THE NASHVILLE/CHRISTIAN JUBILEE, INC., SELF DESTRUCTING?

J. E. CHOATE

Yes, if the symptoms are correct indicators, *Jubilee '97* promises to be the "mother of all Jubilees." Jubilee insiders voice the fear it could be the last. This, too, has been said about the spurious magazine *Wineskins*. The rental price-tag for the polished glass and steel arena is a hefty \$300,000. One Nashville brother is a major guarantor of the sum.

In the October 30, 1947 issue of the *Gospel Advocate*, **B. C. Goodpasture** wrote of a letter he had received from **Norman Davidson** saying that he was prepared to spend \$50,000 to make the preaching of premillennialism acceptable to churches of Christ.

Brother Goodpasture wrote back that the "rank and file of the brethren could not be bought with the price of fifty thousand dollars or even fifty million dollars, and would not be worth the price if they sold out." The present crop of liberal *Jubilee* church brokers will also learn that churches of Christ are not for sale.

The liberal church of Christ model (paradigm) being created by these *avant garde* brethren is now taking shape. This new age "Restoration" denomination is partially cloned from the theology and practices of the *Christian Church/Disciples of Christ*. **Gary Holloway** and **Michael Weed** inform us in their 1995 *Disciples of Christ Historical Society* paper that the *Willow Creek Community Church*, and the "Third Wave" are now the paradigms of choice in some urban churches

### THE VILLAIN LURKING ON THE FIRST LANDING OF THE STAIRCASE

Churches are slowly learning the unvarnished facts that the *Nashville Jubilee* is no friend of the traditional churches. Little attention was paid to *Jubilee* prior to 1991. Then *Jubilee* was infected with a notoriety which hangs

on. **Gayle Napier**, a *Jubilee* speaker and family counselor for the *Harpeth Hills Church of Christ*, charged that the conservative churches controlled by authoritarian elders led to incest, pornography, and other forms of deviate sexual behavior.

The publicity promoting *Jubilee '97* is now in full gear. The May, 1997 issue of the *Christian Chronicle* applauds *Jubilee* in a favorable news story. It is obvious that the editorial *Christian Chronicle* policy endorses *Jubilee*. Their candidness is applauded in helping us to bring out the facts.

### CURRENT JUBILEE '97 INFORMATION SET FORTH IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

The first notice of *Jubilee '97* came on the heels of *Jubilee '96*. A circular dated July 31, 1996 sent out by the *Donelson Church of Christ* (sponsor of the '97 *Jubilee*) announced the plans for *Jubilee '97*. The printed text announcing the general theme "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" was highlighted with a picture of the 1962 **Willard Collins** "Municipal Auditorium" meeting showing 15,000 filling the facility.

The site of *Jubilee '97*, a shining pleasure dome, is just across the street from the old *Ryman Auditorium* where **N. B. Hardeman** 75 years ago delivered his famed tabernacle sermons which defined and gained favorable public recognition for the churches of Christ. The unmitigated arrogance of the postmodern *Jubilee* "brain trust" that they would dare compare the *Nashville Jubilee* with the *Hardeman and Collins* meeting is about par with their mind set. This horse won't ride.

### IT'S DEJA VU TIME "ALL OVER AGAIN"

The *Collins Meeting* will prove to be the last great showing of the unity of all the churches of Christ in the  
(Continued on Page 6)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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June/1997

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

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*Editorial...*

## IS "JUBILEE '97" 1906 ALL OVER AGAIN?

According to God's word, can a person be taught biblically wrong and baptized right?

Impossible!

When Jesus Christ walked and talked among men, he himself said, "NO MAN can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be ALL taught of God. EVERY MAN therefore that hath HEARD, and hath LEARNED of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).

## SALVATION IS "IN CHRIST"

Since Jesus Christ is the Savior—and the salvation he offers is IN HIMSELF—any baptism that leaves one outside of Christ leaves one outside of salvation.

We know that salvation is IN CHRIST, because God's word says so. Read it for yourself:

"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the SALVATION which is IN CHRIST JESUS with eternal glory" (II Timothy 2:10).

## HOW DOES ONE GET INTO CHRIST?

Though the mis-called "larger Christian community," with few exceptions, denies that baptism has anything to do with salvation, the only two passages in God's word showing how we get "into Christ" (where salvation is) teach just the opposite. Read:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5).

Read again: "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27).

Based on these two passages of scripture, *genuine* churches of Christ teach that New Testament baptism puts one "into Christ," hence into the "salvation" which is "in Christ."

## THE "SAVED" ARE ADDED TO "THE CHURCH"

Acts 2 shows 1) that what Peter preached was for salvation, 2) that those who gladly heard the word were baptized and 3) that they were added to the church. Read it:

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying **SAVE YOURSELVES** from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly **RECEIVED HIS WORD** were **BAPTIZED**: and the same day there were **ADDED** unto them about **three thousand souls**...And the Lord **ADDED TO THE CHURCH** daily such as should be **SAVED**” (Acts 2:40-41, 47).

#### ANOTHER “UNTOWARD GENERATION” HAS ARISEN

Evidently “untoward generations” were not limited to the generation that crucified Jesus Christ, hanging him upon a tree. *Another* “untoward generation” has arisen among us today teaching contrary to the doctrine that came from God.

It now seems popular with some to charge those still holding to the doctrine, contending earnestly for the faith as it was once delivered to the saints, with having a mean, hard-hearted, intolerant, unforgiving spirit. Even though we quote God's *exact words*, they place the *onus* for these words upon *us* rather than honoring *God* who gave them.

Take, for example, Romans 16:17-18. *Whose words are these?* “**Now I beseech you, brethren, MARK them which cause divisions and offences CONTRARY TO THE DOCTRINE which ye have learned; and AVOID them. For they that are such SERVE NOT OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their OWN BELLY; and by good words and fair speeches DECEIVE the hearts of the simple.**”

What about II Thessalonians 3:6,14? *Whose words are these?* “**Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the TRADITION which he received of us...And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, NOTE that man, and have NO COMPANY with him, that he may be ashamed.**”

Was the beloved John just being “mean-spirited,” when, by inspiration, he wrote, “**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)?

#### AND WHAT OF JUBILEE '97?

Both by letter and again by word of mouth **Rubel Shelly** confirms that those responsible for the shamefully misnamed “*Jubilee*” that “*Jubilee '97 is intended for the larger Christian community of Nashville.*”

What he erroneously refers to as “the larger Christian community,” *i.e.*, the denominations whether

Protestant or Catholic, brings doctrines and practices entirely inconsistent with the doctrine of Christ.

1) Not only do they teach *different doctrines* but most of them contend that they were “saved” *before*, hence *without*, baptism.

2) For membership they teach one must “join” their churches rather than being “added” by the Lord as Acts 2 says.

3) All of them admit that one can be saved without being a member of their churches; Acts 2:47 teaches that *the Lord* adds to *His* church “daily such as should be *saved.*”

4) All denominational churches cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine taught by the apostles; Paul says to “mark” and “avoid” such for they “serve not God” but their “own belly.” He also commands us to “withdraw” ourselves from those walking “not after the tradition received of us;” and if any man will not obey this word, we are to “note” that man and have “no company” with him.

#### IS “JUBILEE'S” APOSTASY NOW COMPLETE?

From the “uncertain sounds” emanating from this spurious, so-called “Jubilee,” it was clear from the beginning that the founders and principal sponsors of it were leading all who would follow their lead toward apostasy.

We tried to warn brethren where this thing was heading. Many listened. Many *others* did not.

*There is no way for churches of Christ to follow “Jubilee” any longer without complete abandonment of the restoration principle.* The time has come both to “mark” and “avoid” those speakers and churches participating in this error. Sad to say, with “Jubilee '97” we are back to 1906 all over again.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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# JIM BILL McINTEER WHERE ARE YOU?

Many years ago there was a television program called, "Car 54, Where Are You?". Its central characters were two bungling policeman ("Tutti" and "Muldoo"). They were a combination of "Laurel and Hardy" and "The Three Stooges." From episode to episode one never knew in what hilarious antics they would engage. They spent a good part of their patrol time lost. Hence, the title of the program.

### IT WOULD BE FUNNY IF IT WERE NOT SO SERIOUS

In real life situations each character would be considered an incompetent dolt. What is considered very comical in such TV programs causes all sorts of problems in the serious day-to-day world of the family, government, business, education, and religion.

In the battle against liberalism in every facet of our society, a TV comedy writer might take the serious business of scriptural opposition to immorality and develop it to show the farcical antics of which will produce much laughter. Of course, this is exactly what such "politically correct" liberals attempt to do with serious religious and moral subjects. It is sad to say, but with the general populace they are quite successful.

### A NAME THAT THEY LIVE, BUT THEY ARE DEAD

In the present "fight to the death" that faithful brethren are waging against the phalanx of liberals who are seeking to destroy the Lord's church, we have some preachers who want to be considered fine, upstanding, and faithful gospel preachers. Some of these preachers are well known and have long upstanding reputations. However, they are comparable to the church at Sardis in that they have "a name" that they "live", but they are "dead" (Revelation 3:1). Though they may not forthrightly and explicitly teach false doctrine, they are happy to cavort with those who do. Such is nothing less than fraternizing with the enemy. It gives aid and comfort to those who are very bold in attacking the church and promoting all manner of false doctrines. You will never find these spine-

less characters when it's time to move up to the "firing line" to meet the enemy head on. They are nothing less than "fifth columnists." (In 1936 during the *Spanish Civil War* this term was originally applied to rebel sympathizers in Madrid, Spain when four rebel columns were advancing on the city. The rebel sympathizers in Madrid comprised the fifth column). In the experienced hands of a comedy writer such circumstances and persons might provide the materials for an excellent situation comedy, but in the real life of our Lord's church it produces all manner of confusion and havoc in the body of Christ.

### "DUMB AS OYSTERS"

In the city of Nashville, Tennessee a good example of one who, as far as I know, does not explicitly teach any false doctrine, but who extends the "holy kiss" to **Rubel Shelly** and his apostate crowd, is **Jim Bill McInteer**. He is prominent in the church, lauded in many circles for his service, has served or is serving on at least one college board, and is the proprietor of "21st Century Christian." Why will he and others like him not loose their tongues to speak publically against the likes of Rubel Shelly? What hinders brother McInteer, along with others whose tongues have stuck to the top of their mouths, from following the good example of brother **J. E. Choate** in not allowing "old ties" to be more important than the gospel of Jesus Christ? Have brother McInteer and those who use him forgotten the meaning and application of II John 9; Ephesians 5:11 and II Corinthians 6:14-18?

On page five of this issue of *Contending for the Faith* brother **Wayne Coats** has an excellent article pertaining to brethren past and present whose anthem in the "Athens of the South" could well be Simon and Garfunkel's "Sound of Silence." The article is entitled "The Still, Silent Voices in Nashville." We commend it to our readers for your consideration.

—David P. Brown,  
Associate Editor

## THE QUESTION

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and sanctification does the  
Holy Spirit operate**

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**through the Word of God?"**

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# THE STILL, SILENT VOICES IN NASHVILLE

Wayne Coats

As students of church history know, there were serious troubles all over the nation as a result of the high-handed development of the *Missionary Society* in 1849. Then in 1851 mechanical instruments of music began to filter abroad with more serious problems developing. Practically everything was stolen by the digressives of a century ago.

Who would object and who would oppose those troublers in Israel? The numbers were few and far between. In the Nashville, Tennessee area two men dared to be different. **Tolbert Fanning** and **William Lipscomb** started a little paper in 1855 that was known as the *Gospel Advocate*. Fanning stated that he wanted to give the matter which troubled the church a thorough treatment. When one reads the old *Advocate*, one sees a determination to oppose and expose the liberal views and modernistic trends which were sweeping the "Old Ship of Zion" into oblivion. (What would the new *Advocate* oppose today?).

After the Civil War, young **David Lipscomb** dipped his pen in the inkwell of inspired truth and never gave place to the devil during the digressive battles. Nashville, Tennessee (with the *Gospel Advocate* being mailed therefrom) became a "Maginot Line," a citadel for truth, and a "Valley of Elah" which no liberal giant could conquer.

"In Flanders fields where the poppies grow," too many have been forgotten. This is sad; but it is also tragic that most people have forgotten the battles that were waged by faithful writers of the old *Advocate*. Modernism and digression were all but shut out of Nashville and the state of Tennessee.

Who among the older people can forget older battles which had to be fought in Nashville? **R. H. Boll** brought his materialistic, Premillennial views into Nashville and began to spread them. Brethren begged him to keep his opinions to himself, but to no

avail. Again the old *Advocate* arose like a lion from the tribe of Judah as staff writers put truth above friendships and political expediency. The *Gospel Advocate* commissioned **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** to write an entire series of articles which resulted in sounding the death knell to Premillennialism in middle Tennessee.

When Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica he declared, "**for from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing**" (1 Thessalonians 1:8). This was certainly true of faithful brethren in Nashville, Tennessee. How do I know? I have the historic records and I can read them. One could not find a divided church in Nashville, split up and fighting over Premillennialism simply because brethren were willing to fight the good fight of faith. Truth can dispel error when brethren will preach it.

Some years later another problem developed over the matter of orphan homes and cooperation between congregations. What happened in Nashville? What did the *Gospel Advocate* Editor and Staff do and say? They did not retreat to the Cumberland River and silently drift away under cover of darkness. They did not wait and vacillate, procrastinate, and take the lockjaw, like so many now are doing. Brethren did not try to decide which way the weather-vane rooster was twisting and turning before they used their pencils. Nashville preachers did not wait until they got far away from home before they became experts and found relief from their lockjaw afflictions.

Comes now another horrible condition which plagues the church of Christ in Nashville and which is more destructive, damning, despicable, and devilish than anything that has previously occurred. Why so? Other crimes of high treason in decades gone by

have been met with a solid phalanx of opposition, but the very opposite is now seen as liberalism, modernism, digression, cultism, sectarianism, and denominationalism have had free course — for the most part — in Nashville. History can be read by anyone who desires to look at the facts. Only a colossal fool would attempt to distort facts. Let the record speak for itself and let the readers be not duped.

There are men who have spent most of their time as preachers in Nashville, Tennessee. Their influence could have been absolutely invaluable in opposing liberalism, if they had not loved the praise of men more than that of God. Others have waited to see which way the tide washes before they pick up an oar. Still other men and papers have fraternized with the liberal element and their opposition to liberalism has been about the best-kept secret in Nashville. When brethren write and ask me about different preachers in Nashville, I just tell them the facts without any hesitancy.

When **Rubel Shelly** came to Nashville and read a few books at *Vanderbilt University* (a school with which I have had some dealings) he learned that he had been "pumped up" with the wrong kind of theology. It did not take a Solomon to determine right early what Shelly's basic problem was. While a few of us were beating our heads against a brick wall trying to warn brethren, lo and behold **Jim Bill McInteer** was using Shelly and giving him sanctuary down at the then "20th Century Christian" book store in Nashville. This was long after Shelly began to reveal his true colors. Many brethren just do not begin to understand this affinity.

After the notorious "Nashville Jubilee" began with its parade of liberals, modernists, ad nauseam, Shelly could reciprocate by having "Jim Bill" as a "Jubilee" speaker. What besotted ignorance must beset one who is not aware of the unscriptural structure of the "Nashville Jubilee," notwithstand-

ing, all the heresy which is proliferated by various speakers? Our brother "Jim Bill" favored Shelly and other false teachers by appearing as a *Jubilee* speaker in different years.

The church of Christ in Nashville and middle Tennessee would be ten-thousand times better off if brother "Jim Bill" and other preachers, professors, and papers had stood firmly *against* the liberals, but no, they *assisted* the liberals. It is not too late to have godly sorrow and genuinely repent. Will that happen? Shall puny men become too proud to repent?

There would not and there could not have been an unscriptural, ungodly arena of heretics, false teachers, and church-changing "nut twisters" if brethren had refused to support the *Jubilee*. Such Nashville voices as the

*21st Century Christian* and the *Gospel Advocate* have supported the "*Jubilee*" and have assisted it in having some degree of success. It is not enough to just stop. What ever happened to public confession of one's sins? If at some time brethren supported the liberals and have learned that such is wrong, pray tell why they cannot expose the errors they once supported. Is it wrong to be right?

When a far-out liberal group met in one of our western states for an encampment a number of false teachers were invited to speak. Brother Jim Bill McInteer was a featured speaker. I realize brethren do not have to confer with me about such matters. What I am saying, however, is that we do not need fence-straddlers in the kingdom of God, nor do we need silent whispering

voices. What do you think?

What is the "Voice of Nashville" saying? For the most part it joins right in with the liberal church troublers. History will make known those courageous voices who have refused to bow down before the liberal altar of modern Baalism. And yes, history will not only have etched the name of Judas Iscariot as a traitor, a quisling; but a future generation will be able to read the blotched names of the men of our time who turned aside unto Satan.

Wake up and face a few facts before you die! Instead of squirting your venom at me, how about sending it to the church thieves among us. I do not run with that liberal pack of wolves. What about you?

—705 Hillview  
Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122

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## Is Jubilee Self Destructing?

(Continued from page 1)

Nashville area. History will remember this as the last meeting of its kind in the 20th Century. The digressive element in the *Christian Church* introduced in 1849 the *American Christian Missionary Society* into the *Christian Church*. And by 1860, the organ had come to stay in church worship.

In 1906, **S. D. N. North**, *Director of the U. S. Religious Census*, made it official using his own judgment that the Church of Christ and Christian Church formed two separate and distinct religious bodies. North made a special trip in 1907, from Washington to Nashville to confer with **David Lipscomb** on the accuracy of his assessment.

The postmodern "change agents" have once more driven the *traditional* churches of Christ and the *liberal* Church of Christ apart. The 21st century will witness another such U.S. Religious Census at a time that may come sooner than some anticipate. The two churches will be listed as separate as the *Independent Christian Church* and the *Disciples of Christ* (who divided in 1968) are today.

A secret filtered out of *Jubilee* during the annual January meeting of *Winterfest* in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The story originated in a telephone conversation between **Richard Van Dyke**, *Donelson Church of Christ* preacher and director of *Jubilee '97*, and **Max Lucado**. They were

discussing something sensational that Lucado could pull off in his first keynote speech which would fire up *Jubilee* mania and electrify the audience. Lucado thought this could be done by calling on all the elders present on the *Jubilee* floor the first night to come forward and confess the sins of the churches of Christ for the past 50 years.

Just imagine the presence of that great unseen host of witnesses including **David Lipscomb**, **H. Leo Boles**, **N.B. Hardeman**, **Batsell Baxter**, **Marshall Keeble**, and the churches where they worshipped as they witness in spirit these church troublers confess their sins. Is this calculated stupidity, or what?

**Harold Hazelip** and **Steve Flatt** are featured speakers on *Jubilee '97*. The question around Nashville is: Will President Steve Flatt turn *David Lipscomb University* around and restore the century-old Bible traditions of David Lipscomb's school abandoned by Harold Hazelip? A news story in the May 3, 1997 *Tennessean* provides the answers.

The newly installed *David Lipscomb University* president issued a statement in honor of Harold Hazelip after the *David Lipscomb University* Board of Directors named him the new Chancellor of the university. President Steve Flatt said: "I consider myself Harold Hazelip's greatest admirer ... As the former president, he will share valuable insights in the new administration." Another paradigm of "tweedle Dee" and "tweedle Dum"!

I am confident that the *Jubilee* promoters will learn after *Jubilee '97* that **Rubel Shelly** has been the point man in *Jubilee* promotions. He has succeeded to bring into sharp focus the rampant postmodernism now corrupting the *liberal* Churches of Christ. The myth hangs on that Rubel Shelly is a genius equal to that of **Alexander Campbell** and **David Lipscomb**. Let us not do anything to dispel that myth for fear that Rubel will pull in his reins. I think that Rubel is a most clever fellow.

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### THREE CUPS OF MIXED WINES FROM THE JUBILEE WINESKINS

The latest development coming out of *Jubilee* was set up on April 22, 1997 in a letter on *Woodmont Hills* stationary with Shelly's signature. [This is the letter a copy of which was published in brother Rice's editorial in the May, 1997 issue of this journal. — *Associate Editor*] It was an invitation to all area preachers to attend the April 22 luncheon in the Sheraton Music City Hotel to hear Max Lucado kick off *Jubilee '97*. Thus, the first cup was poured.

Those seated at my table included **Gene Jackson**, the Executive Supervisor of the *Assembly of God Churches* in Tennessee. They seemed puzzled by the proceedings. Rubel brought Max Lucado to my table for an introduction. Max Lucado is a very personable and a polished speaker. But he is no **James A. Harding**.

The only local church of Christ preachers present known to me were **Randy Harris, Walt Leaver, Dan Dozier, and Phillip Morrison**. The only high-profile church elder present was **Word B. Bennett**, *Donelson Church of Christ* elder and *David Lipscomb University* board member.

The pouring of the second cup left me totally amazed. Rubel Shelly called upon the "Apostle" **Don Finto** to bless the food. Don Finto did so with a most benign demeanor. He had the serene look of a Buddhist monk whose face was lit up with a sweet beautiful smile as if he were bestowing his apostolic blessings upon all present.

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## JUST WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Buster Acuff

Have you ever wanted to ask those who put up excuses for everything you ask them to do, "Just what can you do?" We are grateful for those in the church that shoulder any burden placed on them; but there are those who refuse everything and say:

"I cannot sing."

"I cannot usher."

"I cannot lead prayer."

"I cannot teach a class."

"I cannot go to Bible study."

"I cannot—ah—sorry, call Bob."

"I cannot drive our car—nerves."

"I cannot help at the Lord's table."

"I cannot come to midweek services."

"I cannot speak to visitors—I'm timid."

"I cannot give—haven't any extra money."

**Question:** Just what CAN you do? **Answer:** Make a pile of excuses!

—*Church Bulletin*  
*Taft, Tennessee*

The pouring of the third cup was also totally unexpected, and to mix a metaphor, came like a thunder clap. In his opening remarks, Lucado divulged the fact that he and Finto were bosom buddies, and had been for many years. In his opening remarks, Lucado said that "Don Finto is my hero." All who know the Don Finto and the *Belmont Church* story and who extol Max Lucado will find this one hard to swallow.

I did not know the story behind this. A prominent local preacher did when I told him about Finto's presence at the luncheon. This preacher has in his possession the entire taped worship service of the *Belmont Church* which was recorded July 26, 1988. It was during this service that Don Finto read the paper which is widely circulated. Finto told the story, that God called him to be an apostle when he stopped to pray in a road side chapel in New Mexico.

The fact came out on the 1988 tape that Max Lucado was present on that same July 26, 1988 in that worship service. He was personally singled out and honored by Finto who told of their long-standing friendship. Is there anything that Max Lucado will not do, or has not done, to win the approval of the denominations?

Also on the tape were the sounds of a piano, tambourine, and a guitar. Finto in a special dedication laid his hands upon and blessed all the babies. A prophet **Don** called "**Rusty**" spoke in "tongues" and delivered prophecies.

The question now for churches of Christ everywhere: Are you now mentally prepared for *Jubilee '97* when you now know what they do? Come to Nashville, and see for yourself!

### POSTSCRIPT:

The flowering crocus in February in Tennessee do not end winter. The foregoing information signals that long winter nights are still ahead for churches of Christ. Let us not lose hope that God who has established his church, preserved, and saved it, will indeed bring to naught the schemes of these postmodern descendants of Gog and Magog.

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# IS THE BIBLE NOT A BLUEPRINT?

Eusebio M. Lacuata

Leaders of the now popular or notorious event, "Jubilee" have said, "I reject pattern theology...I am not looking for a pattern..." and written, "The Bible is a love letter as opposed to a blueprint...for me, for years Christianity was a moral code. It is now becoming a love affair. For years there were rules and regulations, now it is a relationship."

Coming from individuals who are regarded intelligent, such statements are strange in the presence of several Bible passages which could not have been missed by them.

The Old Testament gives these warnings to Israel to whom the law was given: "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); "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt NOT ADD thereto, nor DIMINISH from it" (Deuteronomy 12:52); and "ADD thou NOT UNTO HIS WORDS, lest he REPROVE thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 50:6).

For people of the Christian Age, the New Testament sounds similar warnings: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us NOT TO THINK OF MEN ABOVE THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN, that no one of you is puffed up for one against another" (I Corinthians 4:6); "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" (Galatians 1:8-9); "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. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things be fore, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (II Peter 5:16-17); "Whosoever transgresseth, and ABIDETH NOT IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, HATH NOT GOD. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9); and "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).

With all these warnings to man NOT TO GO BEYOND WHAT IS WRITTEN; NOT TO PREACH ANYTHING DIFFERENT from what the apostles preached; or NOT TO ADD TO or TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM what is stated in the Bible, it should be clear to all that God did not and will NOT TOLERATE ANY TAMPERING with his word contained in the Bible which must be a PATTERN and a BLUEPRINT for all to follow: THE LAW for Israel to whom it was given; and the NEW TESTAMENT for all people of the Christian Age.

Those who disregard the Bible as a PATTERN or a BLUEPRINT in spite of God's numerous warnings, and who say, "For years there were RULES and REGULATIONS, NOW it is a RELATIONSHIP," are IGNORING GOD'S WORD and are now teaching their own ideas to their own damnation! (Galatians 1:8-9) Can the most powerful men qualify for a comparison with God? This is an appropriate and timely counsel for such men: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: PRIDE and ARROGANCY, and the evil way, and the FROWARD MOUTH."

I agree that there is a love relationship between God and man. God loved man first by giving his only begotten Son (John 3:16). Man's part in that relationship is for man to obey what God commands: "For this is the LOVE OF GOD, that we KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS; and his commandments are NOT GRIEVOUS" (I John 5:3) — NOT to SET ASIDE God's "rules and regulations."

The Bible may also be regarded as mankind's ROAD MAP TO HEAVEN. If men don't follow its signs and directions, they will arrive in hell, instead, because the Lord Jesus Christ did not take away "rules and regulations" from his New Testament and he is still "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that OBEY HIM" (Hebrews 5:9).

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# I'M NOT ASHAMED...

Al Brown

We sometimes sing the song, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to defend his cause." It is a beautiful song, and it expresses sentiments which are to be found in every Christian's life. But are they?

It is noble, and easy, to sing the song and to encourage brethren to put the words into practice everyday. I am sure every faithful child of God fully intends to heed Paul's advice:

**"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong"** (I Corinthians 16:13).

It is not so easy to actually defend the cause of Christ in the midst of those who are hostile to Christ and ridicule the way. Young people know only too well how heavy the pressure can be to dress and act just as their peers do. It can be extremely depressing to their young minds if they are looked on with contempt or ridicule.

What they may not realize is that adults find that same pressure just as unpalatable, especially if they still cast longing eyes at worldly ways and things or they are not mature enough to stand for what is right even if they must stand alone. One thing is certain: such a person has never been transformed by the renewing of his mind (Romans 12:2). He still acts, talks, and thinks as worldly people do.

If, when he is in a group of worldly people, he is very careful not to betray his relationship to Christ, he is, without doubt, ashamed to "own his Lord." A typical example of this may be seen when a Christian attends a gathering of worldly people. He ought not to even be there. Paul warned: **"Abstain from all appearance of evil"** (I Thessalonians 5:22).

Everybody has an alcoholic beverage in his hand. Our worldly brother also holds a glass which looks as if it had alcohol in it; and occasionally he pretends to drink it. By inspiration, John wrote: **"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God"** (III John 11).

Someone tells a filthy story. Our incognito Christian laughs along with all the others whose minds are in a sewer. Once again, he has, in compromising with the world, committed sin. Paul said: **"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good"** (Romans 12:9). Surely, all of us would agree: he is ashamed of Christ.

Do you and I have the courage and love for the Lord that we will, in unmistakable ways, show the world whose side we are on—that we will stand up for Jesus?

—Deceased

TENTH ANNUAL

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#### FRIDAY, JULY 25

- |           |   |                 |
|-----------|---|-----------------|
| 1:30 p.m. | "Lessons From the Beatitudes"   | Perry Cotham    |
| 2:30 p.m. | "Let Your Communication Be, Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay"   | Robert Johnston |
| 3:30 p.m. | "An Eye For An Eye"   | Michael Mayo    |
| 6:30 p.m. | SINGING   |                 |
| 7:00 p.m. | "The Greatest Sermon Ever Recorded"   | Carl Garner     |
| 8:00 p.m. | "Think Not That I Am Come To Destroy The Law, Or The Prophets: I am Not Come To Destroy, But Fulfill" | Gary Colley     |

#### SATURDAY, JULY 26

- |            |                                       |                |
|------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 9:00 a.m.  | "After This Manner Therefore Pray Ye" | Mark Littleton |
| 10:00 a.m. | "Moreover When Ye Fast"               | Ben Moseley    |
| 11:00 a.m. | "First be Reconciled To Thy Brother"  | Guss Eoff      |
| 1:30 p.m.  | "Love Your Enemies"                   | John Moore     |

- |           |  |               |
|-----------|--|---------------|
| 2:30 p.m. | "Otherwise Ye Have No Reward Of Your Father Which Is In Heaven"  | Joe Meador    |
| 3:30 p.m. | "For Where Your Treasure Is, There Will Your Heart Be Also"  | Jerry Moffitt |
| 6:00 p.m. | QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION  |               |
| 7:00 p.m. | "Judge Not that Ye be Not Judged"  | Ira Riee      |
| 8:00 p.m. | "Whosoever Looketh On A Woman to Lust After Her Hath Committed Adultery With Her Already In His Heart" | John Moore    |

#### SUNDAY, JULY 27

- |            |  |               |
|------------|--|---------------|
| 9:30 a.m.  | "Ask, and It Shall be Given Unto You; Seek, and Ye Shall Find" | Eddie Whitten |
| 10:30 a.m. | "Strait Is the Gate, and Narrow Is The Way"                    | Joseph Meador |
| 6:00 p.m.  | "Depart From Me, Ye That Work Iniquity"                        | Perry Cotham  |

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# "WHEREFORE, ART THOU, RUBEL?"

JOHN M. BROWN

Where is **Rubel Shelly** on the doctrinal graph or theological spectrum? I am sure he does not know. A brother just a couple of years ago tried to convince me that Rubel Shelly had "clarified" his thoughts, but he had not changed. This brother has not read Shelly fully (either past or present), or is blind, or is suffering from an acute mental debilitation, or all of the above. Shelly advocates "change" in the church; he not only is its proponent, he is quite a practitioner as well. To paraphrase Shakespeare, howbeit loosely, we inquire: "Oh Rubel, Rubel, wherefore art thou, Rubel?" Certainly the miraculous gift of prophecy would be required to know where he will land next or eventually embark.

In a letter from brother Shelly to me, dated May 25, 1996, he was explaining his participation in the "Mid-South Conference on Spiritual Renewal" and stated, "This sort of exchange with people from other traditions used to be commonplace for people from my tradition (e.g., Campbell, David Lipscomb, any other pioneer gospel preacher) but happens only infrequently nowadays because of our isolation and the sectarian spirit of some." I wrote back on June 6, 1996, saying, "To avoid perpetuating any miscommunication between ourselves, may I ask you some pointed questions, to clarify your thinking and avoid my misperception?" The questions I asked were:

1. Do you believe that we in churches of Christ are members of the church Jesus promised in the scriptures?
2. Do you believe we teach truthfully regarding God's plan for saving man?
3. Do you believe that what you style our tradition is somehow different from the New Testament church? If so, wherein is the difference? Is 'our fellowship' coextensive with Christ's church?
4. In what ways do the religious denominations existing in our world relate to the New Testament church?
5. Would you expound further the phrase in your letter 'our isolation and the sectarian spirit of some'?

Under date of June 12, 1996, brother Shelly wrote me back. Of the previous five questions, the first three brother Shelly answered "Yes," and added under number 3, "No, 'our fellowship' is *not* coextensive with the totality of Christ's church." [emphasis Shelly's]. To question number four, Shelly responded, "They are variations/deviations on a divine plan, and the division perpetuated thereby is outside God's will." Under question five, in defining his term "sectarian spirit" Shelly wrote,

"smug attitude that regards our fellowship as coextensive with the body of Christ or arrogance that assumes others should be as we are (rather than that all of us must become more as Christ is!) or blindness that thinks we have finished the process of restoration/renewal."

Now notice carefully. If our fellowship (and I think we all know what we mean by that) is **NOT** coextensive with Christ's church, please tell me *what the parameters of Christ's church are?* Is there a difference between being

IN Christ's church, and being OUT? *What, then, is the difference? Where are the boundaries?* If there are none, then no one could know whether he is in, out, up, down, over, or under! The word "in" implies an "out." Then WHO is in and who is out? We are "in," but we are not the only ones "in." Who else is "in" and how did they get "in?" (Something that is continually frustrating, to the hair-pulling stage, is the liberals use of vocabulary without ever defining what they mean. Then when one infers what they imply, one is accused of "misunderstanding").

Note also he states that the various religious denominations are "variations/deviations on a divine plan." My question is, how much variation or deviation does God permit? How much can one vary or deviate from God's divine plan and remain in fellowship with the author of the plan? Is man at liberty to deviate as far as he desires? Does God have anything to say about that?

And to question five, where brother Shelly answers with such phrases as "smug attitude...arrogance...blindness." Whew! Talk about loaded words, here is a wonderful example. Yet when our language gets rather blunt in answering liberals, their tears flow like a gusher over our "lack of love...mean spirit...unchristian attitude...uncaring view." (Yes, I would like to find one of those "honest false teachers" that brother Shelly used to look for; I would like to find a consistent one, while we are at it).

I wrote back under date of June 17, 1996, and said at the close of my letter,

"Finally, brother Shelly, permit me to ask: did you at one time consider yourself as very conservative? Wouldn't you previously have considered the church of Christ as coextensive with the totality of Christ's church? Have you changed? A related question, the answer to which I would be fascinated to know: *what would have been your own attitude formerly, toward one who held the views you do today?*"

I am still waiting for a response.

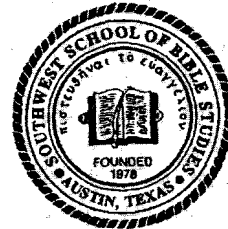
Doctrinally, we know where Shelly has been, we can read his past writings (the most of which are excellently sound!). We know where Shelly is (at least one day at a time), for we can read his current offerings. But where is he going? *I am convinced he does not know where he will end up.*

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If Rubel Shelly (or any other brother for that matter) were having a crisis of faith or an overwhelming of doubt or an uncertainty regarding belief, we should with patience allow that brother to get off in a corner somewhere, take time to himself with the word of God, and work out his doubts, conflicts, and uncertainties. But the problem is, during Shelly's evolutionary process, he desires an entire brotherhood to go with him on his joyride. Beware, for it is a roller coaster out of control, the track is gone, the driver has lost his way, and the passengers do not know where they are going. Brother Shelly's doctrinal evolution reminds one of the pilot of a small aircraft who was asked by a passenger, "Are we lost?" "Yes," said the pilot, "but we are making good time." If you are on the Shelly Ship, tossing wildly at sea amidst the barges, boats, and vessels of wreck and ruin on the rocks of creedalism and man-made tradition, *jump ship and get back on board the old ship of Zion.*

Unlock and unloosen the theological shackles of Protestant denominationalism that have taken you by the throat, brother Shelly. Repent of your sins and come home.

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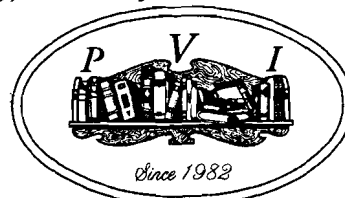
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# COTTON CANDY OR POISON?

Tommy Moore

If I were to ask you what would be worse, to give your children cotton candy or poison, what would you say? In answer to this question most people, very quickly, would say that poison would be the worse thing to give their children. But consider this: what if all we gave our children to eat was cotton candy? What if cotton candy was their favorite food, and that was all they wanted, and any time they received anything else they would throw a fit? Would we give them only cotton candy? Would we be loving and concerned parents if we fed our children only this cottony pile of sugar? Most assuredly not! We understand that our children could not survive on only sugar, for they would soon grow weak, become sick and would die. So, what is worse, to give your children poison, or only cotton candy? The truth is, both will kill the child!

Now let's make a spiritual application. Is it worse to teach in the Lord's church false doctrine or to teach simple pleasant truths from God's word? In answer to this question most people, very quickly, would say that false doctrine would be the worst thing of all to teach. But consider this: what if we only taught in the Lord's church concerning the loving story of Ruth, or about the need to be benevolent, or about the need to be good parents and spouses, or how to feel good about ourselves? Now these are impor-

tant topics and issues of interest, and should be preached and taught. But, can a Christian survive spiritually solely on this kind of diet? Can a child of God mature and be grounded in the faith on these kinds of meals? The answer to this question is a resounding no!

There are many preachers and teachers in the Lord's church who are not teaching error, but neither are they being distinct in their preaching and teaching. Many are given more to proclaiming what the people *want* to hear than what they *need* to hear. Concerning the people of Isaiah's day, the Lord declared, "**That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits**" (Isaiah 30:9-10). Many today are clamoring for the same things as the Israel of old—smooth things, sweet and pleasant words. And what is even more sad is that many preachers and teachers are giving in to their cries with sermons and lessons *filled* with nothing but "lovey dovey mush."

The apostle Paul declared, "**I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house ... I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned**

## TENTH ANNUAL

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### WEDNESDAY, JULY 16

7:00 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:30 PM "Seeking the Old Paths" Jim Dobbs

### THURSDAY, JULY 17

9:00 AM "The Crucial Difference" Waymon Swayne  
10:00 AM "How Do We Recognize Apostasy" Jim Dobbs  
11:00 AM "Dangers Facing the Church" Bill Lockwood  
1:00 PM "Has God's Standard of Living Changed" Darwin Hunter  
2:00 PM "Open Thou Mine Eyes" H.A. "Buster" Dobbs  
3:00 PM "Our Duty Defending the Truth" Bill Lockwood  
3:45 PM "Preaching to Please the People" Terry Cole  
7:00 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:30 PM "Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life" H.A. "Buster" Dobbs

### FRIDAY, JULY 18

9:00 AM "How to Stop Liberalism in the Local Church" Don Tate  
10:00 AM "The Dignity and Sanctity of Human Life" Gilbert Howell  
11:00 AM "Christ and His Church" Joe Nichols  
1:00 PM "Seeking the Church" Floyd C. Johnson  
2:00 PM "Attitudes Toward the Truth" Don Smith  
3:00 PM "Remove Not the Ancient Landmarks" Joe Sponaugle  
3:45 PM "Our Work Will Not Be Done Until..." David Shiers  
7:00 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
7:30 PM "Youthful and Useful" Darwin Hunter

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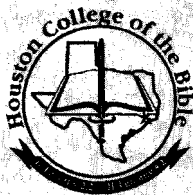
## CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20, 26-27). If we really care for our families and brethren, this will be true of us! Furthermore, Paul says that we are to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). You will notice that good gospel preaching and teaching demands positive AND negative proclamation of truth. But as already mentioned, some "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). But we must not allow this to influence us away from preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God.

We have too many "cotton-candy preachers and teachers" in the brotherhood who are sugar-coating the brethren into spiritual decay! Tell me, which is worse, false teachers or cotton-candy preachers? The truth is, they both will cause the spiritual death of their listeners! Beloved, our preaching and teaching must be true to the Book, straightforward without any apologies, address the spiritual needs of the people, encourage the faint-hearted, rebuke sin, and lovingly set forth the whole counsel of God.

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Will you help me in this effort? Will you be as Jeremiah who said that the word of God "was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay [or, I could not hold it back]" (Jeremiah 20:9). May we all feed the brethren a well-balanced diet from the word of God!

—500 North Pearl Street  
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## RUBEL, RUBEL, I'VE BEEN THINKING

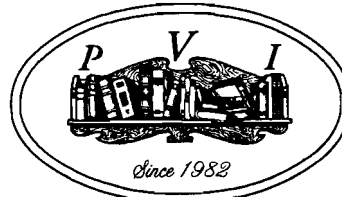
When **Buster Dobbs**, editor of the *Firm Foundation*, read something that **Rubel Shelly** had written, he responded,

Dr. Rubel Shelly said, 'If God is not larger than the fellowship with which I commune on a given Lord's Day, he is too small to be worthy of worship' (*Wineskins*, Vol. 2, No. 11, p.7).

"My dear brother Shelly, does that include Jews, Moslems, Hindus and pagans? Would it include Balism? How about hedonism and atheism?"

## WHAT A BOOK!

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## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

## —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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## —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.

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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.: 7:00 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.

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## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge, Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, Tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."



# NOTES AND QUOTES...

In Russia they have a saying, "the roof is moving," meaning, "you're crazy." Bob Hawkins used this to illustrate those who lay the Bible on the shelf and do not study it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Memphis School of Preaching's 31st Annual Lectureship, March 30-April 3, 1997, was a most remarkable event. With the general theme of "Ezekiel and Lamentations: Lessons for God's People, Past, Present, and Future," great lessons applicable to the church today were presented. We were reminded afresh what Paul meant when he wrote what he wrote in Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:11.

James M. Allen, while preaching at Middleton, Tennessee, had the following in his church bulletin, *The Gospel Light*:

## BROTHER J. AVERAGE CHRISTIAN

As brother J. Average Christian was headed home one night after a little friendly card game with the boys he noticed a large gathering of people and decided to look in to see what was going on. He discovered it was an awards meeting where outstanding men and congregations were being recognized for their work for the Lord. J. Average watched a while with interest and then heard the name of the congregation where he had his membership called out. The congregation was to be honored. The Emcee called for a representative of the congregation to come forward and accept the award. No one came! He called again. Brother J. Average now decided that he would go up and accept. He thought as he walked up to the stand, "Wonder what in the world they've done. I sure didn't know we were doing anything."

Brother J. Average accepted the award amidst much applause and took his bows and thought, "How great it is to be a part of such a great church. Sure do wonder though, how they did it." With a look and feeling of great pride J. Average marched from the stand, thoroughly enjoying every step as the church had just been honored as "congregation of the year" for its outstanding growth. J. Average related the experience of the evening to his wife and remarked between bites of his bedtime snack that they were sure going have to go to church Sunday and see what was going on. He then laid back on his pillow with a big, proud smile on his face and drifted off to sleep.

J. Average Christian was the recipient of reflected glory. It is not considered modest or humble for one to compliment himself and so he just compliments the group he is a member of and the reflected glory shines off on him. "I am the greatest" is not too often heard but one frequently hears "my group" or "my generation" is the greatest.

The only problem with this is that we will all stand before the Lord as individu-

als and not as a group. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12). While reflected glory is good, if deserved, it alone will not be sufficient.

When we accept bouquets, let us be sure we deserve them. It is not in order for me to take bows when I personally have done nothing to deserve them. Great things are happening...so let us each ask ourselves, "Am I making things happen or am I just accepting the bouquets and taking the bows? Do I have real credit with the Lord or just reflected glory in the eyes of men?"

[NOTE: Not long ago, I heard reference to "the dumbing of the church." This seemed a curious expression until I considered that like so many of our children who no longer can spell, read, write or figure, perhaps we need to get back to basics.

How many—even of our longtime adult members—can tell where to find the "Golden Rule"? or even the plan of salvation? How to account for such ignorance? Some tell us this is "school boy" knowledge. They want to go on to "deeper things" before learning what is along the shore.

One elder asked me recently about the effectiveness of lectureships, saying that they had had lectureship after lectureship and nobody was baptized. True. But what is the purpose of lectureships? To edify the members, not to evangelize non-Christians.

Then how can we win others to Christ. Not by just waiting for them to come to us! We must carry the gospel unto them. Not during lectureships, but between times. If we could lead the members to knock doors from house to house daily, sowing the seed, we could have a harvest ready for reaping during gospel meetings (not lectureships) three or four times a year. Then when we have lectureships, we could build up our members, both new and old, in the one faith.

Are we converting just to a formula for salvation—or to Jesus Christ and him crucified? IYR Jr.]

\*\*\*\*\*

Churches may fail us, but God never does.

\*\*\*\*\*

## WE CAN ABUSE MATTHEW 18:20

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

It is true that when saints of God meet for worship, whether it be a 2,000-member congregation or seven people meeting in an urgent mission field, the Lord is with them. That is a part of the principle involved in this verse, and yet the verse has its immediate application in the two or three going with a brother in an effort to correct a problems (vv.15-17), and upon all else failing, the disciplinary action following.

The verse can certainly be abused, as

we recently saw in one periodical, where some rebellious ones, in a mad against the eldership, then pulled away from the saints to meet in a home, comforting themselves in the "fact(?)" that the Lord was with them because he is with two or three as they meet in his name!

Well, that's to take the principle and pervert it to one's own selfish ends. Nowhere does God lay down a principle that then can be taken and abused by arrogant, rebellious, presumptuous and non-spiritual people to the end that they are blessed in leaving the assembly of the saints and "do their own thing."

There's nothing wrong with Matthew 18:20, but there's something wrong in contentious people thinking they can damage the body of Christ, meet apart from it, guided wholly by selfishness, and yet the Lord will be continually blessing them!

—Bill Jackson, deceased

\*\*\*\*\*

J. C. Bailey, Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Canada: "It has been wonderful the way brethren have responded with help for this disaster (i.e., the hurricane in India). There are others who have been giving out funds besides Joshua. I have known of some funds sent to individuals...

"The reports coming out of India are very encouraging. The nations in that area are responding to the gospel as well...

"My wife and I are having some problems with getting around. I walk only with a walker now and have dizzy spells now and then. My wife is very weak now and has problems with her memory. However, at our age of coming 94 in September and my wife 92 the same month we really are fortunate to be able to do what we can do."

Charles J. N. Agyekum, who ministers to the Church of Christ, Post Office Box 8002, Kumasi, Ghana, wrote that the above-named church has organized house to house personal evangelism and needs books, tracts and pamphlets that can help their prospects.

"We should be grateful to you," he writes, "if you would kindly send us James Pilgrim's booklet, entitled, *Milk to Grow on for New Born Babies*."

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# Pure Language

Joe W. Nichols

When religion is corrupted, the initial pure language of the religion is lost. This results as the language becomes defiled or contaminated. Nehemiah's grave concern for God's people of his day was that their children "spake half in the speech of Ashdod and could not speak in the language of the Jews." (Nehemiah 13:24) Nehemiah's manner in having to deal with the problem of "impure language" should alarm us to our responsibility in such matters: "I contended with them, and smote them, and plucked off their hair and made them swear by God..." (Nehemiah 13:25).

God through Zephaniah the prophet revealed a day to come when he would, "turn to the people a pure language (lips), that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent" (Zephaniah 3:9-10). The prophet Hosea speaks similarly, saying, "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you WORDS, and return unto the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and accept that which is good: so will we render as bullocks THE OFFERING OF OUR LIPS" (Hosea 14:1-2).

Realization of that which was foreseen by the prophets finds fulfillment only in pure New Testament Christianity and its worship without foreign contamination or defilement. It is said of the first century church, "that they continued STEADFASTLY IN THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE and fellowship...and day by day continuing with ONE ACCORD..." (Acts 2:42, 47).

In order to be participants in what God had in mind in Christianity, we must be of the "pure language" (Truth) and of "one consent" (Unity). Participating in that which is contaminated by human religious dogmas and inventions puts one where the Jews were when God was so highly displeased with them. Denominationalism corrupts the "pure language" and the "one consent" that God desires in his worshippers.

Jesus told the woman at the Sycharian well, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in TRUTH" (John 4:23). The words of the Hebrews' writer corresponds with the statements of the prophets and Jesus: "Through him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, THE FRUIT OF OUR LIPS which make confession to His name" (Hebrews 13:15).

Paul's plea of I Corinthians 1:10 establishes the platform for the Truth and unity that God had in mind: "that ye all speak the same thing, and that their be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and the same judgment."

It is evident that among us today there are those who are not content with the "pure language" (truth) and "one consent" (unity) that God requires of us. They would have us to speak half in the "speech of denominationalism", while practicing "unity in diversity." How absurd! Those who speak in the language today of: grace only (Calvinism); fellowship with denominations; mechanical instrumental music in worship; women in leadership roles; emotionalism (pentecostalism) instead of being guided rationally by God's word; social functions and entertainments substituted for worship and service to God must be challenged. Their impure language must be eradicated from among us in order to guarantee our survival as the Lord's church.

When we can no longer identify ourselves from the pages of God's word by our "pure language" and "one consent," we become as was the case with God's people of old, displeasing to God and hopelessly lost. God forbid that such an end should be the plight of the Lord's church in America.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS



**RICHARD NATHANIEL HOGAN**  
[1902-1997]

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVIII, No. 7

July/1997

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

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## Editorial...

# R. N. HOGAN'S FAITHFUL "LABORER TOGETHER WITH GOD" —BETHEL SMITH

When paying tribute to great brethren who have passed on to their reward, sometimes we forget those in the background without whose dedicated, conscientious assistance much of what was achieved might never have happened.

Such easily could be the case in the passing of **R. N. Hogan**. It takes nothing away from the magnificence of his accomplishments that we now call attention to the work of **Bethel Smith**, Hogan's personal (without pay) secretary for more than 50 years. She stayed in the background rendering indispensable service enabling him to be on the road so much of the time preaching those great gospel meetings across these United States and around the world.

## RELUCTANT TO GIVE OUT INFORMATION

So humble is sister Smith that she was reluctant to give any information at all concerning herself and her work with and for brother Hogan.

**Bethel Maye Johnson**, now 80, was born June 27, 1917, at Victoria, Texas. She first met brother Hogan in 1939 when he came to Houston, Texas, for a gospel meeting. By then she had met and married **William Smith**, then working for the Security Pacific Bank, in Houston. (She herself had finished high school and business college, but opted to stay home with the children.)

Brother Hogan had moved to Los Angeles, from Houston, in 1937. The Smiths did not leave for California until much later—first to San Francisco, where Smith worked in the shipyards; then they, too, moved to Los Angeles in 1941.

## GRADUALLY BECOMING FULL-TIME SECRETARY

Both William and Bethel were great admirers of brother Hogan. She did not immediately begin full-time work as Hogan's secretary, though she and others helped get the local church bulletin ready for mailing each week.

**Eugene S. Smith, Sr.**, of Dallas, Texas, for many years had been printing and publishing Hogan's paper, *The Christian Echo*. Eventually he felt that, in view of his other publishing and radio work, the *Echo* was too much for him to handle; so brother Hogan decided to bring the paper to Los Angeles and publish it himself.

The *Echo* was the only regular gospel paper in existence among the black brotherhood. Having a paid circulation of approximately 7,000, a great deal more work was involved getting it out each month than the local weekly bulletin had been. So, from part-time volunteer work, sister Bethel gradually gravitated into full-time Secretary—and finally Associate Editor—of *The Christian Echo*.

#### HOGAN'S EVANGELISM LEANED HEAVILY ON BETHEL

Meanwhile the white brethren and churches in Los Angeles had bought brother Hogan a big tent to use in his evangelistic work especially among the blacks of the Los Angeles area. In addition to those huge tent meetings in Los Angeles and vicinity, he was invited up to as many as 25 such meetings each year all across the United States, mostly in Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas and even into Indianapolis and Chicago.

Being gone so much of the time in those years, who was to get out *Echo*? And who was to look after his voluminous mail sluicing in each day while he was away? The only person qualified and available to carry on this part of his work all those years was Bethel Smith.

#### KENNETH HAHN, TOO, RECOGNIZED HER ABILITY

As the years wore on, and brother Hogan grew older, he began spending more time with his work at home right there in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, a white brother, **Kenneth Hahn**, was elected County Supervisor for Los Angeles County. [He gave brother Hogan's areawide influence credit for his elections.]

Particularly to honor brother Hogan, in 1970 Hahn named Hogan's secretary Bethel Smith to the Los Angeles County Board of Governors for Arts and Museums, where she served for two years. Then, in 1972, he further named her to the Business License Commission for Los Angeles County, a position she still holds.

#### WHAT IS TO BECOME OF THE ECHO?

Now that brother Hogan is gone, what is to become of *The Christian Echo*? This is the only paper which has served the black brotherhood continuously since it was founded by **G. P. Bowser**, in 1902. Bowser was the one who trained Hogan to preach.

On Bowser's death bed, Hogan promised his old mentor to keep the *Echo* going as long as he lived—and (thanks to the selfless help of Bethel Smith across the years) he did.

At the time of his passing (at age 94), brother Hogan still was President of the non-profit corporation getting out the *Echo*; J. S. Winston, age 90, was (and is) Editor and Circulation Manager; and Bethel Smith, age 80, is Associate Editor.

#### AND WHAT OF BETHEL SMITH?

In talking with sister Smith on the telephone from Memphis, she was uncertain what the future may hold for this notable gospel paper, now in its 95th year. As long as she is still able to get it out, she is doing so. However, even *her* days now are numbered. (She has one son, **Raymond Griffin**, still living.)

[For those who would like to subscribe while you still can, please send \$8.00 together with your subscription to **THE CHRISTIAN ECHO, P. O. Box 37266, Green Station, Los Angeles, CA 90037.**]

When the time comes that Bethel Smith either dies or no longer can serve, we have no doubt as to her final destination. As the principal one who made it possible for Hogan to keep on going with the gospel for so many years, all we can now say is: **GOD BLESS YOU, BETHEL SMITH!**

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*



**DURING BROTHER HOGAN'S MAGNIFICENT** funeral following his passing on February 26 earlier this year, one of the numerous speakers eulogizing him remarked that Hogan had taught all the preachers one thing — that they could have secretaries to assist them in their work. True. But how many of them have secretaries who will work efficiently without pay for 50 years? That is what Bethel Smith (shown above) did for R.N. Hogan and the cause they both loved and served !

# *Richard Nathaniel Hogan*

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.



**Richard Nathaniel Hogan**  
[1902-1997]

He was 94 years and three months old when the Lord finally took him home—but what an extraordinary, eventful and fruitful life we all gathered in Los Angeles to celebrate at the passing of **Richard Nathaniel Hogan** following his death, February 26, 1997, in Inglewood, California!

I shall be forever grateful to **Clint C. Wilson** for telephoning me the sad-happy news within just a few hours that same morning. Knowing of my life-long friendship, admiration and participation with this extraordinary African-American gospel preacher, he knew that if there was any way at all for me to be present for his funeral, I'd be there.

## **NO BLACKS AFTER SUNDOWN**

How I came to know R. N. Hogan is a story in itself. The part of this nation, brotherhood and family that I grew up in all were ambivalent about matters of race. I never even *saw* a black man until I was three years old. When we moved from Hollis, Oklahoma, to Norman, in 1922, not a single black person lived there. I was shown an old elm tree south of town where one was lynched years earlier—for what cause I never heard. From then onward Norman's unwritten law was that no black man should let the sun set with him still inside our city limits!

From my father, I learned, as a child, that before the Civil War the Rice side of our family owned slaves either in Georgia or Alabama. My mother's father did not believe that Negroes even had souls. Mother herself admitted that they had souls but denied they were her "social equals." To her dying day, no black persons ever darkened our front door; they all—what few there were—had to come through the kitchen!

In 1929, my father returned from nine weeks of teaching singing schools in Houston, Texas, all aglow from hav-

ing met a black preacher (**Marshall Keeble**), who "knew his place." Being then 12 years of age, I could not figure out what Keeble's "place" was.

## **NO CHURCH FOR BLACKS**

Nine years later, having moved from Norman to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in south Texas, I could not understand why we had 19 *white* churches of Christ, and a few *Latin-American* churches, but *not a single congregation among the blacks!* Since Romans 2:11 says "**there is no respect of persons with God,**" and James 2:1 clearly teaches Christians to "**have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons,**" this made no Bible sense to me.

Having heard of a black preacher (**R. N. Hogan**) who then was cutting a gospel swath through Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas, I determined to learn what the excitement was all about. When it was announced he would be coming for a gospel meeting in San Antonio, some 250 miles north of us, I went there to meet him and to

ask if he would come on down to "the valley" to hold such a meeting for us. He said he'd be glad to, *if it could be arranged.*

## **RACISM WAS ENTRENCHED**

Being then 21 years of age (Hogan was age 37 and in his prime), I knew of no reason it could *not* be arranged; so I returned to the Rio Grande Valley to do so. Little did I know the deep racism that was entrenched in southern Texas at that time.

It took literally *months* of hard work trying to interest reluctant white brethren in sponsoring such a meeting and in raising the funds it would take; however, by December of that year, arrangements were complete, brother Hogan brought his 500-capacity "gospel tent" to Harlingen, Texas; and the *first gospel meeting for blacks* in the Rio Grande Valley was underway.

## **ROPE DOWN THE MIDDLE**

My part in that first valley-wide "Hogan Meeting" was two-fold—1) to conduct the song services, and 2) to turn quickly to the passages he cited and read them loudly from the Bible while Hogan himself quoted them from memory. (To emphasize a particular point, he would deliberately *misquote* a passage—then have me read it correctly, orally, over and over again from the Bible.)

That was a long time before the Civil Rights marches of the '50s and '60s. Segregation still was the order of the day—then—in south Texas. Even though we were supposedly "seeking the lost" from the black community, white brethren insisted that a rope be fixed down the middle aisle segregating the blacks from the whites!

Conducting the song services, I took my stance down front, halfway between the whites and the blacks, with that two-inch rope pointing toward my middle. [Even that did not satisfy one of our white preachers;

having a radio program on the Harlingen station, he attacked me on the air for "waving my arms in front of all those niggers!" How he expected me (or anyone) to mark time without "waving my arms" is anyone's guess. And how unnecessary and despicable it was thus to insult the very ones we supposedly were trying to save!]

#### "SEE? IT WON'T RUB OFF!"

During the meeting, brother Hogan lodged with the **M. H. Colemans**, a black couple, who ran the School Valley Orphanage (for black children) near Combes, north of Harlingen.

When the Colemans brought Hogan for the afternoon service the day of that radio attack, as soon as they arrived sister Coleman walked over to that radio preacher. Instead of shaking hands with him, she rubbed the back of her hand over the back of his, saying,

"See? It won't rub off!"

Purple with rage, that preacher could have had apoplexy. Race prejudice was violent those days in south Texas—even among supposed-to-be "Christians."

#### ABANDONED IN HARLINGEN

One incident occurred during the meeting which could have destroyed everything — though it was not planned. Rather than driving my own car from Edcouch each night, I came with **Roy (Buck) Stephens** and family.

At the close of each service, brother Hogan always shouted to the audience, "**SHAKE HANDS AND BE FRIENDLY!**" On one particular night, Roy must have thought I was shaking hands and being friendly too long—so, without warning, he abandoned me at the tent there in Harlingen and drove home.

It was 21 miles back to Edcouch from Harlingen. Brother Coleman said, never mind, that he would take me.

#### PRIZE COWS GOT OUT

On our way to Edcouch, a cold, "blue norther" came sweeping down into the Valley from the upper part of the state. We decided to stop by the School Valley Orphanage for a cup of coffee.

While sipping coffee, the telephone rang. It was brother Coleman's fore-

man informing him that fences were down and some of his prize, thoroughbred livestock were out. Forgetting all about me, brother Coleman ran to his car and drove off searching for his cattle.

With the "blue norther" raging outside, sister Coleman started a wood fire in their old-fashioned, pot-bellied stove.

Toward midnight, I asked sister Coleman where her husband was and when she thought he would be back. She explained about the cattle being out, saying he might be gone all night looking for them.

I asked if they did not have another car? She said they did, but no gas.

#### "SKIN AIN'T NO SIN"

By 1:00 a.m., I was so sleepy that I almost fell against the stove. Asking sister Coleman if she had an extra bed, she said they had *three* beds but only enough cover for *two*. Realizing she had to have *one* bed, that left only *brother Hogan's bed* with enough cover to keep warm.

Finally, exhausted, I said, "Skin ain't no sin." Suggesting that Hogan go 'way over on "that side" and just barely get under the cover, and I would stay on "this side" and just barely get under the cover—he could stay "over there," I could stay "over here," and at least we could sleep warm until brother Coleman returned.

Brother Hogan said we had no other solution, but if it ever got out it would ruin us both.

#### COLEMAN GONE ALL NIGHT

As it turned out, brother Coleman was gone all night long rounding up his cattle. When he got home at 8:00 o'clock the following morning, he expressed surprise.

"Are you still here?" he exclaimed.

We explained about there being no gas in the other car and that I was stranded. Weary and sleepy as he was he said we had to think of a way for me to get back to Edcouch with nobody knowing where I had been all night.

He remembered a "dog-leg," sharp double-bend in the road, approximately two miles east of Edcouch. He said if he drove me past the first bend and I jumped out before we got to the second bend, hopefully no one would



**NOT ONLY DID J.S. Winston lead singing for R.N. Hogan across the years, but he also served as circulation Manager for *The Christian Echo* —and still does.**

see us. Thus I could walk the two miles on west into Edcouch then two miles north to the Stephens' home, and that should do it.

#### STEPHENS THOUGHT IT FUNNY

But for the quirky humor of Roy Stephens, this solution *should* have worked. At least we tried. But when I walked up to the front of the Stephens' home, there was Buck standing in the doorway.

"Tell me one thing," he said; "did you sleep with Hogan last night?"

"Such a question, Buck!" I exclaimed.

"Don't beat around the bush with me, young man," Roy pursued. *Did you or did you not sleep with Hogan last night?*

Looking him straight in the eye, I chided him for having run off and left me in Harlingen. I said I would tell him the truth, "but if you ever tell it, you will ruin us both." I told him exactly what had happened.

#### FORLORN HOPE

Laughing uproariously, Buck seemed to think the whole thing funny. Personally, I could not see the humor. All I could do was trust him, hoping he

would have the good sense not to tell anyone else.

Future events proved how forlorn my hope really was. The following year, Roy gave up farming and moved out to Roaring Springs, a ranching community on the west Texas plains, as their preacher. Not long afterward, brother **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.**, was in a gospel meeting at Plainview, Texas, not far from Roaring Springs.

It was the custom in those days, when brother Wallace would be in a meeting somewhere, for gospel preachers from distances around to visit his meetings for the morning service, staying over to eat lunch together and talk. On this occasion, they got to telling funny stories of things that had happened to gospel preachers they had known.

#### STEPHENS TELLS IT ALL

After listening to several preachers tell their favorite stories, Buck Stephens said, "Now I'll tell one."

Did he ever! Little did he know that Foy E. Wallace, Jr., was racist. [It was through Buck's telling what he himself considered "just a funny story" that brother Wallace became so incensed that he "wrote us up" in his *Bible Banner* in 1941. In fact, this precipitated a brotherhood battle calculated to destroy both Hogan and me as well as several others as gospel preachers who also were editors of gospel papers. But that is *another* story.]

#### SECOND MEETING WAS AT WESLACO

Not only had Roy Stephens moved in 1940, but I, too, left Edcouch, that same year moving 14 miles south and east to Mercedes, Texas. Learning that the next town west of Mercedes—Weslaco—had a large black community, I persuaded the brethren to call brother Hogan there for his *second* gospel meeting in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

This time, instead of me leading the singing and serving as Hogan's scripture reader, we invited his longtime friend and yokefellow **J. S. Winston** to "do the honors." **J. M. Butler**, another great singer and preacher, also came.

Brother Hogan liked to instill initiative in new converts as soon as possible after their baptism. Early in the



**THE LATE G. P. BOWSER**, of Fort Smith, Arkansas, was the one who trained R. N. Hogan as a gospel preacher. Once in a debate his opponent, vaunting his knowledge of the Greek language, threatened to "eat him alive."

"In that case," Bowser replied, "you will have more Greek in your stomach than you've got in your head."

On Bowser's death bed, he asked Hogan to promise to keep his gospel paper, The Christian Echo, going as long as he lived. With the help of Bethel Smith, his faithful personal secretary for more than 50 years, he was true to his promise. Even now that Hogan is gone, sister Bethel still edits and publishes this foremost gospel paper devoted entirely to the black brotherhood.

Weslaco meeting a black man named Brock obeyed the gospel. The very next night Hogan called on this new brother in Christ to lead in prayer.

Brother Brock must have had stage fright, for, after we all bowed our heads, it must have been at least two minutes before he got up the courage to speak. When he did finally say something, it was short and to the point. "Lord," he prayed, "prop us up in the weak and leaning places."

His prayer may have been short, but it was effectual and fervent coming from the heart and lips of this newly-righteous man. (See James 5:16.)

#### NO PLACE FOR BLACKS TO EAT OR SLEEP WHILE TRAVELING

Every time that brother Hogan would come from Los Angeles for a gospel meeting in those days, I could not help noticing how exhausted and weary he looked. Asked why, he said there was no restaurant or motel that would accept blacks, then, between California and Texas—that once he started driving through he had no place to eat or sleep until he reached El Paso. Also, even in Texas, blacks had to know where to stop.

During the Weslaco meeting, I took Hogan, Winston and Butler across the border to Reynosa, Mexico, for a game dinner. I was well known at this restaurant, but no waiter came to our table.

After sitting for half an hour, I walked over to the manager asking why no service. He explained that most of his business came from Texas—and if white Texans saw blacks being served in his restaurant, they could close him down.

When I insisted that we be served, the manager said if we would go to a shed *behind the outhouse*, he would serve us there. We did so—and he served us—but that was the last time I ever returned to that racially discriminating Mexican restaurant!

#### MOVING TO CALIFORNIA

When World War II came along, I was invited by Army Chaplain **Fred McClung** to move to Paso Robles, California, to serve as his civilian fellow worker while he was stationed at Camp Roberts, 11 miles north. I moved to Paso Robles in April, 1942.

Preaching along the West Coast over the next 11 years, I saw to it that R. N. Hogan was invited for gospel meetings wherever I preached—first at Paso Robles, later in the San Francisco Bay Area, and still later in Seattle, Washington.

Not only did he come for those meetings up and down the West Coast, but he and what is now known as the Figueroa Church of Christ helped me to purchase property both in Downtown San Francisco as well as in Central Seattle.

It was during my ministry in Seattle that the congregation where Hogan preached in Los Angeles had a chance to buy its present property on Figueroa. With great pleasure we had a part in its purchase.



Clint C. Wilson Sr.



SERVING FOR MANY YEARS as secretary for the Figueroa Church of Christ, where R.N. Hogan ministered for half a century, Clint C. Wilson, Sr. (see left) also works as cartoonist for the Los Angeles Times and other publications in the Los Angeles area. Above is seen one of his cartoons of brother Hogan which he drew for The Christian Soldier, a paper that Ira Y. Rice, Jr., edited and published in the late '30's and 40's.

#### HAVING SHOES TAILOR-MADE FOR HOGAN'S BEAUTIFUL FEET

When, in 1955, my family and I moved to Singapore as the first missionaries in modern times from churches of Christ to Southeast Asia, brother Hogan and Figueroa helped us go.

Our first time out, we stayed four and one-half years; the second time three and one-half years.

Just prior to one of our home returns, I wrote brother Hogan to send me his shoe size—also the outline of both feet—on a piece of paper. Romans 10:15 says, “**How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel...**” I wanted to have shoes tailor-made for the beautiful feet of R. N. Hogan.

Accompanied by a Chinese preacher from Singapore, my son in the gospel **Tan Keng Koon**, he and I attended a great gospel meeting that brother Hogan was preaching in a field somewhere in Los Angeles. A wave of excitement went through the huge crowd at the close of service that night,

when I asked Hogan to sit down on the platform while I fitted those tailor-made shoes to his beautiful feet!

#### HOGAN, WINSTON TO SINGAPORE AND AROUND THE WORLD

Across the years, I kept asking brother Hogan to come to Singapore for a gospel meeting. He kept on saying how much he dreaded to fly. But when Tan Keng Koon asked him, too, what could he say! He had to come.

It was a Tuesday morning, on December 10, 1974, that **Bethel Smith**, Hogan's faithful, longtime personal secretary, **Ada Moss**, and others delivered brethren Hogan, Winston, Vada and me to the Los Angeles International Airport for our departure for Singapore.

Prior to take-off. Brother Hogan insisted he wanted a plane with “at least 12 motors,” so if any of them conked out we could keep on flying. Someone said not to worry, that he would not crash “till his number was up.” Hogan said he wasn't worried about his number being up, but the number of the one sitting *next* to him! There being

no 12-motored plane available that morning, we had to settle for a four-engine Boeing 747—but we made it!

#### FIRST STOPS: HAWAII & JAPAN

Our first stop en route to Singapore was Hawaii. Hogan and Winston wanted to see Pearl Harbor and Honolulu; so we hired a taxi, asking the driver to show us around.

Doing the same thing in Japan, Hogan was seated up front next to the driver, who went zip, zip, zip all over Tokyo. Our driver seemed never to see a stop sign or even think of slowing down.

When we got back to our hotel, Hogan was not “as white as a sheet,” but he was visibly shaken.

“I have just taken two trips with that driver,” he declared.

“Two trips?” I demurred.

“Two trips!” Hogan insisted. “My first and my last!”

All of us were in high spirits.

After Japan, we made two more stops—Hong Kong and Saigon—before reaching Singapore.



On our way into town from Paya Lebar International Airport, Tan Keng Koon filled us in on the various preparations they had made for Singapore's *R. N. Hogan Evangelistic Campaign and Gospel Meeting*.

Even before our arrival, 20 precious souls already had been baptized just during the "build-up" which got underway two weeks prior to our arrival from the U.S. Koon had arranged for Hogan, Winston and me to speak to different Singapore congregations on the Lord's Day before the campaign began on Monday.

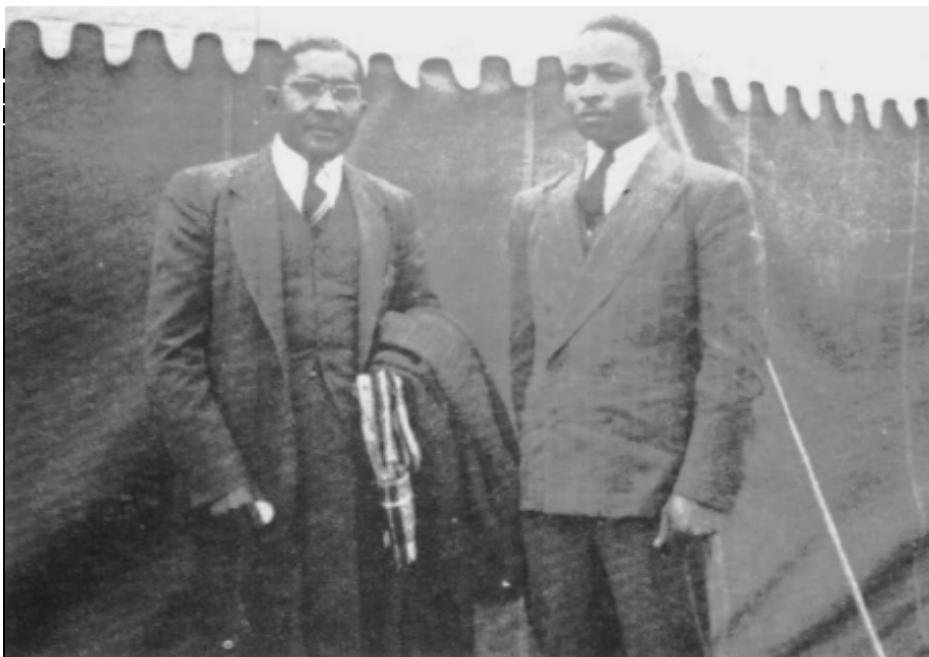
Having gone all-out to have everything in readiness for a harvest of souls, Koon described how he and the members of the Upper Serangoon congregation had gone from door to door covering every single home in a 94-square-block area (some with apartment buildings up to 19 stories high). Of the more than 7,000 doors knocked in their section of the city, they had found some 600 families they considered likely "prospects" for conversion.

On that last Lord's Day afternoon before the campaign, Koon and his wife **Baby Tan** organized the workers from their congregation and personally visited every one of those 600 families, telling them once again about the gospel effort about to start and handing them printed brochures about the buses they had chartered to transport visitors to and from the meetings each night. (The Queenstown congregation also had chartered a bus and had done considerable work similar to that described foregoing.)

#### LARGEST-EVER ATTENDANCE ON THE FIRST NIGHT

If ever there was any doubt whether the Chinese *yellow* people of Asia would respond to the preaching of an African-American *black* man, it was dispelled the very first night. When all began arriving that Monday night, the air was electric with anticipation.

A huge awning-type tent had been erected covering the entire front yard of the building at 131 Moulmein Road. Also, another awning had been stretched over the 16-foot walkway along the left side of the building. Side-wall partitions were all folded back so that people even on the outside of the auditorium could see, hear and



**WHO WOULD EVER HAVE SUPPOSED**, in 1939, when the above photo of R.N. Hogan and J.S. Winston was taken in their gospel meeting in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas that 35 years later these same two faithful brethren would be together again in a similar gospel effort half a world away — also that the photographer in both cases, IRA Y. RICE., would be with them both places! Hogan and Winston are shown, left and right above, in front of their big gospel tent 35 years before; below they are seen, right and left, together with Vada Rice and Hogan's long-time secretary Bethel Smith and others who came to see them off for Singapore, Tuesday morning, December 10, at the Los Angeles International Airport.



participate in the services. Special lighting had been arranged and a public address system installed. Stacks of song-sheets of songs which had been practiced over and over again many times were ready.

For our very first service folks began arriving at least an hour beforehand. By the time the first chartered bus arrived, the auditorium already

was half filled. I never saw so many people crowded into one city-type bus. Built for 60 people, normally, 120 spilled out of that very first bus by actual count.

And the singing! Oh, that singing! What a transformation had come over that part of the worship in Singapore. From some of the poorest singing in earlier years, it had developed into



**HOGAN, WINSTON, AND THE RICES** were in fine spirits just prior to their take-off for Singapore that Tuesday morning of December 10, 1974, in Los Angeles. Brother Hogan insisted that he wanted a plane with "at least 12 motors" so if some of them conked out we could keep on going. We had to settle for a four-engine 747—but we made it anyway!

some of the best I ever heard. Instead of having to coax it out of the crowd, as in former days, all that brother Winston had to do was sing the first couple of notes and the crowd picked it up and went with it. Even Hogan and Winston (who had heard plenty of good singing in their time) said they had never heard anything quite like this!

#### **PREACHING WITHOUT INTERPRETER**

Although I had assured brother Hogan that, in Singapore, he could preach in English—even without an interpreter—I do not think he fully accepted the fact until that very first service. However, as he saw that great audience of close to 600 mostly Chinese with a sprinkling of Indians, Americans, and others warming to his message, he seemed to relax into the same kind of preaching he did so superbly back in the U.S.

Beginning from the very first night, those responding to the gospel call started coming down the aisle—several on the first invitation. Almost every night after we dismissed the services we had to call the audience back together for several more baptisms resulting from concerted efforts of personal workers in the after-meetings.

#### **EXTRA EFFORT MADE LOCALLY**

A vacation Bible school was conducted during the mornings in connection with the campaign. **Pat McGee**



**BETWEEN PLANES IN HAWAII**, brethren Winston and Hogan, above left and right, wanted to see a bit of Honolulu; so, we hired a taxi and asked the driver to show us around. this photo was taken from the national cemetery known as the "Punch Bowl," where those killed at Pearl Harbor lie buried. Diamond Head is seen in the background.

had a class for unconverted prospects. Every single one of these was baptized before the campaign was over!

One night I gave out brother **Gordon Hogan's** telephone number insisting that anyone who could not sleep because he had not yet been obedient to his Lord in baptism should call that number any hour of the day or night and that brother Gordon would be happy to get out of bed and baptize anyone regardless of the hour.

(I don't think he got much sleep after that, but he did baptize lots of folks!)

#### **"AM I TOO LATE?"**

The next day after the announcement was made, toward noon, from way up the street a man came running. Reaching our building, he ran right through our front gate and into the auditorium.

"Am I too late? Am I too late?," he almost shouted.

"Too late for what?" we asked.

"To be baptized!" he exclaimed.

Well, of course, he wasn't "too late." We baptized him that same hour—just like in the beginning of the gospel.

A total of 85 were baptized during the campaign itself—and 20 were re-

stored—105 altogether. It gave the cause of Christ in Singapore a shot in the arm like it never has had either before or since.

#### HOGAN, WINSTON CONTINUE ON AROUND THE WORLD

When the scheduled time for closing the campaign arrived, we pleaded with brother Hogan to continue a few more days. Owing to prior commitments, he felt that he just had to be on his way the following day; so brother Pat McGee was prevailed upon to pick up where brother Hogan left off. He did so—watering where brother Hogan had planted—and God gave the increase. In fact, 13 more were baptized.

From Singapore, Hogan and Winston continued on around the world across India, Pakistan, the Middle East and Europe, arriving Stateside once again in time to fulfill those prior evangelistic commitments.

\*\*\*\*\*

Having thus proved to himself that he could fly to other countries and be effective in soul-winning, brother Hogan responded again and again to the call of world evangelism—especially in Africa. But his very *first* effort toward fulfilling the “all nations” part of the Great Commission was when he



**AS IT ALWAYS IS, Vada's and my "homecoming" to Singapore, where we have lived, loved and labored for so many years of our lives, was intensely gratifying. Among the many who turned up to greet brethren R.N. Hogan, J.S. Winston, and us Rices were the Tan Keng Koons, Don Greens, Gordon Hoggans, Pat McGees, Henry Khongs, Eddy Ees, Charlie Ng Fock Lam (all shown above) and others.**

and J. S. Winston accompanied the Ira Rices in 1974 to Singapore.

\*\*\*\*\*

The years rolled on, of course; and since so much of my own work centered around Southeast Asia and the Far East, while Hogan's work was more in the U.S. and Africa, our trail-

crossings grew farther apart.

I kept inquiring after him from time to time; however, in the fall of 1996, when he was 93, I heard that he now was invalid and could no longer get out of bed. Thus, in October, I made a special trip to the West Coast especially to see him once more on time's side of eternity.

Since he was staying in the home of his daughter, it took a while to track him down. When I finally found the address, I wondered if he could recognize me or not. Being ushered into his bedroom, how strange to see this once-powerful, brilliant, vibrant man just lying there—hardly able to move.

As I stood there looking down at him, he opened his eyes. Too weak to speak, he could only whisper.

“Ira Rice,” I heard his whisper of recognition.

No longer could he carry on a conversation, so for the next half an hour, I reminisced for *both* of us.

Upon leaving, how glad I was to have seen my old, gospel yokefellow one more time. Having worked with him in countless gospel meetings in Texas, California, Washington—and even in far-off Singapore—what a lot we shall have to talk about when we meet once again on that much-farther-off “beautiful shore!”



**THEY MAY NOT HAVE BEEN the “Three Musketeers,” but brethren J.S. Winston, Tan Keng Koon and R.N. Hogan (left to right) became almost inseparable during the Singapore Gospel Campaign. Hogan and Winston depended on brother Koon not only for their accommodation, meals, laundry, dry cleaning and transportation, but he served their needs in every conceivable way.**

# WHY LIBERALISM HATES CHRISTIANITY

Mark K. Lewis

Recently I was having a conversation over the Internet, with a person from Missouri. This individual's politics are very liberal, and, while a decent person, he has little or no religious conviction, and at best, is an agnostic. During the course of our conversation, he spouted the usual, knee-jerk pabulum about the "religious right" being mean-spirited, hateful, judgmental, etc., which immediately told me that the only place he got any information was from **Dan Rafter**. I thus asked him the following questions: If everybody in this country would faithfully follow the teachings of Jesus, how many drug pushers would there be? How many cases of AIDS? How many battered wives? How many illegitimate children living in poverty? He was honest enough to answer "none," to which I replied that such is the political goal of the "religious right," though eternal salvation must be the ultimate aim.

Yet, the conversation was instructive in other ways and led me to ponder the question of why liberals hate religion so much. There is no doubt that the reasons vary among individuals, but it is important for us to realize that hatred of religion is inherent in the liberal philosophy simply because of what they view as the results of religion.

Over 200 years ago, the blasphemous French philosopher **Voltaire** wrote, "Religion is the chief cause of all the sorrows of humanity. Everywhere it has only served to drive men to evil, and plunge them in brutal miseries... it makes for history an immense tableau of human follies." An influential 19th century American, **Benjamin Franklin Underwood**, explained further: "To many liberals, Christianity appears an unmitigated evil; a superstition which although it had its origin in innocent ignorance and credulity, has been the greatest obstacle to human progress that mankind has had to encounter." The vile atheist **Robert Ingersoll** said that the church had, for 1,000 years, "extinguished the torch of progress in the blood of Christ." Unfortunately, there is some truth to this statement; but it is just as unfortunate that most people do not know the difference between pure New Testament Christianity and the gross perversions and deviations of Catholicism and Protestantism.

But the point is that much of the "left's" obvious hatred of (their understanding of) Christianity in our country today proceeds from their belief that Christianity has been a hindrance to man's progress and has resulted in much evil. Rather than reading their New Testaments and trying to comprehend what the religion of Jesus Christ really is, they prefer to look back in history and recall the cruelties, immoralities, and butcheries done by those who really have no close connection to the truth and label that Christianity. This idea has had a tremendous effect in our country; indeed, it underlies the entire educational system. **Dr. John Dewey**, who is known as the father of modern American education, was no friend of Christianity. Indeed, he was a very good liberal: "The objection to supernaturalism is that it stands in the way of an effective realization of

the sweep and depth of the implications of natural human relations. It stands in the way of using the means that are in our power to make radical changes in these relations." In other words, Christianity is a hindrance to liberal ideas of progressive social relations. It must be removed. This is a cardinal tenet of liberalism today, and thus it is clear why there is no desire among the "left" to promote the Christian faith, why they defend abortion, homosexuality, pre- and extra-marital sex, and almost every other vile crudity that pervades our country: men must be "free," and Christianity is the greatest obstacle to that freedom and does all sorts of evil to prevent people *from* being "free." In the liberal mind, "freedom" equals "progress," thus Christianity must be eliminated, or at least relegated to a non-influential role in society's affairs.

Beloved, to defeat the enemies of God, we must understand them.

—3104 Oliver  
Bossier City, Louisiana 71112

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8:00 p.m.	"...The Messenger Was Ineffective"	Roddie Covington

#### Sunday, August 31

9:00 a.m.	"...There Were Saved In all Denominations"	Perry Cotham
10:00 a.m.	"...Holy Spirit Baptism Was For Everyone"	Perry Cotham
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# “THOU MAYEST” OR “YOU MAY”

R. C. Oliver

There are two words in the English language that give some people a little difficulty. They are **can** and **may**. The word **can** means ability, and the word **may** means permission. You **can** do a certain thing, means you have the ability to do that thing. On the other hand, you **may** do a certain thing means you have permission to do that thing.

In the conversation between Philip and the eunuch (Acts 8: 26-40), Philip said: “**If thou believest...thou mayest.**” **IF** is a conditional conjunction and introduces a conditional clause, thus making the confession a condition to baptism, and also to salvation. Upon hearing Philip, the eunuch replied, “**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**” Then Philip baptized him, because his confession gave him permission to be baptized.

The confession is a prerequisite to baptism. We see here that the eunuch did not have heaven's permission to be baptized until he confessed that he believed that Jesus is the Son of God. Neither does anyone else have

heaven's permission to be baptized until he confesses his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason why we have to make the confession today before we are baptized.

If as yet you have not made the confession, it is hoped that you will and that you will follow this confession by being baptized as the eunuch did. And do it today, for today is the day of salvation (II Corinthians 6:2). You may never have another opportunity to do so, therefore do it today. Jesus said, “**Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven**” (Matthew 10:32).

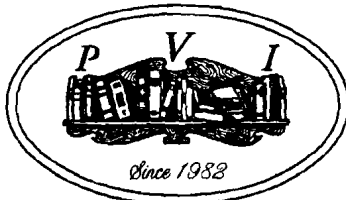
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# DON'T ROCK THE BOAT

Trent H. Wheeler

"Preach the truth, but don't rock the boat." This sad but familiar cry is being heard all across the brotherhood. Elders and preachers in the Lord's church claim to uphold truth but they don't want anyone to rock the boat in the local congregation. They fail to see the need of opposing religious error until it affects them directly. By that time it is usually too late.

What has happened to the bold men of the past who stood up for truth despite the consequences? Men like Peter and John who asked, "**Whether it be right in the sight of God to harken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.**" (Acts 4:19.) They did not know what the consequences of such a statement would hold. In Matthew 14:1-12 we read the account of John the Baptist's execution. John spoke boldly the truth to Herod, "**It is not lawful for thee to have her.**" (v.4) John's stand for truth cost him his head.

Paul warned Timothy of the danger of such men when he wrote, "**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 truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**" (II Timothy 4:3,4.) Too many congregations are looking for preachers to tickle the ears of their members. The Bible can be taught as long as controversial issues are not addressed. The church has become so afraid of offending someone that the members have been "protected" from doctrinal preaching.

The church today faces the same situation Paul addressed in Hebrews 5:12. "**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.**" Too many elders and preachers in the Lord's church fall into this category, needing to be taught again. These weak brethren in the Lord's church need a good dose of teaching on Christian responsibility as well as moral courage and faithful service.

Unless the trend changes soon, sound gospel preachers are going to have difficulty finding a congregation they can faithfully serve. We need to return to the old paths. We are in dire need of elders and congregations that support the efforts of faithful gospel preachers and publications like this one.

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# DANGERS OF EXTREMISM

CURTIS A. CATES

## INTRODUCTION

Through the ages of God's dealings with man, one of the most destructive forces used by the archenemy of man, Satan, has been [and is] extremism. It has divided God's people through the centuries, it has encouraged atheism in every generation, and it has damned countless priceless souls in every dispensation. Extremism crucified the Savior—and continues to rend his body and grieve his heart. The Lord's church has not been free from its curse, from its ugly claw of heresy in the present generation.

## WHAT IS EXTREMISM?

Extremism is the quality of being extreme, radicalism. To be extreme is to exceed the standard of faith, either adding to the laws of God or taking from those laws. To use the expressions of the "pioneers" in the Restoration Movement, extremism is to speak where the Bible is silent or to be silent where the Bible speaks. It is to treat matters of faith as if they were matters of opinion, or to treat matters of opinion as if they were matters of faith. It is to bind where God has loosed and to loose where God has bound. It is to fail to accept and honor the authority of God and of his Son, either by placing man-made opinions, doctrines, and traditions on the level of divine law and traditions [thereby placing man's authority on the level of God's authority, and thus usurping God's authority] or by refusing to be governed by God's authority and rejecting his commands and counsel. For one to go to either extreme is to become an enemy of the cross and to array one's self against God (Matthew 12:30).

## "SPEAK WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS; BE SILENT WHERE THE BIBLE IS SILENT"

Throughout the Scriptures, God has warned against tampering with his word — either adding to, taking from, or substituting for. The warnings would include the following: (1) "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). (2) "Every word of God is tried: ... "Add thou not unto his words, Lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:5,6). (3) Do not add; do not take away (Revelation 22:18-19). (4) And he said unto them, "Go ye into all with world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15) (5) "Preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2). (6) "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11).

One must not deviate from the word, and the one who encourages him becomes a false teacher (II John 9-11). Jude was going to write of the common salvation but rather "wrote unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all [time] delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Paul charged Timothy to "charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine" (I Timothy 1:3). The early church was to continue in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).

## CONCLUSION

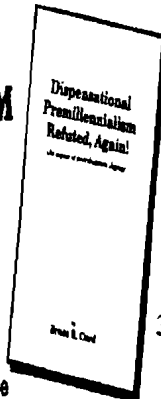
The Lord's church is being disrupted by heresies which would lead Christians into radicalism and into liberalism. Men are no longer willing to submit to Christ's authority; many are not speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent. Many are not content to call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways. Thus, souls are being lost while time, energies, and money are expended in an attempt to combat error. But, the Christian must be set for the defense of the gospel, and error among those professing holiness must be fought by the faithful. The Lord, Paul, Peter, John, Jude contended for the faith; the Lord is with those who submit to his unadulterated word.

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# A MUSTARD SEED

Reg Rogers

You will find in Matthew 13:31-32, "**Another parable [Jesus] put before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.**"

A tiny mustard seed has the potential of growing into a tree. A mustard seed is much smaller than a turnip seed, and there are other seeds smaller than these; however, a writer has the prerogative of using any figure of speech that is reasonable. Jesus did that here; the figure? SYNECDOCHE. With that figure he made a mustard seed the smallest of all seeds. The respectable **Adam Clarke** testifies to having seen in Bible lands such a tree strong enough for a man to climb. But the power of the parable does not depend upon finding such a tree, only one suitable to lodge birds.

The burden of the parable is that from a small, rather insignificant source could come something very great. How fitting a comparison to Christ's kingdom, his church, to come from a few disciples, mostly common people and unlettered by earthly standards, to grow to such proportions as to furnish the whole world with a refuge eternal.

This may lead us to Daniel's vision of Christ's kingdom. The king of Babylon saw a great composite image sym-

bolic of four world empires—the fourth, the Roman, represented by legs of iron and feet, part of iron mingled with miry clay. Now note this: Daniel beheld till a stone, cut out without hands, smote the image on the feet and crumbled the whole of it.

The stone was cut out without human hands, suggesting the action of the divine hand. Then notice that the stone, little by comparison, became a mountain that filled the whole earth. Mountains, in scripture, symbolize kingdoms. In the case of that seen by Daniel, the kingdom of Christ fits the figure. "**In the days of those kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever**" (Daniel 2:44).

Man cannot know the outcome of a thing by the size of the beginning thereof. "**The end of a thing is better than the beginning thereof**" (Ecclesiastes 6:8).

Did not Jesus say, "**Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom**" (Luke 12:32)?

In some places "the kingdom" means the whole world. In the parable of the mustard seed, it indicated the church as described by Daniel.

—Reprinted from *Wait A Minute*

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# A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Guy N. Woods

There has been an ever increasing tendency in the past few years to seek a change in the methods that have formerly motivated us in our attitude toward the denominational world. Brethren have contended for a different method of approach, have urged a modified view of the relation we sustain to the world. Particularly is this true with reference to the tactics that should characterize us in discussing the differences between the New Testament church and the denominations. As a result debates with sectarians have become unpopular, strong preaching is frowned upon, and a generally soft attitude has become the order of the day. In the field of journalism, especially, has the battle waxed warm. It is urged that argumentation and controversy have no place in a religious journal; that it is detrimental to the cause to hand copies of our pages containing such to our friends not Christians, and that the papers should be purged of all such. It is strange that proponents of this theory do not see that their argument is equally valid against the New Testament, itself. Paul withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed; and later told the world about it in his epistle to the churches of Galatia. Paul and Barnabas dissented so sharply over John Mark that they parted company.

Evidently, Luke did not feel the need of suppressing this interesting bit of information concerning those men. Many other similar accounts are recorded with great detail in the book of God. Indeed, we hesitate not to assert that this freedom to investigate and criticize is the one safeguard against corruption of doctrine and innovation in worship. Only the realization that what we write is subject to the most minute examination and the severest investigation will keep us from apostasy in matters of doctrine. It is in-

deed strange that any one who has regard for the Lord and his word would seek to surpass criticism, or lift his utterances above the level of investigation. The very attempt smacks suspiciously of the papacy.

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 to fearlessly 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. Let the Lord's disciples learn that their master came not to bring peace on earth, but a sword. The servant is not above his master. Christianity is, in its very nature aggressive, and its friends must never succumb to that maudlin pietism that trucks to the popularity of the world. The great characters of the past who have walked pleasingly before the Lord have been men who were not afraid. Noah stirred up considerable strife before the flood, and Moses created quite a storm in Egypt. Elijah disturbed Israel, and John the Baptist was beheaded for his fearless preaching.

[Deceased]

[*"Christianity in a Changing world," Abilene Christian College Lectures, 1939*]

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# THE KIND OF PREACHING NEEDED TODAY

H. Leo Boles

The kind of preaching that we need today is just the kind that Jesus and the apostles gave to the world. The churches of Christ were established and guided in their work and worship in the first century by the preaching that we have recorded in the New Testament scriptures. Churches were established by this kind of preaching in cities, villages, and countries. They were developed and fulfilled in their mission under the guidance of the instruction given us in the New Testament. They were successful then under such preaching, and can be today under such preaching. In fact, no church can fulfill its mission on earth and glorify God, except it follow the instruction given the early churches. Just what is needed for churches today may be found in what was needed for the churches then. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles and evangelists in giving to the churches then what was needed.

The public preaching today and the public teaching today must be plain, positive, direct, and scriptural. All public preaching and teaching of the gospel should be done in humility and reverence for God's truth, and should be given in kindness and in earnestness. No hypocrite can preach the truth of God with the power and persuasion that should ever accompany the preaching of the gospel. Mere generalities and negative preaching will not meet the requirements of this age or any other age. The history of all successful gospel preachers bears witness that they were in earnest and clothed in humility in proclaiming the gospel to the lost and in edifying the saints of God. This age needs, and the churches of Christ should demand, that the simple truths and principles of the New Testament be preached. Neither the world nor the church needs rhetorical sentimentalities nor oratorical sermonettes. The preaching should be direct and should meet the needs of the hearers. There should be no rehash of slavish repetition of the sermons of some famous evangelist or preacher of worldly renown. The preacher should be "hidden behind the cross," and his sermons should come from his heart and life, as he has drawn from the New Testament teaching. The churches do not need sanctified dullness, nor very learned dissertations, nor scientific smatterings, nor elocutionary artifices. No church can thrive spiritually upon such food, and truly no sinner can be converted to Christ by such preaching.

Not only should the preaching be simple and direct and positive, but it should instruct, reprove, rebuke, and exhort. The preacher should "**preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching**" (II Timothy 4:2). The preacher should adjust his own life with the truth of God, and then his reproofs and exhortations will have greater force. No one need think that he can preach the gospel as it

was done in the first century without rebuking sin. The preacher who is afraid to rebuke sin in the spirit of Christ is unworthy to be called a "preacher of the gospel." The preacher who is too cowardly to rebuke sin as God's book does is unworthy to be classed as a preacher of the gospel.

**The public preacher and teacher of the gospel must rebuke sin.** This should be done in love and gentleness, but it should be done in firmness and positiveness. Much preaching today is in such generalities and is so pointless and timid that it has lost its power. Nothing will stir the churches and shake the world but positive **preaching**. When preaching is not antagonistic to sin and is popular with the world, we may know that it will accomplish but little good. There should be no timid apology offered for rebuking sin in the world or in the church. The power and majesty and holiness of the truth of God demand that it be preached in such a way as to rebuke elders, preachers, the wealthy, the poor, and every class that may be guilty of sin.

There is need at the present time for preaching that will correct all the evils in the church and point sinners "to the lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." The preaching needed today should encourage the cultivation of personal holiness and consecration of God. It should encourage all church members to be earnest, prayerful students of the Bible and willing to sacrifice and serve in the name of Christ as opportunity is offered them. The preaching needed today should teach God's people to present their bodies a living sacrifice unto God and to keep themselves unspotted from the world. If such preaching is done, there will be a revival in church activities and a larger increase in additions to the church.

[Deceased]

[This article first appeared in the March 31, 1932 issue of the Gospel Advocate]

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**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.

## **—Colorado—**

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

## **—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.: 7:00 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.

## **—Missouri—**

**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.

## **—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.

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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.: 7:00 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.

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# JESUS AND THE SECTS

Rick Brumback

In the first century Jewry was as divided as Christianity appears today. There were several sects which differed in ideology and practice, and yet we see Jesus in none of these camps.

To understand the rise of the sects, and how the peculiarities of each came to be, it is important to know the events which occurred in the intertestamental period, that is, the time period between the last writings of the Old Testament and the events at the time of Jesus' birth. During the intertestamental period, the Jewish nation underwent several changes in both the religious and political arenas. They were trying to re-establish their religious identity while dealing with ever-changing political situations. With no more inspired writers or prophets, the nation tried to revive a knowledge of and adherence to the law of Moses. To this end, scribes, who at first served primarily as copyists, began to occupy positions of increasing importance since they were the most familiar with the law and could begin to re-educate the nation. Over time, the scribes became something of a professional group consisting of scholars of the law. They stressed exact adherence to the law, and even began to apply the law to every conceivable part of life, often requiring new additions to the law. The result was the emergence of an oral law in addition to the written law of Moses.

The political developments of the intertestamental period had profound effects on Jewish thought, but perhaps the most significant was the introduction of Greek culture by **Alexander the Great**. He not only conquered enormous territories, but taught Greek ways, changing the cultures of the newly acquired territories.

## Pharisees

The first sect we examine from the days of Jesus is the Pharisees, whose name meant "separated ones". The Pharisees consisted of the scribes and those who held not only to complete adherence to the law of Moses, but also to the oral law. They saw the introduction of Greek culture as an evil influence which would corrupt Jewish faithfulness. Consequently, they resisted the foreign ways, calling the people back, not only to the Law, but to the oral law.

They had many beliefs which we would share, at least in a general sense, e.g., the resurrection from the dead, the existence of angels, etc. But their religious zeal had prompted them to go beyond God's requirements in the Law. In Matthew 15 they charged Jesus saying that his disciples did not follow the oral law of ceremonial washing before eating (the question did not involve hygiene). Jesus replied, "**Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?... But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,**" (vv. 4, 15). Jesus was not a Pharisee, and would not let himself or his followers be bound by religious laws which did not come from God, a primary distinction of the Pharisees.

## Sadducees

The next sect is the Sadducees, which consisted largely of the wealthy and the priests. This group acknowledged the law of Moses, but did not recognize the oral laws of the Pharisees, a point of contention that helped cement the division between the two. In addition they had welcomed the arrival of the Greek culture, and had made peace with the foreign world, even at the expense of the Law. They were more concerned with the political than the spiritual and would violate the latter for the former.

The Sadducees were largely disinterested with Jesus until he claimed to be the Messiah, at which point they became alarmed that he might upset the political arena, since the Romans could not ignore the "King of the Jews". This was the primary cause for their antagonism toward Jesus.

Needless to say, Jesus was not a Sadducee because he would never set aside God's laws in order to make peace with man. His purpose was spiritual, not political or worldly.

## Zealots

The third sect we will mention is the Zealots, which could be labeled as the Jewish nationalist party. Before the Romans began to rule Judea in 63 B.C., the Jews enjoyed a century of independence. The independence gained and lost, coupled with the Pharisees' zeal for purity, led many to believe that the Messiah would only come to a people willing to fight for deliverance from foreigners. As the years passed the Zealots became increasingly violent in their attempt to throw off the Romans. It is believed that **Barabbas** and the two thieves crucified with Jesus were Zealots, along with **Simon Zelotes**, one of the apostles.

Jesus was not a Zealot, for he resisted attempts to be crowned as an earthly ruler (John 6). In addition, He told **Pilate** that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36).

There are a few other sects of the first century, but these are the ones most mentioned in the New Testament, and which helped shape Judaism to the greatest degree. It has been mentioned with each that Jesus was not a member of any of these sects. He rejected the additions to the Law given by the Pharisees, he upheld the Law which the Sadducees would abandon for worldly associations, and he was not come to establish an earthly kingdom as the Zealots desired. What was Jesus? He was simply a Jew, who followed the Law in its entirety, not binding where God had not bound, nor loosing where God had not loosed. He said of Himself, "**And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him,**" (John 8:29).

There are those in the church today who serve as modern Pharisees. Our non-institutional brethren would bind where God has not bound, adding human laws to

the gospel and demanding our adherence. We also find modern Sadducees in the church. Our liberal brethren will loose where God has not loosed, making peace with the world at the expense of peace with God. While ignoring parts of the gospel, they call us "legalists" because we do always those things that please God. Within this century we also have had brethren who would preach that Jesus will come back to Jerusalem and establish a kingdom, something he himself denied emphatically.

Brethren, let us not fall into one of these "camps," but like Jesus just be one of God's people. Let us be simply Christians, willing to come to God with a loving and pure heart, keeping his will. Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," (John 14:23).

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## ***"JUST PRAY THE SINNER'S PRAYER"***

[Read the following from a radio program, **UPWARDS**, by **Max Lucado** — featured speaker of the 1997 Nashville Jubilee. Compare it to the "sinner's prayer" of the sects. DPB, associate editor]

**MAX LUCADO: Radio Station KJAK  
Lubbock, Texas December 1996**

You can be sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor ruling spirits, nothing now and nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us, nothing below us, not anything else in the world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You see, in God, by virtue of your adoption, you have a divine affinity, you have eternal security, and you have a golden opportunity.

I cannot imagine an orphan turning down an opportunity to be adopted. With one decision, with one raising of the hand, with one agreement to leave the orphanage, that person all of a sudden goes from being abandoned to being claimed, from having no name to a new name, no future to a new future, he leaves the orphanage, and enters the house of the father.

That's what God offers you. No quiz, no examination. All you have to do is to say "yes" to the Father. And many of you have done that. But I have a hunch that not all of you have. I have a hunch that there are a few of you listening, even now, and God is using this to pull on your heart. The Holy Spirit is informing you of something

that you have never really heard before — and that is, that God is ready to be your Father. Maybe you never understood that the invitation was for everyone. Maybe you thought that you were unworthy. Maybe now you do understand. God will make you worthy, and the invitation is for you. And all you have to do is to call him Father. Just call him Father. Just turn your heart to him right now as I am speaking. Call him your Father. And your Father will respond. Why don't you do that?

"Father, I give my heart to you. I give you my sins, I give you my tears, I give you my fears, I give you my whole life. I accept the gift of your Son on the cross for my sins. And I ask you Father, to receive me as your child through Jesus I pray. Amen."

### **ANNOUNCER:**

And friend, if you prayed along with Max Lucado just now, here on **UPWARDS**, we want to welcome you into the family of God. We hope you will contact us and share your personal testimony. If you are already a believer, we thank you for praying for these new brothers and sisters in Christ.

Because Christmas is an excellent time to receive God's gift of salvation, and whether you are a new believer or perhaps a veteran of the faith, Max Lucado has prepared an uplifting new printed resource. He has titled it "*WHEN THE ANGELS CAME DOWN*". You want a copy for yourself or perhaps to share it with a loved one

about whom you may be concerned spiritually. With your December donation of any amount to UPWARDS, you may request a personal copy. The place to write is UPWARDS, Box 5860, San Antonio, TX 78201. Or if you like you may phone us toll free for added convenience, and it would certainly speed up the opportunity. The number is 1-800-822WORD.

Next week we will take a break from our series titled THE GREAT HOUSE OF GOD, giving way to an uplifting selection of holiday lessons specifically designed to help you grow stronger in your faith. As with today's study, each of these lessons is available on extended audio cassette. The title of this week's series WHEN YOUR HEART NEEDS A FATHER. Every tape contains an additional bonus message from Max on the reverse side. Cost is just \$5.00 for each additional cassette.

Again, our ministry mailing address is UPWARDS, Box 5860, San Antonio, TX 78201. And the new publication we are offering currently is *WHEN ANGELS CAME DOWN*. Don't miss out on yours. If you'd like to call us toll free, the number is 1-800-822-9673.

**ANNOUNCER:**

Max Lucado returns with a special word for those who received the gift of salvation just moments ago in prayer.

**MAX LUCADO:**

Today is the first day you've ever prayed a prayer like that. Could you do me a favor? Could you write me a letter? I don't have anything I am going to ask from you. I do have a letter I would like to send to you, I'd like to give you a word about the next step or two. I want to encourage you to find a church, I want to encourage you to be baptized, I want to encourage you to read your Bible. But I don't want you to do any of that so that you will be saved. I want you to do all of that because you are saved. You see, your Father has a great life planned for you, and I want to tell you about it. Give us a call, and drop me a note. And, thanks my friend, for making the greatest decision of your life. I'll be back on Monday. I hope you will be, too.

"Don't criticize the Bible; let the Bible criticize you."  
 "God's work done in God's way will never lack supplies."  
 "You can't change the past, but you can ruin a perfectly good present by worrying about the future."

**Denominational Doctrines**

by Jerry Moffitt

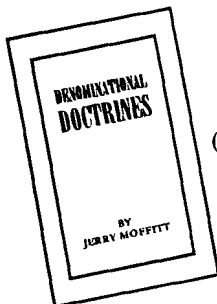
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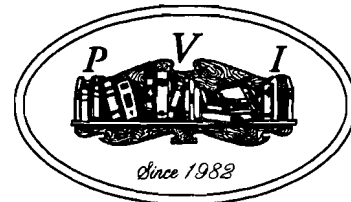
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# NOTES AND QUOTES...

P. J. Harvill, of Carrollton, Texas, some years back wrote, "We read in a recent paper of yours that you had never seen tares as referred to in the Bible. We are sending you an example of 'wheat and tares.' They are ready for harvest but only the reaper knows the difference or people like you who can spot 'tares' in the church and warn to be on guard against letting them completely take over. Not until we had a disaster in our congregation did we appreciate your work."

[NOTE: "Your sending me that example of 'wheat and tares'," I replied in part, "was greatly appreciated. I know what you mean about folks not being able to spot the tares among God's people until disaster takes over." IYR Jr.]

\*\*\*\*\*

It is better to be beaten in the right than to succeed in the wrong.

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## FIND A NEED AND FILL IT

Homer Putnam Reeves

The Kaiser Corporation has a motto which has proven its worth: "Find a Need and Fill It." This simple but very effective little motto has enabled this company to provide goods and services in ample supply.

The church is greatly blessed with a wealth of talent. Our potential is terrific. Really, there are countless valuable, untapped resources, enough to bewilder us almost. Whatever may be said, ability is not lacking in the church!

Moreover, many, perhaps the great majority, of our people, are mature in the faith. Most are old enough in Christ to know what to do. Information is not lacking in the church. Certainly, we all need to learn more; but most of us know much, much more than we do.

So, we have no shortage of ability and no want of information. What is our lack? Where are we deficient? In what are we failing? The answer is clear. We simply do not perform as well as we know and to the extent of our ability. (Take the time to read Matthew 25:14-46.)

The Kaiser motto is good. May we urge every member of the church to find a need and fill it. Seek out a job and do it. Let everyone do what he can, for God's glory. Let's do it now. Redeem the time:

buy up opportunities.

Jesus urges, "Son, go work today in my vineyard." Surely we know that the night cometh when we shall not be able to work. Please, let us make [this year] the most productive year in our history. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

—Via Gospel Advocate

\*\*\*\*\*

Ian McPherson, Bellerive, Tasmania, Australia: "Greetings once again from Tasmania... Our lectureship is just around the corner. It begins on May 1 till May 4. All our speakers are still confirmed and have submitted full manuscripts for inclusion in our book that we are to publish. It will contain about 100 pages.

"Gary Young is editing it, but since he is away overseas, the bulk of the work is falling on his wife Helyn and our daughter Joanne. They have done a marvelous job in preparing it. They have to edit and type all the manuscripts.

"When they have all the pages ready, we will get them printed and bound. The books will be available for around \$7.00 which will be the cost of producing them. If any of our readers want one, you can order it through us here."

[NOTE: Brother McPherson's mailing address is 32 King at Bellerive, Tasmania, Australia 7018. IYR Jr.]

Asghar Ali, of Lahore, Pakistan, let us know that their daughter Dinashin was admitted into one of the best colleges (Kinnaird College) in Lahore, the oldest college for women in Pakistan. She had received good marks in her high school work.

\*\*\*\*\*

## GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE

Bill Jackson

The apostle Peter ends his great second epistle with the charge, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). Here, this growing is set in contrast with verse 17, those who were not alert and who might be led away by false teachers and then would fall from their own steadfastness. The contrast is between falling and growing.

It is right and proper that we be concerned about growth. Upon his entry into

the kingdom, the child of God should be vitally interested in spiritual growth and development. He should want to move from the babe status to that of the mature, perfected following of Christ. Every congregation should want to grow—in number, but also in terms of the spirituality of the group. In fact, unless the growth in spirituality is there, there is no true church, regardless of the numbers. We have come to the point today, in the kingdom, that "numbers for numbers' sake" seems to be the motivation of some.

One cannot help but notice that those congregations "known for numbers" are the very ones also known for liberalism in so many instances. "Fill the pews at any cost" is not growth, and with that attitude there come dozens of problems.

One can indeed get carried away with numbers, and then, in order to keep the numbers, it is convenient to take a "soft" approach in handling truth. I have personal knowledge of a minister of one of these very, very large congregations, and about whom there is a great deal of brotherhood publicity, and upon being questioned he admitted that 1) no church discipline was taught or practiced, and 2) no stress was given to God's law concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage—and especially was this not stressed in the singles class composed of several who were divorced! Now, really, can true spiritual growth come when vital parts of God's word are ignored?

We are obligated to grow. We are obligated to be strong. The command to grow, in one place, is II Peter 3:18. The command to be strong, in one place, is I Corinthians 16:13. For growth, and for strength, one will have to do the things that make for growth and strength.

The apostle says it best here: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2). Faithful adherence to the word, and following only the word, allowing the word to find lodging in the hearts and lives of the saints, provides growth and strength. It will come in no other way!

That is why we should take great pleasure in the teaching program, whereby the word of God is continually studied. Growth and strength come thereby. There are a thousand and one other things the kingdom could expend its energies on and NO GROWTH AT ALL would come. We MUST do the things making for the growth and strength of the saints!

[Deceased]

## THE QUESTION

"In conviction, conversion, and sanctification does the Holy Spirit operate

ONLY

through the Word of God?"

## A DEBATE

The Disputants

David P. Brown Bob L. Ross  
(Christian) (Baptist)

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**WHAT ABOUT PARENTS WHO DISCOURAGE THEIR SONS FROM BECOMING PREACHERS!**

Tommy J. Hicks

I've known parents who discouraged their sons from becoming preachers because of all the heartache, insecurity, and outright abuse heaped upon preachers by their own brethren. Every faithful preacher, who has preached very long, could tell true horror stories of such things that would break the hearts of the caring. However, most preachers would agree with Paul's statement in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

There is not a doubt in my mind there will be some brethren who will lose their souls because of their attitude and actions toward faithful proclaimers of the word.

I have often wondered if it is true that preachers have it so easy and get paid so much money why is it that there are so very few who desire the "job." While I truly have appreciated every cent of support brethren have provided for me, enabling me to "preach the word," there is just not enough money in the world to get me to be a preacher. Money should never be one's motive for preaching. There are lots of easier things to do where more money could be had.

**BUT, DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR GOSPEL PREACHERS. THEY LOVE THEIR WORK, AND THEIR BLESSINGS IN THIS LIFE ALONE FAR OUTWEIGH THEIR ADVERSITIES.**

It is sort of like the advertisement for the Marines: WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN. Only preachers have to be tougher than Marines, in a manner of speaking (smile Marines), of course.

**PARENTS, ENCOURAGE YOUR SONS TO BECOME GOSPEL PREACHERS.** If they do, you can truly be proud of them. They will have amounted to something that really counts. They will be really "MEN" among men, but, most importantly, they will be men of God.

—Handley Herald

\*\*\*\*\*

**J. E. Choate**, Nashville, Tennessee: "I am on the mailing list of the Willow Creek Association, and have some mailings from them that are not generally available. However, whoever would know about Willow Creek church in depth must absolutely read the articles.

"I plan a series of articles over the next year to expose what these brethren have in mind and will not tell the rank and file of the churches of Christ. There is so much to do, and the pressures are intense to get on with the work..."

[NOTE: "Is it not ironic (not to say ironic)," I replied to brother Choate, in part, "that 'change agents' among us can opt for a model such as the Willow Creek Community Church, the Vineyard Movement or the 'neo-conservative' movement—yet they can no longer 'see' a pattern in the New Testament! And what is a 'model' but a 'pattern'? Like the

old saying said, 'There is none so blind as he who will not see'..."

"It is important that the rank and file of the members inform themselves where all this is coming from—not just those looked upon (or who look upon themselves) as scholars.

**"So keep these articles coming. If the old Ship of Zion goes down, surely it must be due to our own ignorance!"** IYR Jr.]

**Don Thornton**, Hong Kong: "My wife Pien and I have been going across the border to help teach some brethren and study with those who are not members of the church. We met a sister's mother who is about 64 years old. She had been persecuted off and on for many years because of her belief in God and her desire to study the Bible. During the Cultural Revolution she was disciplined severely, shamed and even though her husband did not believe in God's word, he stood by her side, so he lost his position in the army.

"She had been baptized by a brother about two years ago but she had the idea that she was already saved before then. The American attempted to teach her through her daughter, but because of the fact that it was her daughter doing the interpreting the mother did not accept the teaching. The mother told us that she had been studying the Bible for years and the daughter only for a short time, so she had very little confidence in her. To show respect to the teacher, she was 'baptized' but she was confident she had been saved years before for God had helped her many times in great danger.

"We told her that God knew her heart so God knows how to bring her to the right moment so she could learn the truth. She said she always had the fear that at the judgment day God would say to her 'depart from me for I never knew you.'

"Pien, my wife, then proceeded to teach her in Mandarin, the official language of China. After a couple of hours of studying Acts and other verses, she stood up and said, 'I now understand. I want to be baptized right now.' So she was baptized that very hour. I am sorry that I cannot give her name nor the names of the other brethren at this time because of the area where they live..."

"We planned to print 10,000 New Testaments in China to be shipped back to Hong Kong to send to students in different locations who are our students. The cost would be about \$5,500. I even took the down payment out of the bank and sent it to China but the brethren investigated the company carefully and concluded that the company did not have the equipment to do the printing. I was given the \$2,500/US back. I know of a dependable printer in northern China and will approach him later this year.

"We have found a better and cheaper way to send the lessons to the various countries. We sent more than 150 pounds during the month plus many other letters that way. There must be more than 11 pounds to any one country. The total number of letters with two or more new lessons with lessons graded and questions answered were over

3,000 in April...and increasing daily.

"We have lost two Chinese families due to them moving to another location. One was the song leader and interpreter.

"We still have a big turnover. The average length of stay in our area for the members is about 1.5 years. We also have the problem of members working alternating Sundays.

"Three of eight baptisms were a result of members helping in teaching their families as we helped them. Those baptized are a result of those temporary members teaching their friends and families after we had taught them and showed them how to reach the lost. One member was reached by the Bible correspondence course and, in turn, ten of her friends obeyed plus two mentioned above. Three of those baptized will be attending the worship in other areas.

"We have a goodly number of correspondence students asking for someone to teach personally. It is not easy to get follow-up workers so we have written a correspondence lesson telling them what to do if no one can visit them. The Bibles that we are giving out also do the same. These are the Bibles that we want to print..."

[NOTE: The Thorntons are the ones still handling our "Bibles for China" work, which was begun by Archie W. Luper back in 1979. Our supply of Chinese Bibles, Testaments and Basic Bible Courses in Hong Kong is being depleted. Those who would like to contribute toward re-supplying these materials, please make all contributions payable to BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST, clearly earmarked "BIBLES FOR CHINA," and address them to 4850 SAUFLEY FIELD ROAD, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32526. IYR Jr.]

**Carl W. McDaniel**, Atascosa, Texas: "I appreciate your paper warning us of the many problems and things we need to try to avoid...I've had all three volumes of *Axe on the Root* for many years."

**Trudy Heidemann**, of Prosser, Washington, wrote, "I don't know if you are related to the Ira Rice that I knew when I was young. He held a meeting in Shidler, Oklahoma, in the late '40s. I was about 17 or 18 at that time. My name was Peters."

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give a gift  
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to a friend?**



# SINGING

Jimmy Clark

**“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee”** (Hebrews 2:11-12).

The joy of reconciliation which comes from the atonement of Christ is beautifully expressed in singing. The Godhead has always known that songs are powerful mediums to motivate the lives of men.

It is very important that men meditate on the divine teaching concerning singing, not just to refute the unauthorized use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, but to see the true value of singing in the lives of Christians today. Consider some things that biblical singing does.

**Teaches the Truth.** It is vitally important that the songs one sings speak what the scriptures teach. **“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”** (Colossians 3:16).

Singing is, therefore, to be that which can be understood, not just a large sound. **“What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pay with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also”** (I Corinthians 14:15).

The songs that came from the voices of the first century brethren involved revelation. Their minds were to be actively involved as they sang. Though revelation is complete today, one should not think that the mind can be idle as he participates in the singing.

Some of the most remembered truths of scripture are retained by the minds that hear biblical songs. Singing is a very precious privilege and priceless means of proclaiming the gospel.

**Touches the Heart.** The emotions of man are moved by the truths taught in the songs. **“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”** (Ephesians 5:19).

The heart strings are plucked every time one participates in singing. So often people are moved to tears when they hear and sing songs like “Where We Never Grow Old” and “Paradise Valley.” Hearts of men are made strong when “Rock of Ages” and “Blessed Assurance” swell from the bottoms of men's soul's.

There is no need for any artificial stimulation when the heart is conscious of the truths in singing. Paul knew the value of singing as he and Silas were at Philippi in prison (Acts 16:25). May all come to see the simple truth that singing is beneficial to both God and man.

**Turns One Toward God.** When a song teaches the truth and the heart is meditating on the words, one is then directed toward God and away from the world.

The first recorded song in the Bible is a reminder of God's goodness and grace. **“The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him”** (Exodus 15:2).

The psalms constantly magnify the Lord and all his wondrous works. It is not by accident that David was a man after God's own heart, for his songs were filled with faith toward God and love of the word of God. **“Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage”** (Psalms 119:54).

A sure deterrent to unrighteousness in one's own life is to fill it with Biblical singing. It lifts one higher than any song that this world could ever devise.

—Church Bulletin  
Bethel Church of Christ  
Athens, Alabama

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

A publication of Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## An Anecdotal Update of Nashville Jubilee Inc.

J.E. Choate

I predicted some time back that Jubilee '97 would be the "mother of all Jubilees" since its incorporation in 1989. *Semiotic* is a word in general theory which deals with signs and symbols in natural and constructed languages.

This article sets up signs and symbols to give special insights into the liberal agendas of the "change agents" with specific reference to Jubilee '97. The symbol comes from the *biblical* Jubilee. Jubilee became a symbol of freedom for the ancient Israelites in an age when man, ox, donkey, and the land rested every seventh and 50th year.

The symbol of Jubilee in Nashville Jubilee, Inc., is a misnomer. The Nashville Jubilee does not offer freedom in Christ, but enslavement to the doctrines and practices of sectarian Christianity. This is the fatal solution of the "change agents"—to destroy the identity of the churches of Christ in this postmodern age.

Jubilee has divided in less than ten years the Nashville churches of Christ. This is marked by an unparalleled spirit of bitterness and rancor unknown in 150 years of Nashville history. This sad state of affairs did not exist before **Rubel Shelly** came to Nashville.

Rubel Shelly has used every tool, device, and weapon in his arsenal to drive ever deeper the wedges of division. Families are divided. Children of alienated families can no longer play together. Something is terribly wrong. The presence of evil is crouching in the doorways of our churches.

What are the *causes* for the troubling and dividing of churches of Christ. Some of the answers are simple. The "change agents" say the churches of Christ are another denomination with a sectarian past. This destroys the very essence of the Restoration plea for unity based upon scripture.

A new hermeneutic is proposed which denies the apostolic pattern of the New Testament. The meaning of scripture is reduced to a common acceptance of the societal and cultural pressures of this postmodern age. The very foundation of the church Christ built is now in a state of crisis and erosion. But all of these things and much more are only major symptoms of what is happening to the churches of Christ.

### READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

One of the major clues resides in the original wording of the charter of Nashville Jubilee, Inc. The wording is of such a nature that it refers to an undefined secular humanitarian enterprise.

First of all, the original wording of purpose set forth in the Jubilee charter as of February 19, 1989 makes no mention of the churches of Christ in the defining statement. Any church or humanitarian organization would fit.

**The purpose for which the corporation as organized is to present for the public good, an organization devoted to training, encouragement, and inspiration of congregations and individuals toward greater service to God and all humanity and any other good and lawful purpose consistent with these goals.**

This is a noble statement, but not enough. Not one word suggests the promotion of churches of Christ.

### SIGNS AND SYMBOLS OF THE TIMES (MATTHEW 16:3)

Jesus criticized and named the Pharisees and Sadducees because they demanded of him a sign from heaven, but refused to read the signs of the times. What are the

(Continued on page 5)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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August/1997

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David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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Editorial...

## JUBILEE '97

### Did More Meet the Eye Than Was There?

When the Lord sent Samuel to the house of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, to seek a man to replace Saul, the son of Kish, as king over Israel, at first, when Samuel looked on Eliab, he said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before me."

But the Lord said unto Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7)

#### GET ALONG GO ALONG?

Having lived in Nashville personally for seven years in the late 1960s and early '70s, I learned early of the tendency of many Nashville preachers—even some elders—to judge things as they *outwardly* appear to be. Also of the inordinate dread many have that taking a stand (even for truth) might lead to conflict and discord.

Rather than taking a stand for what they truly believe, many practice a "get along go along" philosophy which in the long run opens the door to doctrinal error, and is precisely what was responsible for permitting the woefully misnamed "Nashville Christian Jubilee, Inc." to get started in the first place.

#### LIKE FROGS IN A POND

We've all heard the story of the farmer who claimed to have a million frogs in his pond—but when they drained the pond, they found only two frogs.

Admittedly the 12,000 or so who came to Jubilee '97 made a lot of noise. It must be remembered, however, that Nashville, Davidson County and Middle Tennessee are a mighty big "pond." When we lived in Nashville, we counted 135 congregations in Davidson County alone—at least 100 of them in Nashville—to say nothing of the scores and hundreds of other congregations, from little to large, in the Middle Tennessee area.

Of this enormous number of churches of Christ in the area, it is significant that *only ten* actively supported Jubilee this time around. If our information is correct—and we have tried to make it so—these ten churches, namely, were Antioch, Brentwood Hills, Community/Hendersonville, Donelson, Green Ridge, Harpeth Hills, Madison, Otter Creek, West End and, of course, Woodmont Hills. [If others feel

they should have been included in the list, please let us know, so we can name you, as well.]

#### ELDERS TAKING A STAND

Going back to the very first "Jubilee," in 1989, we all remember the **Robertson County** church and its elders exposing this misnamed anomaly from the beginning.

By 1994, the **Jackson Park/Nashville** congregation carried "*A Message From The Elders*" in their church bulletin—an action causing many other congregations and elderships to take a new look at this deviation from the only rule of faith and practice among churches of Christ—God's word.

In their weekly bulletin, *The Light Bearer*, under date of June 25, 1997, the **Goodlettsville**, Tennessee congregation front-paged the following:

#### Position Statement—Jubilee

The elders have prayerfully considered the much-publicized Jubilee, scheduled to be held July 1 through July 5. This program has received mixed reviews since it began.

Some have suggested that the program is one in which a person, depending upon their maturity, may attend and find it to be a positive experience. Your elders remember biblical examples where individuals were overcome when subjected to pressures and false teaching. Therefore, in connection with our responsibility for the spiritual oversight of the congregation we do not support Jubilee. It is our sincere recommendation that none of you attend, or support in any fashion, the endeavors of Jubilee.

The elders have had discussions with some of the speakers. This process has confirmed our fear that at least some of the individuals included on the program do not teach the truth contained in the Bible. Specifically, the purpose, or need, for baptism is distorted by the individual that is the "Keynote" speaker. In one of his radio presentations in December 1996, Mr. Lucado taught that a person could be saved without baptism. He encouraged those who had accepted God as their savior that morning, to find a church and be baptized. However, he further commented this was not being suggested in order that they might be saved but because they were already saved...

While not 100% true, a large number of the speakers are known to hold similar positions as Mr. Lucado. There are some scheduled speakers that, based on our direct discussions with them, do not support the teaching of Mr. Lucado. Some of them have been encouraged to not participate in the Jubilee because of the erroneous doctrinal positions held by Mr. Lucado. However, those with whom we have talked continue to believe they can make a difference by attending the Jubilee and "teaching the truth."

If you have any questions regarding this matter, any elder is available to further discuss the matter.

[Signed]

*The Elders*

[NOTE: To further bolster their Position Statement, the Goodlettsville elders, on page 4 of that same bulletin, published a careful transcription of Max Lucado's speech alluded to, which was delivered over Radio Station KJAK, Lubbock, Texas, in December 1996. Their mailing address is 411 South Main Street, Goodlettsville, Tennessee 37072. IYR Jr.]

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Continuing this litany of warnings, **Crieve Hall/Nashville's** weekly bulletin, *The Crieve Hall Family Chronicle*, under date of July 2, 1997, had the following to say on Page 3:

#### *Jubilee*

**Sunday, June 29, 1997, Brother Dan Winkler** responded to the request of the elders, and spoke at both morning worship assemblies about some of the dangers relating to the Nashville Jubilee.

**Crieve Hall church of Christ** through the elders, never supported this activity in any way, not in announcements, financial support, or with our prayers in public.

We had serious concerns from the beginning of the very first of these programs. We notified the sponsoring church of some of these concerns before the first Jubilee was ever held. Correspondence took place. At the annual planning meeting of Crieve Hall elders and ministers, before the first Jubilee was ever held, we agreed 100% not to have anything to do with the questionable program.

**Dan Winkler** spoke to the problem June 29. The sermon was recorded. If you want a copy of the recording, please order from Crieve Hall church of Christ, requesting sermon of June 29, and it will be handled. Cost of tape is \$2.00 plus handling. We are grateful for our faithful elders who are acting Biblically to their responsibility of overseeing the Christians, the church they oversee. Acts 20:28-30. Thank God for a preacher who will publicly proclaim the truths related to this problem. Thank God for a church that supports our elders in their overseeing functions. Thank God for the truth!

[NOTE: The foregoing was signed by **Paul M. Tucker**, longtime minister to the Crieve Hall Church of Christ. Their mailing address is 4806 Trousdale Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37220. IYR Jr.]

#### **BOUND VOLUMES AVAILABLE**

Many tell us they don't know what they would do without all 27 BOUND VOLUMES now available of BACK ISSUES of *Contending for the Faith*. The roots of the present lie deep in the past. For a good understanding of what is happening to us, you need them ALL.

To order, please send \$192.00 asking for the COMPLETE SET. Address it to **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, 2956 Allshore, Memphis, TN 38118.

We can but imagine the consternation which swept through the *Hillsboro/Nashville* eldership, when the following appeared on the front page of their *Hillsboro Herald* church bulletin for June 29: Without clearing it with the elders, a junior member of their church staff evidently took it upon himself/herself to insert the foregoing advertisement right on the front

page! It did not reflect the views or the wishes of the Hillsboro elders *at all!*

Therefore, in their very next bulletin—the one for July 6—in the same identical placement, the Hillsboro elders made crystal clear that they did NOT endorse 1997 Jubilee.

Their correction reads as follows:

**TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS!**



DATE: ..... JULY 2-5, 1997  
 PLACE: ..... NASHVILLE ARENA  
 FEATURED SPEAKER ..... MAX LUCADO



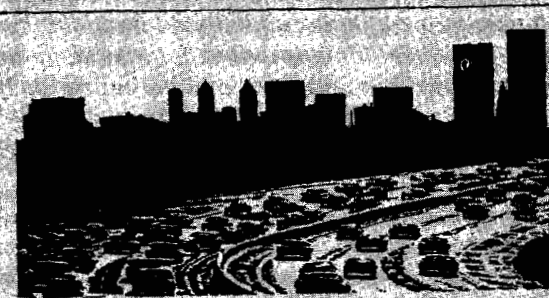
**COUNTERING THE CULTURE**  
 HILLSBORO SUMMER SERIES  
 JULY 2 ..... JOHN MILLER

Correction:

Last week in this space there was mistakenly printed an announcement which appeared to endorse 1997 Jubilee.

The elders of the Hillsboro church do not endorse 1997 Jubilee.

Our concern for the Biblical soundness of some of the teachings at Jubilee, and our earnest desire to not be a stumbling block, leads us to refrain from support for or endorsement of 1997 Jubilee.



**COUNTERING THE CULTURE**  
 HILLSBORO SUMMER SERIES  
 JULY 9 ..... KEITH NIKOLAUS

In addition to all of these, on July 3, a meeting attended by more than 60 elders, preachers and other brethren took place at **Concord Road**/Nashville to consider how best to register their disapproval of Jubilee, Rubel Shelly, et. al. Among those in attendance were **William Woodson** and **Jim Bill McInteer**. Although he could not be there in person, **Willard Collins** sent a letter expressing his rejection of Jubilee.

Even Nashville's two leading daily newspapers—*The Tennessean* and the *Nashville Banner*—knew that Jubilee did not represent the views of the old-line, long-established, traditional churches of Christ in the area. They let this be known by running headlines, such as “**Jubilee stirs debate among congregations—Conservatives say speakers aren't 'teaching the truth'**” (front-paged in the *Banner* for July 1), and “**Jubilee opens under cloud of uncertainty**” (which dominated the Religion section of *The Tennessean* for July 3).

It might be asking too much to drain the Nashville/Middle Tennessee “pond” to capture those few “frogs” who are *causing* all this division and offence contrary to the doctrine, re: Jubilee.

But if you *really* want to do something about it, you might write to the **East Hill Church of Christ, Post Office Box 329, Pulaski, Tennessee 38478**, and ask for the packet of documented information they are putting out at their own cost. It includes a 24-page booklet, some tracts and a tape recording of actual speeches by **Max Lucado** (error) and **Leroy Brownlow** (truth). At last account, they already had filled orders for 1,000 sets of this material, plus 2,500 of the booklets alone.

If you will order a packet for your preacher and each of your elders, this could go a long way toward ensuring that *Jubilee '97* will be the last we see or hear of this unscriptural phenomenon which seeks to undermine the cause of truth and the genuine churches of Christ.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

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## Jubilee Update

(continued from page 1)

signs of these times which point to the false teachers and their false doctrines? I have tracked the course of Jubilee since 1992. All signs point to ever growing divisions as “change agents” plunge the churches ever deeper into confusion.

For the past five years, I have written updates on each Jubilee. I have not solicited support or encouragement from individuals or churches. But a steady stream of encouragement has come from the most highly visible and honored members of the churches, young and old. The most often received expression is — “keep on doing what you are doing.”

### TURNING THE CORNER ON JUBILEE

Several notable events have taken place during the spring and early summer which have dramatically impacted Jubilee and local churches. The more significant ones are addressed. Those that surfaced came from totally unexpected places. And the “spin-offs” have been equally surprising.

The first was a church meeting which may well prove to be an historic event. More than 60 elders, preachers,

and church members met at the Concord Road church of Christ. The purpose was to register their disapproval of Jubilee and Rubel Shelly, and what can we do.

Some of the most widely known and respected preachers attended — **William Woodson** and **Jim Bill McInteer**. **Willard Collins** sent a letter expressing his opposition to Jubilee. He told of rejecting the offer of the Jubilee planners to appear on stage the first night to accept a plaque honoring him for his life of service to the churches of Christ.

The second event was the public disclaimers of the Crieve Hall, Goodlettsville, and Hillsboro elders who made it clear that they do not endorse Jubilee. Time will tell that the decisions the elders made spell doom-day for Jubilee. I think so.

Another thing is that these elders are like well mannered school boys who have had enough of the school yard bully who disrupts their game of baseball. The only solution is for the boys to flex their muscles and to tell the bully to shape up or ship out. It may very well be that the solution, now at a painful impasse, is to mark Rubel Shelly and all his kind as chief troublemakers of the traditional churches of Christ.

The first bone of contention is centered in the fact that **Max Lucado** was the keynote Jubilee speaker. We learned of his connections with **Don Finto** through Rubel Shelly at the April 22 luncheon at the Sheraton hotel. How a member of the traditional churches of Christ could speak on Jubilee '97 without a word of complaint troubles me deeply.

Why does Rubel Shelly picture Max Lucado as the best qualified preacher today to preach the gospel? He is a standard evangelical preacher stamped in the mold of **Billy Graham**. **Batsell Barrett Baxter** was perhaps the most admired church of Christ preacher in our generation. His singular tragic flaw was that he trusted unworthy preachers and other admirers who never stood for anything.

Batsell was a friend of mine. We worked closely in the DLC Bible department until his passing. He spoke his mind, and I did the same. Brother Baxter approached Billy Graham in his Nashville meeting asking why he did not preach the words of Jesus in the Great Commission. Graham dismissed him with a curt reply, “Now, you have made your speech.”

Another bone of contention surfaced in the months prior to Jubilee '97. Rubel Shelly courted a second Jubilee

audience in the *local denominational churches*. He expected them to furnish the overflow crowds nightly to the arena. *They did not come*. There were 15,000 Jubilee seats in place. The Arena front office reported that 10,500 attended the first night.

These denominational people are civil people who were simply not interested in hearing Shelly and Lucado bash their own churches which had reared them from the cradle. These church of Christ people are their next door neighbors.

## THE JUBILEE NEGATIVES

The Jubilee promoters cannot blame their woes on the traditional churches of Christ. *Peace had reigned in the churches of Christ before Rubel came*. The *Nashville Banner* and *Tennessean* have fairly and objectively reported on the comings and goings of the churches of Christ over the years. Their staffs are loaded with church of Christ people.

The Jubilee people who journeyed to Nashville must have been surprised

when they opened their newspapers on the eve of Jubilee '97 to be greeted with eye opening headlines.

The *Nashville Banner* headlined Jubilee hours before the first Lucado keynote speech — "Jubilee Stirs Debate Among the Congregations." The subtitle read — 'Conservatives say speakers are not teaching the truth.' The *Nashville Tennessean* headlined the story — "Jubilee Opens Under Cloud of Uncertainty." The subtitle read — "Event's future in doubt as organizing churches debate tone, funding."

Another thing that caught the eye on the convention floor were the numerous displays. Two displays were not on the floor by purpose—the *Gospel Advocate* and the *21st Century Christian*. The negative is that these two publishers were registering their opposition to Jubilee. This was also the case with *Freed-Hardeman University* whose Board of directors ordered the FHU display off the convention floor.

Another negative for Jubilee was the presence of something in the display of the Howard Publishing Com-

pany. The last issue of *Image* was on the table. This is a fact and facts will be facts when God sets this earth on fire sending it a spinning fireball through the heavens. The paper is merging with *Wineskins*. This is a curious decision. Does not brother **Alton Howard** remember that **Doug Foster** and **Andre Resner** shot *Wineskins* down in 1992?

The big question is will Jubilee fold or continue. The rumor is that this will be their last July 4th celebration.

But another rumor has surfaced. Some unidentified "guardian faerie" has put down a million dollars to insure Jubilee's future!

## POSTSCRIPT

My prediction is that Jubilee has a future, but not with the traditional churches of Christ. No longer can the Jubilee godfathers identify with churches of Christ. Now is the time for the faithful to stand up and blow the whistle on these church bullies. There is no cheap grace for them. They should repent and ask for forgiveness and mend their ways.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

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# “These Ye Ought To Have Done, and Not To Leave the Other Undone” (Matthew 23:23)

[ Editorial Note: The following letter was written in response to my Associate Editorial of the June 1997 issue of *Contending for the Faith*. The title of the editorial was, “Jim Bill McInteer Where Are You?” The letter of response is self explanatory as is my reply to it. —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, TN 37204  
Mr. David P. Brown  
P.O. Box 2273  
Spring, TX 77383-2273

July 23, 1997

Dear Mr. Brown,

Your recent Associate Editorial question may have been rhetorical in nature, but I thought you might appreciate an answer. You expressed your perspective, and, while mine will be colored by the fact the individual in question is my father, I wanted to let you know what I have observed in the time I have known Jim Bill McInteer.

You will always find him with the saints anytime they are gathered. He continues to have many opportunities to proclaim the good news which he does whenever physically possible. You will find him encouraging others in their walk with Christ. His ministry through letter writing has touched untold hearts. His open door and listening ear for young and old have provided him opportunity after opportunity to strengthen the body of believers and to help struggling families recover healthy relationships. He spends much time in reading and prayer to be better equipped in his teaching.

Over the last few years the place that you will find him is taking care of my mother. This care may have impacted more lives than all he has said and done in the previous 70 years of his life. Mother has Alzheimer's. It is very advanced. She has not known me or my sister for many years. She knows dad only as the person who takes care of her. She requires constant care. Dad has taken that responsibility upon himself. All the cooking, cleaning and hygiene duties are his. One of his only daily breaks from the unending needs comes in the early morning as he heads out of the house to take his prayer walk. If you have ever worked with an individual in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's you have some appreciation for how physically and emotionally demanding such care is. He has accepted this facet of the marriage commitment without complaint. His constant prayer is to live long enough to serve her through these days. I know of no other Alzheimer's patient who has had this level of personal care and been provided this level of normalcy in the twilight of life.

Dad takes mom with him wherever he speaks. The assembly is such a life long part of mother that she has a comfort level that allows her to peacefully sit. One of the last areas of recognition was song. Up until the last year or so she could join in singing. Even that small bit of memory has now faded.

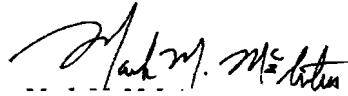
Their togetherness is important because of the lesson it has taught. A lesson of commitment that exhibits the compassion of Christ. There is no way to number the people who have

been touched by this example. Individuals who have been drawn closer to God by seeing someone who is trying daily to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. The purpose is not for personal glory, but that the glory of God might be reflected through his life of service.

Your expectations of where he should be are different. You may hold everyone to the same standard in which case you omitted a host of names. The Barnabas example is an extremely high standard also. It brings peace, unity, and the uncovered “light on a hill” to the world. It is the no compromise position where actions speak as loud as words. A life where message, mission, ministry, and service combine.

Dad is right where he has always been, serving God, living in constant thankfulness to the One who conquered death and gave life. I am biased, but I think that is a very good place to be.

Sincerely,



Mark M. McInteer

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## *Contending for the Faith*

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

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204

August 20, 1997

Dear Brother McInteer:

Indeed, I do appreciate your response to my July 1997 Associate Editorial in *Contending for the Faith*. I trust that you will closely consider my response to your letter of July 23, 1997, which along with your letter to me, will appear in the August 1997 issue of *Contending for the Faith*.

I also have a copy of an article that appeared on pages A1 and A2 of the July 17, 1997, edition of the *Nashville Banner*. Winston Moore of *21st Century Christian* sent the copy of the article to us. The wonderful picture of your mother and father preceding the article certainly is a portrait of devotion. As you know, the article basically states about your parents what you relayed to me in your letter. Along with your letter, the *Banner* article is to be commended for extolling the highly commendable devotion of your father, **Jim Bill McInteer** to your mother, **Betty McInteer**. We at *Contending for the Faith* join with you and the *Banner* in commending your father's dedication to your mother as a wonderful example of what the marriage bond means. Brethren should follow his example in discharging their duties in the areas you mentioned.



## INTRODUCING MY PARENTS

My father has served as an elder in the **Cullendale Church of Christ**, Camden, Arkansas for over 30 years. Daddy and mother's ages respectively are 73 and 70. They have been married over 51 years. Mother also has a problem with (as best the doctors can determine at present) an insufficient blood supply, at least, to part of her brain. They do not know whether it is the beginning of Alzheimer's or not. At this time they are not recommending the test for Alzheimer's. It is a "wait and see" situation.

While mother is not in the same mental state as your mother, daddy must constantly be available to help her. She simply could not live by herself. However, daddy continues to do his teaching, visiting, and all the rest of the things that faithful shepherds are scripturally obligated to do in superintending the flock.

Since June of this year daddy and mother have traveled from Camden, Arkansas to the **Bellview Church of Christ Lectures**, Pensacola, Florida. From the Bellview lectures they journeyed directly to the **Houston College of the Bible Lectures**, Spring, Texas. While my wife and I met them in Pensacola and we "caravanned" back to Spring, the extended trip took its toll on mother. Now why, with mother's condition, did they do all of that traveling? Because they love sound gospel preaching and the fellowship of faithful brethren. For the same reason they will again, the Lord willing, journey to Spring, Texas to attend our youngest daughter's wedding this week. Immediately following they will travel back home to Camden. Later in the week they will make the drive from Camden to just north of Nashville, Tennessee to attend the **Robertson County Lectureship** over Labor Day weekend. (Allow me to invite you to attend the **Robertson County Lectures**. I would appreciate the opportunity to visit with you personally). In all of these tiring travels daddy is always there to help mother. I, too, am so grateful for my daddy's exemplary dedication to my mother. In time it may be that daddy will face the same thing your father now faces. To a degree I can empathize with you and I can certainly sympathize with you regarding your mother and father's situation.

## WHAT ARE MY EXPECTATIONS

In the next to the last paragraph of your letter to me you wrote of what you suppose is my thinking regarding your father's conduct. You wrote, "*Your expectations of where he should be are different.*" That sentence does not represent my thinking at all. Your father should be doing exactly what the *Banner* article and your letter to me reported him to be doing. My editorial dealt with biblical obligations your father has omitted, namely his unwillingness to expose and refute false teachers such as **Rubel Shelly**.

You also wrote to me saying, "*You may hold everyone to the same standard in which case you omitted a host of names.*" The only standard to which I have a right to hold your father, you, my father, me, or anyone else is the New Testament (Psalm 119:172; John 7:24; 8:31, 32; 12:48; 17:17; Philippians 3:16; Jude 3). Furthermore, in the same vein you wrote me saying, "*The Barnabas example is an extremely high standard also. It brings peace, unity, and the uncovered 'light on a hill' to the world. It is the no compromise position where actions speak as loud as words. A life where message, mission, ministry, and service combine.*" No one who is faithful

to Christ is opposed to following any biblical example that demonstrates how to live the Christian life. With that in mind please consider the following questions and observations (Isaiah 1:18; 1 Peter 3:15; Acts 17:2).

1. *Did the apostle Paul refuse to follow what you call "the Barnabas example" and compromise the truth when he withstood the apostle Peter "to the face because he was to be blamed" (Galatians 2:11)? Or, was it Peter who was guilty of not following "the Barnabas principle," which caused Paul to oppose Peter? Remember, "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation (hypocrisy)" (Galatians 2:13). If Barnabas was guilty of the same sin as Peter, did Paul's rebuke of Peter apply to Barnabas also?*

2. *Do you believe and teach that submission to God's word in many areas provides one with license to set it aside with impunity in one area? The wealthy young ruler of Luke 18:18-25 declared that he had kept everything the Lord told him to do. However, the Lord told him that he lacked only one thing to make his service to God complete. Jesus loved the young man and had the power to save him, but he could not save him (Mark 10:32; John 17:2). Our Lord could not save that young man because he would not do all that God obligated him to do (John 14:15; 1 John 2:5; 5:3). The young man rejected the authority of Christ over one area of his life. Having spurned Christ's authority over just one area of his life the love and power of Christ could not save him.*

3. *Have you noticed that every parable the Lord gave us regarding the judgment pronounces condemnation for something somebody did not do that was right rather than for something they did do that was wrong? This is not to say that people may be guilty of the works of the flesh and be saved therein (Galatians 5:19 - 21). It is to say that most of us measure our righteousness by the wicked things we have ceased to do rather than by the good things we are doing.*

## THE ONE-TALENT MAN

Please consider the one-talent man in the "Parable of the Talents" (Matthew 25:14 - 30). Why did the Lord declare to the one talent servant that he was wicked and slothful (unprofitable)? You cannot find a thing wrong with him from a positive standpoint; yet, the Lord told him that he was wicked and slothful (unprofitable). Just what was so terribly wrong with this servant that it drew such a scathing denunciation from our Lord? The answer: He did not do what he could do! Evidently many people will be in the same condition as the one talent man on the day of judgment (Matthew 25: 31-46). Hence, from our Lord's perspective (and that is the only one that really matters) sins of omission are as damning as sins of commission. Please remember that Jesus gave us the principle of "**these ye ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone**" (Matthew 23:23). It is the whole council of God, not just part of it, that must be taught and practiced (Acts 20: 26, 27; Colossians 3:17).

In the second paragraph of your letter to me you wrote that your father "*continues to have many opportunities to proclaim the good news which he does whenever physically possible.*" In the same paragraph you also indicated that he continues to write letters to help people and that "*He spends much time in reading and prayer to be better equipped in his teaching.*" That he is able to do these things is proof that if he desired so to do, he could expose

false teachers and false doctrines. The exposing and marking of false teachers and false doctrines is as much a part of Christian conduct as your father's tender loving care of your mother (Acts 20:20 - 32; Romans 16: 17, 18; II Timothy 1:15; Philippians 3:2; Jude 3). This is part of the Christian responsibility of elders and gospel preachers. Thus, in my 1997 June associate editorial in *Contending for the Faith*, I was asking where your father is in this aspect of his Christian conduct? Your response to my associate editorial seemingly says that your father is not obligated to expose error and false teachers if he does all the things noted in your letter and in the *Banner* article. If that is what you and the *Banner* article are attempting to uphold you are wrong!

*Where was your father in exposing and opposing false doctrine and false teachers before your mother's health declined to its present state?* My father along with his fellow elders work hard to keep false doctrine and false teachers out of the Cullendale Church of Christ. They have had a lectureship since 1982 in which they uphold the truth of New Testament Christianity and expose false doctrines and those who teach them. Furthermore, they do not knowingly fellowship brethren who persistently engage in practicing and propagating error. Daddy was involved in such activity before mother's present state of health and he continues to conduct himself accordingly. Furthermore, if I, his only son, were to deviate from the truth, he would deal with me accordingly. Your father should be trying to keep you from associating with false teachers, or if you believe false doctrine, working to get you to give it up. What better way for our fathers to show their love for us, than to seek to keep us and anyone else in truth's strait and narrow way (Matthew 7:13, 14)?

#### YOUR APPEARANCE ON THE 1997 JUBILEE

Since I have this opportunity I will also address you regarding your appearance on the 1997 Nashville *Jubilee*. Do you support the teaching of Rubel Shelly regarding the fellowshiping of denominations? Do you agree with Rubel Shelly's apology to the Christian Church, for the division that took place and was officially recorded in the U. S. Census of 1906? Furthermore, though he is "retired" and not on the paid staff of Woodmont Hills Jim Woodroof has been added to their work force. According to their bulletin, he will do most of the preaching when Rubel is away (*Love Lines*, Volume 23, Number 33, August 13, 1997). Are you in fellowship with Woodroof? Is Max Lucado faithful to God? Do you agree with Max Lucado's view concerning baptism? Do you think Max Lucado is scriptural when he tells alien sinners only to pray to God for forgiveness of their sins? Along with the men listed above are the following *Jubilee* speakers also unfaithful to God: Randy Harris, Roger McCown, Joe Beam, Mark Henderson, Dan Dozier, Gary Holloway, Nila Sherrill, Rick Atchley, Harold Hazelip, Roy Osborne, Jim Man-kin, Joe VanDyke, Steve Flatt, Buddy Bell, Jeff Walling? With the few aforementioned errors and many other documented errors from the people previously listed, how can

you consider yourself faithful to God while supporting and appearing with such men as just noted on in the *Jubilee* (I Corinthians 6:17; Ephesians 5:11)? Have you lost sight of the infallible New Testament pattern for the Lord's church? If the above mentioned persons are not false teachers, what must one believe, teach, and do, or, not believe, not teach, and not do that would qualify one to be correctly labeled a false teacher?

The previous errors, as well as others that are addressed in the 1997 June and August issues of *Contending for the Faith* as well as many other places, are the reasons that I wrote my 1997 June editorial. Your father is simply unwilling to speak up and out against those who are in error. If you and he would love God, the truth, and the church enough to stand publicly against such spiritual corruption more good could be done. You need to love the Lord, his gospel, and his church more than family, friends, or prestige. You need to separate yourselves from those that propagate and fellowship false doctrine and publicly expose them. First of all you and your father, as well as others who are presently walking the same path as each of you are, need to repent of fellowshiping false teachers and not speaking out against those who are turning many churches into sectarian denominations.

#### CONSIDER J.E. CHOATE

I commend to you J. E. Choate for an example of willingness to speak out publicly and expose error even at the cost of losing friends. Do as he has done and many people in Nashville may yet be turned back to the Lord.

I have nothing but the kindest regards for you, and your parents. Again, I commend your father for his wonderful devotion and care of your mother. It is my prayer that you and your father will cultivate the same care for the Lord, the gospel, and his church. Please return to the bedrock of truth whereon we may "all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:21). Remember, that one of the marks of biblical love is that it "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (I Corinthians 13:6; John 8:31, 32).

**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. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:21 - 23).**

In His Service,



David P. Brown

# Jubilee stirs debate among congregations

## Conservatives say speakers aren't 'teaching the truth'

By Keith Snider

BANNER RELIGION WRITER

When the Church of Christ fills Nashville Arena with prayers and praise Wednesday for the spirited kickoff of its 1997 Jubilee, Roy M. McConnell hopes his congregation stays home.

McConnell, minister at Robertson County Church of Christ in Greenbrier, sees the four-day gathering as symbolic of a battle raging within the church between liberals who want to modify some traditional positions in an effort to reach out to others and conservatives like him who favor a bare-bones theology no matter how unpopular that may be.

In short, he thinks Jubilee goes too far.

"They no longer think the New Testament is the pattern for the church. They have left that,"

McConnell says. "They've given up everything about the Church of Christ but the name — and some of them have given that up too."

McConnell and an increasingly vocal number of conservative leaders in the Church of Christ are urging their members to boycott Jubilee, which functions as the annual convention of the 1.65-million member Protestant body.

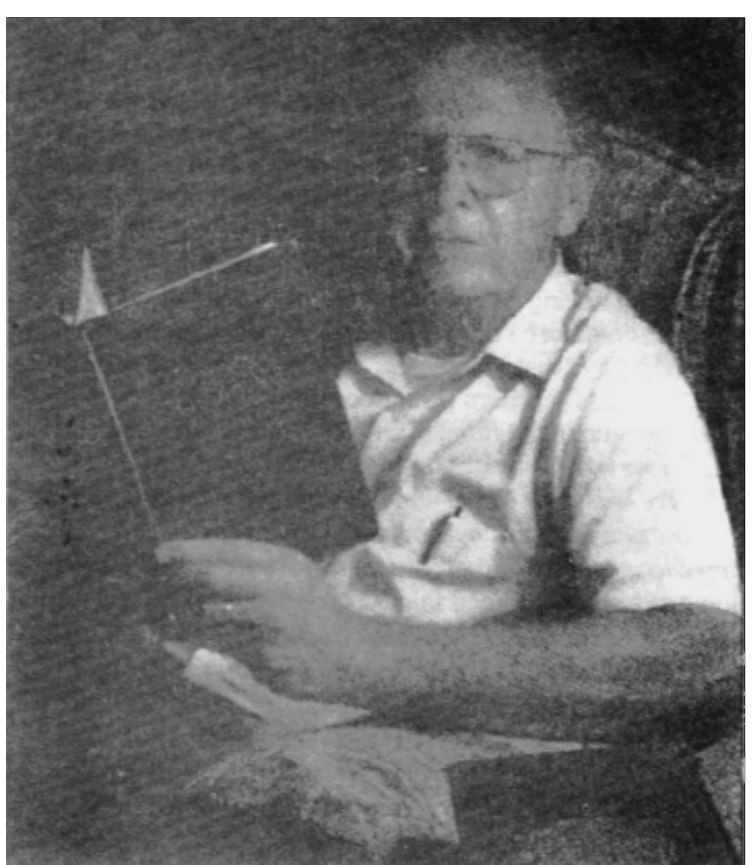
Elders at Goodlettsville Church of Christ issued a statement last week cautioning church members not to attend or otherwise support Jubilee because some people on the official program "do not teach the truth contained in the Bible."

Specifically, the elders criticized keynote speaker Max Lucado for suggesting that Christians need not be baptized — a position that would put him at odds with Church of Christ doctrine.

Lucado, a San Antonio, Texas, Church of Christ minister, has built a national following through his books and tapes and had spoken twice at Jubilee.

“  
*They (Jubilee supporters) no longer think the New Testament is the pattern for the church.*

**Roy M. McConnell**  
Minister opposed to Jubilee



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Lucado will be among 70 speakers who will lead scores of meetings and workshops at the Jubilee, which drew 10,000 people from 38 states last year and is expected to attract similar crowds in its first year at the spacious arena, organizers say.

Lucado will speak at Jubilee's kickoff at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday on the theme "Turn your Eyes Upon Jesus." His keynote will be repeated at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday.

Jubilee customarily is sponsored by Nashville-area Church of Christ congregations and has broad support in Tennessee, where the church has a strong presence. Madison Church of Christ, with 5,500 members, is the largest Church of Christ congregation in the world.

Organizers have advertised Lucado's appearance on about 50 billboards in the Midstate and spokesmen on both sides say the evangelist's notoriety has refocused attention both on Jubilee and on theological differences in the Church of Christ.

### Criticism 'inevitable'

His supporters say Lucado has been misunderstood on the question of whether baptism is necessary for a person's salvation. According to a position paper provided by Jubilee organizers, Lucado holds that baptism is obligatory for Christians but is "the initial step of a faithful heart."

Continued from page A1

The statement warns against "dogmatism" on the issue.

But Charles R. Burton Jr., one of the Goodlettsville elders, says the concerns over Jubilee go beyond Lucado.

"Some of the guys they have in there — we just don't agree with what they teach and stand for," he says.

W. Wayne Coats, minister at Villages Church of Christ in Mt. Juliet, describes Lucado as "just one minnow in a pool" of liberal leaders who gradually have forfeited the body's theological heritage.

"The problem is liberalism. There have been congregations split, divided by it. Dissension is rampant. That philosophy is rampant in the Jubilee," he says.

While they are concerned by the criticism, Jubilee supporters insist there are only several hundred church members who oppose the event.

"A certain amount of criticism is inevitable if you attempt anything — especially if it's larger than one household or church — to do something for the greater church in Nashville," says Rubel Shelly, minister of Woodmont Hills Church of Christ and one of the founders of Jubilee. "I just believe (Jubilee) is a holy thing. I'm delighted to be a part of it."

"We're not a convention. We're not trying to settle issues of orthodoxy," says Randy Harris, minister of Donelson Church of Christ, host church for the Jubilee. "We

*The problem is liberalism. There have been congregations split, divided by it. Dissension is rampant. That philosophy is rampant in the Jubilee.*

**W. Wayne Coats**

Villages Church of Christ minister



**Jubilee keynote speaker** Max Lucado's 'liberal' views put him at odds with some Church of Christ members.

choose speakers who have something to tell us about Jesus."

### **A return to roots**

Jubilee, which began in 1989, has grown each year despite opposition, Shelly says.

Although squabbling within the Church of Christ has been more polite than the bitter disputes of the Southern Baptist Convention, theologians say it turns on issues that are just as basic.

The Church of Christ emerged from the 19th-century restoration movement that decried denominationalism and sought to return the Christian church to its first-century roots. Among other things, Church of Christ congregations practice weekly communion, do not use musical instruments during worship, accept the Bible as literally true, forbid women to preach and resist contact with other churches.

In recent years, meanwhile, Jubilee has included workshops on social issues such as divorce and speakers have urged congregations to eradicate racism and become more welcoming to outsiders generally.

The tension between restoring the church and pursuing church unity — in many ways as old as the Protestant Reformation — has been present from the beginning of the Church of Christ, says Jim Mankin, a professor at Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas.

Because the Church of Christ has no teaching office or hierarchy, basic disagreements over theology go unsettled, says Harris, who also teaches at David Lipscomb University.

"Are we a truth movement or are we a unity movement? Well, we're both," he says.

Still, Mankin says, the church often has tended toward a kind of denominational identity rather than stressing the more fundamental goal of unity.

"That's probably been a criticism that's justified of us — that we're insulated and isolated," he says. "As evangelicals, we all believe Jesus Christ is Lord. We have some differences we need to work through, but let's at least start there."

Mankin, who once pastored the Madison Church of Christ, says Church of Christ evangelists in the 1920s and again in the 1960s pleaded with Nashville congregations to work with other Christians.

"What Max is trying to do is be an effective writer and witness to Jesus Christ," Mankin says of Lucado. "It seems to me that with Jubilee we're laying a foundation for getting back to Jesus Christ."

But McConnell says the church increasingly is willing to soften some of its central doctrines — such as seeing the Bible as God's final revelation to Christians — because they might be obstacles to ecumenical activity.

"Ultimately, they'll have to fellowship everybody. There's nothing to stop it," he says.

Keith Snider may be reached at 726-5982 or by e-mail: ksnider@NashvilleBanner.com

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: Although churches of Christ in general decry the controversy making such publicity necessary, those of us still standing for the New Testament pattern for the church appreciate Keith Snider and the Nashville Banner for giving front-page coverage to our ongoing debate under date of July 1, 1997. The entire article is reprinted herewith by special permission.*

*Brother Roy M. McConnell, elder-minister to the Robertson County Church of Christ, accurately stated to Banner Religion Writer Snider the attitude that genuine churches of Christ maintain toward the Nashville Christian (?) Jubilee, Inc. Naive, gullible, deceived brethren may have flocked to this anomaly by the thousands; but they do not represent the tens of thousands of New Testament Christians who stayed away. Neither do Max Lucado, Rubel Shelly, Randy Harris, Mike Cope, Rick Atchley and most of the other speakers who appeared on the program this year.*

*Thank God for Charles R. Burton, Jr., and his fellow elders at Goodlettsville, for W. Wayne Coats, and for others who spoke in defense of the truth. As for what Shelly, Harris and Jim Mankin said, it all would better have been left unsaid. Their description both of Lucado's position on baptism—and also of Jubilee itself—is just not so.*

*For all his effort to be fair, Snider got one thing in his article wrong, when he wrote that "The Church of Christ emerged from the 19th-century restoration movement..." Jesus Christ already had established his church in the 1st century (Matthew 16:18; Romans 16:16). The 19th-century movement was to restore that same church according to the precepts, commands and examples approved in the New Testament 1800 years earlier.*

*Anything so misrepresenting and disruptive of what true churches of Christ stand for has no right even to exist, much less to be falsely styled "holy," "a unity movement," and "a foundation for getting back to Jesus Christ." Such statements recall what Jesus himself said in Matthew 15:14 and Luke 6:39. Jubilee '97 may have been the Nashville liberals' "biggest" yet; we can hope it also will be their "last."—The Editor]*

# SEASONED PREACHERS PRESENT FELT THEY WERE OBSERVING 'PENTECOSTAL' MEETING

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Ordinarily, some of us who attended the first couple of days of "Jubilee '97" would not have been there at all, lest our presence be mistaken for endorsement of this contrary-to-sound-doctrine event.

We were there not to *participate*, but to *see for ourselves* what actually happened. So many "uncertain sounds" emanated from the *planning* stages of this year's event it seemed important that seasoned observers be present that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses" every word might be established (Matthew 18:16).

We knew, of course, that venerable brother J. E. Choate would be there taking notes (that is he in the photo just behind the tall young man, center). However, in addition to brother Choate, at my personal request, several others came to further establish the facts, including Curtis A. Cates, Director of Memphis School of Preaching; Dorsey Traw, 36-year-veteran missionary to Thailand; David Brown, my Associate Editor, and his son-in-law Michael Light, both from Texas; and, of course, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor of *Contending for the Faith*.

Why were we there?

1. Rubel Shelly had announced well in advance of the event that this year's "Jubilee" was opening up to what he called the "larger Christian community" of Nashville, *i.e.*, the denominations. If that actually happened, we needed to know it—first hand.

2. We had learned of a plan to invite any elders present to march down the aisle to confess the sins of their predecessors among the Nashville churches of Christ over the past 50 years. [Just how one could confess faults for *another*, we were not told; but if it actually happened, we needed to see it.]

3. Knowing of Shelly's and Max

Lucado's fellowship with Don Finto at that dutch-treat luncheon this past April 22, at the Sheraton Music City,

of Nashville, we needed to know if Finto would have a part in Jubilee '97.  
4. Having tapes of Lucado's speech

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## Jubilee opens under

■ Event's future in doubt as organizing churches debate tone, funding

By RAY WADDLE  
*Religion Editor*

The annual Jubilee convention here has become the biggest event in Church of Christ circles nationally, but its future is in doubt.

About 15,000 people are expected to attend by the time it ends Saturday, but organizers have expressed worries that it might be getting too expensive and time-consuming for local churches to sponsor the free, four-day event.

Jubilee has been dogged by criticism in its nine-year life by some Churches of Christ who say its festival atmosphere, music and convention speakers are unbiblical or too liberal.

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

◆ "God is not mad at us," Max Lucado says, on 7B.

Church of Christ life, injecting an upbeat gospel message untarnished by hellfire judgmentalism.

"We're celebrating the good things God is doing among his people," said Phillip Morrison, a coordinator for Jubilee.

"Some oppose what we do, saying it's not scriptural enough, but we don't do anything that's in violation with Scripture," he said.

The convention opened last night at the Nashville Arena with an address by popular minister and author Max Lucado. About 12,000 attended. Lucado speaks at 7:30 p.m. today and tomorrow.

No one will say officially, but

A few local congregations have warned their members to stay away. Yet supporters say Jubilee has helped rejuvenate



John Watkins of Parrish, Ala., prays at the opening ceremony.

organizers are uncertain about Jubilee's future. None of the four original sponsor churches — Woodmont Hills Church of Christ, Antioch Church of Christ, Madison Church of Christ and Donelson Church of Christ — has stepped forward to plan one next year.

The cost and promotion of Jubilee has become a sticking point. Normally, forthright organizers

dodged the question some estimates initially more than it cost in recent years.

Jubilee has been criticized by Baptists and other churches for injecting a spirit of opposition that tradition. Christ members find it

last December over Radio Station KJAK, of Lubbock, Texas, wherein he offered salvation in answer to prayer without baptism, we needed to hear in person what he said in his invitation at Jubilee '97. Truly, he invited folks to be baptized; however, NOT *in order to be saved* (New Testament) but because

of what Christ *already* had done for them (straight out Calvinist, Baptist doctrine).

Positioning ourselves in the bleachers high enough above the main floor to have a clear view of what transpired, we noted that folks began drifting into the Nashville Arena about 5:30 that

first evening, Wednesday, July 2. The overall theme was *supposed* to be "Turn Your Eyes Upon JESUS;" however, everywhere we looked our eyes fell on the name of Featured Speaker MAX LUCADO, false teacher, whose doctrine is contrary to Jesus' teaching—about salvation, in particular!

As the Arena began to fill, I asked Dorsey Traw how many were coming out of *conviction*? Having already talked with several, he felt that most who came were just "along for the ride" that they had not a clue what this was all about or its far-reaching implications contrary to the cause of Christ.

At 6:18 p.m., the mighty loudspeakers, above center, blared out a recorded religious song with *instrumental music*. Harold Shank and his family, of Highland/Memphis, sat on the row immediately in front of us. He introduced himself and his wife, reminding me of my speaking on missionary work years ago in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, when he was but 14. As a result of that speech he said he had done missionary work in Wisconsin and, later, in two places in the Ukraine.

When the live singing started, Jeff Nelson, of Oak Hills/San Antonio, coordinated two men and two women on each side—nine in all—in what they styled a "praise team." They sang *acapella*, and everyone was invited to join in the singing. However, with those *women* up there exercising *leadership authority* over the men in the audience (contrary to I Timothy 2:11-12), we just couldn't. So we didn't.

One of the women in the "praise team" kept raising her hands, Pentecostal-style. This, in turn, caused others to do likewise in various parts of the Arena. When, at the start, they sang songs like "I Know Whom I Have Believed," "Let Them Praises Give Jehovah," and "Come Thou Almighty King," the audience responded. However, when they introduced "contemporary" songs, like "Light the Fire in My Soul," few in the audience knew the songs and the *congregational* singing was pitiful.

On one song—"Shine on Me"—one or two in the audience started clapping and soon half the audience was clapping in unison. When that song was finished, Jeff Nelson said,

# cloud of uncertainty



MINA LONG / STAFF

...ices of Jubilee '97. He was among 12,000 or so who attended at the Nashville Arena.

tion of cost, but out it at substantial the \$150,000 that years.

ecome popular and other non-members, creativeness and innovative Church of own on. self in the middle

of an ongoing argument between Churches of Christ about the future of the ultraconservative fellowship. Traditionalists say the fellowship should stick to an allegiance to the model of primitive New Testament Christian worship.

Progressives say they want to keep the spirit of the New Testament but not cling to mere tradi-

tions that make churchgoing irrelevant to the lives of contemporary believers.

A long list of classes and lectures at Jubilee this week includes topics such as "Why Most Churches are Wrong about Divorce," "The Brady Bunch Doesn't Live Here," "Personal Spiritual Development" and "Jesus the Life Giver." ■

"Amen!" and the audience applauded. We felt we were in some kind of hyper-emotional Pentecostal meeting rather than something pertaining to the Church of Christ.

[Just why they thought *praise to God* should have *human applause* wasn't clear. What *was* clear: most were just responding to the impulse of the moment with no concern for what was scriptural. Under such conditions, if it makes you feel good, just do it; never mind if the Bible teaches it or not!]

As time neared for Lucado's speech, the ground floor was filled and almost two-thirds of the bleachers, as well. The last song led by the "praise team"—"Great Are You, Lord"—ended with an "Amen" and more applause.

Master of ceremonies for the preaching service was **Harold Hazelip**, former President of David Lipscomb University, with **David Slater**, of Madison, leading the congregational singing.

We all listened carefully to what Max Lucado had to say.

Non-typical of *gospel* preaching among churches of Christ, it would have fitted nicely into almost any denominational worship service. And when he got to the invitation, he made clear that he believed in baptism—*just like the Baptists*—not for salvation but for what Christ *already* had done, leading hearers to think they were saved *before baptism!*

\*\*\*\*\*

As for Religion Editor **Ray Waddle's** story in *The Tennessean*, which we are reproducing by permission, herewith, we do not criticize him at all for the conclusions he reached. That Jubilee '97 opened under a "cloud of uncertainty" was correct; but what *caused* the cloud? Both their keynote speaker and numerous other speakers featured on the program had been giving forth "uncertain sounds" for many years! Did not the apostle Paul warn, "...if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Just because something is BIG is no guarantee that it is true, from God, or invincible. Goliath may have been

BIG; but a shepherd boy with a few small stones and a slingshot—with God—gave the lie to his boasts.

So-called "Jubilee" *claims* to be "the biggest event in Church of Christ circles nationally," but it has NO CONNECTION with the churches of Christ in general (Romans 16:16).

To say that "a few local congregations have warned their members to stay away" is accurate as far as *church bulletins* are concerned, but does not *quite* get the picture. It is reliably estimated that more than 40,000 church of Christ members involving 100s of congregations are in middle Tennessee alone. What if they all had showed up? It would have taken at least three Nashville Arenas—and maybe more—to hold them all!

Of one thing our readers may be certain: neither the Jubilee nor the spectacle presented by the photograph in this article accurately represents the genuine churches of Christ who *stayed away!*

When **Phillip Morrison** says that "some oppose what we do, saying it's not scriptural enough," he implies that there are *degrees* of scripturality. When it comes to "thus saith the Lord," a thing cannot be *more or less* scriptural; it is either *scriptural* or it is *not*. Scripturality is what distinguishes true churches of Christ from the denominations—and also from Jubilee.

The *true* cost of Jubilee has nothing to do with dollars and cents but with the divisions and offences it has caused among churches of Christ in

general. Sponsors and promoters of Jubilee boast of the "great speakers" they bring together each year—and, admittedly, some of them can *really speak*. But what did Paul say, in Romans 16:17-18? Read it again:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

That Jubilee has "become popular with Baptists and other non-Church of Christ members," as cited by Waddle and *The Tennessean* is absolutely correct. Why *shouldn't* it be—seeing that **Rubel Shelly, Randall Harris, Mike Cope, Harold Hazelip** and others principally connected with Jubilee have abandoned the truth of God's word in favor of Baptist doctrine and Pentecostalism!

They can scooch up to the denominations "like porcupines in November;" however, *genuine* Christians and churches of Christ refuse to follow. Madison, Woodmont Hills, Antioch—and now Donelson—can continue to sponsor this anomaly if they are so minded; but let them not be surprised if fellowship one day is withdrawn and they find themselves on the outside looking in.

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# IS IT ALL RIGHT FOR JUBILEE TO CAUSE DISSENSION AND DIVISION AMONG US?

## Does Cause of Truth No Longer Matter?

Although, in previous "Nashville Jubilees," those responsible for these doctrinal aberrations filled local newspapers voluminously with advance publicity, for "Jubilee '97," almost nothing appeared in the papers until almost time for the deviant event to begin.

Readers will recall that last year at least 25 congregations were induced to put ads in the papers calling upon all and sundry to attend; this year, almost eerily, only three or four churches bothered to do so.

Then, on July 1st — the day before Jubilee '97 was to start the following day — suddenly those contending for the faith against Jubilee's errors, decided to take the initiative. Resulting from an interview with Roy M. McConnell, under the heading "Jubilee stirs debate among congregations," Religion Writer Keith Snider found quite a lot to say in the *Nashville Banner*.

When brother McConnell described the four-day gathering at the Nashville Arena as symbolic of a battle raging within the church between the liberals who want to *change* the churches of Christ from the doctrinal stance they always had taken and those *still committed* to that doctrine, he was absolutely right.

It is not, of course, through any indisposition to reach out to others that those standing with brother McConnell are determined to contend for the faith as it was once for all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Rather the *reason* that faithful brethren cannot follow Jubilee's compromise with the denominations is that II John 9-11 teaches that to do so means forfeiting fellowship with the very God who *authored* the traditions we follow.

Both in the 1st century as well as during the restoration period of the past 200 years, the New Testament was viewed by the faithful as the pattern for the church. When a congregation ceases to follow that pattern, it no longer has a right to call it self Church of Christ. And those churches supporting as well as participating in the Nashville Jubilee gave up that pattern long ago.

To refer to the churches of Christ in general as a "Protestant body," misrepresents what we stand for. There was a body in the 1st century (referred to as such) called "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16). A gradual apostasy set in over the next 300 years so that by the 4th century, many of those churches had gone into Catholicism. By the 11th Century, an effort to correct Roman Catholic error brought something into being called Orthodoxy, which eventually split into three different bodies—the Greek, the Russian and the Armenian Orthodox churches.

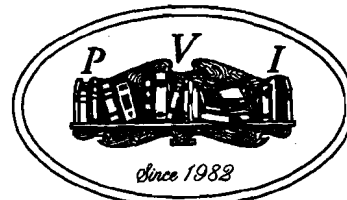
Beginning in the 14th century—and for 400 years thereafter—protests, (primarily against Roman Catholic extremes), developed into several different kinds of Protestant bodies, including the Lutheran, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Church of England (known in the U.S. as Episcopalians) and others.

Toward the close of the 18th century, a Methodist preacher James O'Kelly saw the folly of Protestantism and tried calling his followers back to the Bible. A few years later, Walter Scott, Barton W. Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell and others (mostly Presbyterians) saw the same thing and closed ranks contrary to it.

These men *had* been Protestant preachers. However, they *abandoned* Protestantism entirely. Rather than starting yet another *Protestant* body, they urged everyone to *quit being* either Protestant, Orthodox or Catholic, to hurdle back across the centuries and to restore the church as

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Christ himself established it in the 1st century, letting the New Testament be their *only* rule of faith and practice.

It was from that movement to restore the church to its original, pristine purity that those now calling ourselves churches of Christ sprang. And any effort to deviate from that norm, unavoidably brings on the confusion, debate and division that Snider refers to in his article.

Elsewhere in this edition of *Contending for the Faith*, we are printing statements by the elders at Goodlettsville, Crieve Hall and Hillsboro in full. They are exactly right that those supporting the Nashville Jubilee NO LONGER TEACH THE TRUTH AS CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE.

Having Max Lucado's own words as recorded on tape from his radio speech over a radio station in Lubbock, some of us tried to warn that he no longer believes or teaches baptism for salvation according to the New Testament; but those sponsoring Jubilee were determined to have him anyway—and did.

But Lucado is not the *only* one on Jubilee who has abandoned the truth on baptism; so have Rubel Shelly, Randall Harris, Phillip Morrison and many, if not most, of those who appeared on Jubilee last month. Not all of them have ceased believing and teaching baptism for the remission of sins, of course; but those following the lead of Lucado, Shelly, Harris, Morrison and others central to the Jubilee are headed in that direction.

We noted Snider's statement that Jubilee "has broad support in Tennessee, where the church has a strong pres-

ence." It depends on what is meant by "broad support." Of the hundreds of Tennessee churches—possibly 1,300 of them altogether—all we could count who actively *supported* Jubilee this year from Tennessee were exactly *ten*. Ten congregations as over against 1,300 does not sound like "broad support" to us.

In any case, truth is not defined by how many do or do not support a given position, but what did *God* say. And if Madison (or any other church) is determined to align its 5,500 members against God and the New Testament, so be it. Jesus said we are going to be judged by *his* word—not Madison's (John 12:48). And even if every single one of Madison's elders, preachers and members goes contrary to God's word, Romans 3:4 *still* says, "...let GOD be true, but every MAN a liar..."

Why do supporters of Lucado bother pretending that we do not understand Max's position on baptism as being unnecessary for salvation. When both we and newspaper reporters all hear the same things out of his own mouth, his problem is our *understanding* not our *misunderstanding*.

As for saying that "there are only several hundred church members who oppose" Jubilee, how self-deceived can they get? Even if that were the case, it still would not make right bringing all those heretics into Nashville giving credence to their heresies.

For Rubel to minimize the doctrinal tragedy he has foisted on the churches of Christ in general by saying that "a certain amount of criticism is inevitable," is beside the point. The point is that both he and those participating with him on Jubilee are premeditatedly going out of their way to feature false teachers of every description in these events. John 9-11 says DON'T DO IT! Rubel and his cohorts just ignore this commandment and DO IT ANYWAY! And he describes thus disobeying the Lord as "a holy thing"!

To further say, "I'm delighted to be a part of it," is so much empty talk. He needs to read again Paul's admonition to the Philippians, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things) (Philippians 3:16-19).

It wouldn't hurt Randy Harris to study this same admonition. To bring in those contrary to Jesus' teaching "to tell us about Jesus" makes no sense at all.

But enough. Even though enormous numbers of us vehemently disagree with some of his sources, nevertheless we appreciate Keith Snider for attempting a factual presentation of the doctrinal controversy surrounding the Nashville "Jubilee" and those responsible for it.

Whether there will be another one in 1998, at this point at least, is anybody's guess. Those of us still committed to the doctrine of Christ that Jubilee has left sincerely hope the one for '97 will be the last.—Ira Y. Rice, *Editor*

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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.

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# RONNIE CROCKER REBUKES DONELSON CHURCH IN HER OWN PULPIT FOR HOSTING NASHVILLE JUBILEE '97

Of all the many weird happenings connected with Nashville Jubilee '97, one of the strangest was the excoriation that Ronnie Crocker delivered to the Donelson Church of Christ from her own pulpit for hosting the event.

Since his actual words were deleted from the church's tape recording that was made at the time, we should not have known of this if he had not *also* entered what happened on Internet.

"I recently had the opportunity to appear from the pulpit of the Donelson church of Christ in Nashville," he said. "Donelson is this year's host of Jubilee. This great and terrible event (Jubilee '97) offers a massive (10,000 souls) platform for some of the most influential and infamous false preachers in our brotherhood.

"My purpose for visiting the Donelson church was to attend the 24th annual National Prison/Jail Workshop. They hosted this event on June 25-28. I, being an ex-offender, was given the opportunity to speak to those assembled.

"This occasion was both video and audio taped. Acts 20:28-31 was the text I used. I marked erring brethren Lucado, Shelly, Cope and other Jubilee speakers as 'grievous wolves.' I compared them to the very rapists and murderers we reach out to in our prison ministries. I explained how, on a spiritual level, these men are assaulting the bride of Christ, stripping her of her true identity and setting about to clothe her in the error of denominationalism. I pleaded with the Donelson eldership to 'watch' and 'remember' and protect the precious church which Jesus 'purchased with his own blood.'

"When I concluded my 13 minutes in Donelson's pulpit, I sat down in anticipation of the response. Ron Goodman, the organizer of the prison workshop and member of this congregation, then took several minutes to refute my remarks.

"When the session ended, I was immediately surrounded by brethren. Some approached me in anger, some in agreement! Because of all the confusion, I am not presently clear on all the things that were said to me. One of the Donelson elders were among the first to meet me. He rebuked me. He then went on to defend Jubilee '97 and Max Lucado. Our discussion ended after several minutes. He then gave me a 12-page paper that the Oak Hills church of Christ uses to explain their position on baptism. Max is the preacher at Oak Hills. I am sure that he gave me this article to defend Lucado. However, I think it reveals how very far he and the Oak Hills church have strayed from God's word and way. Let me know if you would like a copy of this article. I believe a Baptist would accept its position on baptism.

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"As I said, there were also those who were extremely pleased with what I did. I will never forget the tear-filled eyes and comments of the older couple who hugged me in gratitude! All have not 'bowed the knee' to liberalism!

"Then, just as things began to calm down, Richard VanDyke, the director of Jubilee '97, introduced himself to me. We then spent the next half hour in 'no small dissension and disputation!' He rebuked me for violating Matthew 18:15-17, in not personally approaching these individuals before marking them publicly. Of course, I disagreed with his applying this passage to those who publicly teach false doctrine. We then discussed some specifics about Lucado, Shelly and Woodruff. The most peculiar thing that I learned is that Richard VanDyke disagrees with the erring doctrinal positions of Lucado and Shelly. VanDyke said he does not believe that there are Christians in the Baptist church. He also, unlike Lucado and other Jubilee speakers, believes that people are baptized into Christ as opposed to praying their way into Christ (sinners prayer). However, he did not see the harm of their speaking at Jubilee '97.

"Another point I discussed while in Donelson's pulpit involved Joe Garcon, a member of the Independent Christian Church denomination. I expressed my opposition to his speaking at the prison/jail workshop. In his talk, Joe included us in a list of denominations. I will discuss this situation in a paper I plan to send to those who attended the workshop.

"My reason for writing this article is to make others aware of this event. Whenever the opportunity arises, we must try to reach out to our erring brethren with love...love for souls...and love for truth! Before my God, I believe with all my heart that this was my motive as I rebuked the Donelson church of Christ from her own pulpit.

"In Christian love,

[Signed]

Ronnie Crocker  
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# ALARM AND ALARMISTS—

## Something Bad Really is Happening

Edwin Jones

For the past several years a liberal agenda has been slowly but surely unveiled among brethren. Those who have led the way in this undertaking have been very dishonest. **Rubel Shelly** once insisted that it was not his doctrine, but his attitude that had changed. His teachings that demonstrated otherwise were said to be "taken out of context" or "misunderstood." Those who questioned brother Shelly and others of similar views were all classified as alarmists with an unloving and hateful spirit. Now, however, the agenda has been fully revealed. The denials, though still offered by some, now are seen for the dishonest tactics they have always been.

Brother Shelly now openly fellowships with denominations. He has been *very* bold to declare that certain doctrinal points are no longer of concern to him. His ministry is "bigger" than those "little" concerns such as instrumental music, the Lord's Supper every Sunday and understanding baptism to be for remission of sins.

He is following the "spirit of Christ" now. The fact that the Christ was actually of a different spirit seems somehow to be of no significant importance (Matthew 23:23). The difference between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Shelly is obvious when Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17:20-23 is contrasted with the following statement by Rubel:

*"We will not lose our separate denominational identities, we will not give up our particular heritages and histories, we will not have to give up our distinctive practices with regard to our different organizational structures, worship, and so on. I see no need for that...I believe it's per-*

*fectly all right for us to live in different houses, and to have our distinctives, and our preferences, and our tastes."*

**Mike Cope**, co-editor with brother Shelly of *Wineskins*, has also been clear in where he is coming from doctrinally. Consider the following remarks made by Mike last year:

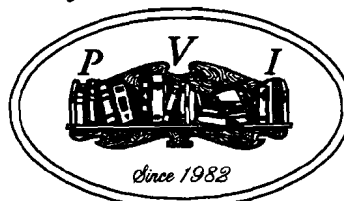
*"But what are you going to do with all the wonderful Spirit-filled, Jesus-like, prayerful believers who don't go to church where we go, weren't baptized and whose doctrine doesn't line up exactly like ours? That was the crisis for me. And, it hit me, unity can't come by uniformity. We are never going to be united by trying to clone people. By saying, 'Okay, you've got to have one person's personality; you've got to have one person's preferences; you've got to have one person's understanding of scripture.' We will never get it that way. It gets back to the first lesson in this series, where I pointed out that if you want uniformity, the thing to do is not give everybody a Bible but go get everybody's Bible and hide it."*

Additionally, **Joe Beam** has been bold to state his beliefs. Observe his remarks at last year's Jubilee in Nashville:

*"I submit a challenge to you (churches of Christ). Have a healing service once a month at your church. Invite the*

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*community to come forward, confess sin, be prayed for and tell them that you'll pray that God will heal them...Tell them that the elders will be there to pray and anoint with oil."*

Max Lucado has been among the clearest in speaking of his doctrinal departures. In the July 3rd issue of *The Tennessean*, Max is cited as being unimpressed with theological battles of the churches of Christ—such as whether there ought to be a piano in a church. Brother Lucado believes that the gospel is “bigger” than that.

You may wonder just how “big” the gospel is? Consider the following excerpt from brother Lucado's radio program last December:

**“You can be sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor ruling spirits, nothing now and nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us, nothing below us, not anything else in the world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**“You see, in God, by virtue of your adoption, you have a divine affinity, you have eternal security, and you have a golden opportunity. I cannot imagine an orphan turning down an opportunity to be adopted. With one decision, with one raising of the hand, with one agreement to leave the orphanage, that person all of a sudden goes from being abandoned to being claimed, from having no name to a new name, no future to a new future, he leaves the orphanage and enters the house of the father.**

**“That's what God offers you. No quiz, no examination. All you have to do is say 'yes' to the Father. And many of you have done that. But I have a hunch that not all of you have. I have a hunch that there are a few of you listening, even now, and God is using this to pull on your heart. The Holy Spirit is informing you of something that you have never really heard before—and that is, that God is ready to be your Father. Maybe you never understood that the invitation was for everyone. Maybe you thought that you were unworthy. Maybe now you do understand. God will make you worthy, and the invitation is for you. And all you have to do is call Him Father. Just call Him Father. Just turn your heart to Him right now as I am speaking. Call Him your Father. And your Father will respond. Why don't you do that?**

**“Father, I give my heart to you. I give you my sins, I give you my tears, I give you my fears, I give you my whole life. I accept the gift of your Son on the cross for**

**my sins. And I ask you, Father, to receive me as your child. Through Jesus I pray. Amen.”**

**ANNOUNCER:**

**“And friend, if you prayed along with Max Lucado just now, here on UPWARDS, we want to welcome you into the family of God. We hope you will contact us and share your personal testimony. If you are already a believer, we thank you for praying for these new brothers and sisters in Christ.”**

The announcer then advertised printed material and then returned with the following comment:

**“Max Lucado returns with a special word for those who received the gift of salvation just moments ago in prayer.**

**MAX LUCADO:**

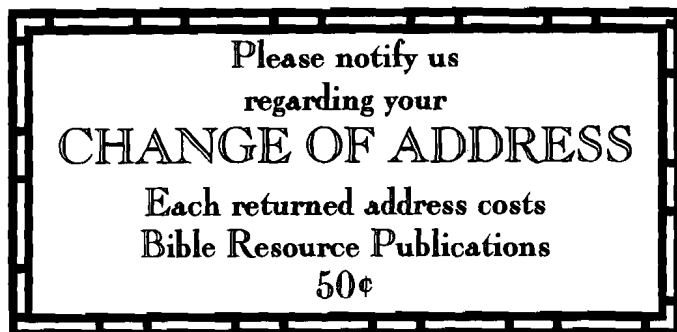
**“Today is the first day you've ever prayed a prayer like that. Could you do me a favor? Could you write me a letter? I don't have anything I am going to ask from you. I do have a letter I would like to send to you. I'd like to give you a word about the next step or two. I want to encourage you to find a church. I want to encourage you to be baptized. I want to encourage you to read your Bible. But I don't want you to do any of that so that you will be saved. I want you to do all of that because you are saved. You see, your Father has a great life planned for you, and I want to tell you about it. Give us a call, and drop me a note. And, thanks, my friend, for making the greatest decision of your life. I'll be back on Monday. I hope you will be, too.”**

I don't think the preceding account can be misunderstood. Neither did I find recent sermons preached by brother Lucado at a Baptist congregation to be ambiguous. It seems that all believers in denominations are on the same “fellow ship” sailing merrily to heaven.

Brethren, it is time to arise and take a stand. We would not be alarmists by doing so. We would just be expressing legitimate alarm. The level of folly was openly on display at a kick-off meeting for the 1997 Jubilee where both Max Lucado and Rubel Shelly welcomed Don Finto (a man who claims that he was called by God to be an “apostle” at a roadside chapel in New Mexico in 1988) Max called Don his “hero” and Rubel called on Don to lead in prayer: Where Don preaches in Nashville “prophets” are called upon to speak in tongues and deliver prophecies. What a hero! What a wonderful choice to lead in prayer!

I hope that you are as alarmed as I am about these actions. The spirit represented by the liberal agenda is alive and thriving. Most who organize the Nashville Jubilee and the youth Winterfest are of this liberal mindset. The difference between the mainstream of the church and the liberal agenda is very pronounced! While hateful, legalistic over-reactions are not to be given approval, indignation over departures from the truth is needed. The evidence is not subject to misunderstanding. No context can make the overtly wrong to somehow be right. We have been lied to for a long time. There remains no excuse for not recognizing the severity of the problem.

[NOTE: The foregoing article is reprinted from the July 20, 1977 issue of *The Messenger*, weekly bulletin of the Karns church of Christ, Knoxville, Tennessee.—The Editor]



# CONSIDER THE WORDS OF JUDE...

Jim Blankenship

Jude urged them to reinforce their faith: "...**Build yourselves up in the most holy faith**" (vs. 20). The Christian whose faith is anemic or shallow is easy prey for Satan. If we are to survive the difficulties that will come, we must have a strong faith, and a strong faith is well within our reach. Through a daily study of God's word, a fervent prayer life, a personal commitment and involvement in the activities of the church, you, too, can develop a stronger faith in God.

Jude urged them to remain faithful to God: "**Keep yourselves in God's love**" (vs. 21). There will be many temptations that will lure you away from God. Peter said that Satan actively seeks our souls (1 Peter 5:8). You will not finish the year without a scar or stain. You can keep yourself in God's love by actively seeking to do God's will in every part of your life. You can repent of your sins so that they do not separate you from God and from loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).

Jude urged all to be confident in the Christian's hope: "**Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life**" (vs. 21). Do not get bogged down in and blinded by life's problems. Look for the light at the end of the tunnel. Never forget that hope can be a bridge that can carry us over the troubled waters we might encounter. Set your mind on things above (Colossians 3:1-4), and never take your eyes off of them.

Jude urged us to remember the supreme mission of our lives, the saving of lost souls: "**Snatching men out of the fire**" (vs. 23). In the busy times ahead our lives will be pre-occupied with many activities, but we must never forget our mission to be soul-winners for Jesus. "**He that winneth souls is wise**" (Psalms 11:30). When our lives are busy bringing others to Christ, our hearts will not be far from God.

"We don't have any enemies; it's just that some of our friends are trying to kill us!" — Commercial Appeal

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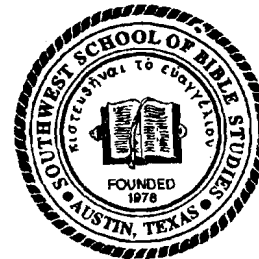
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Jude urged perseverance with the word: "**Earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints**" (vs. 3). Just think how great a brotherhood we would have if every brother professing to be a gospel preacher would only take verse three to heart, carefully examine the word for what it is without twisting, perverting, or in any other way changing it in the pulpit and on the printed page. The apostle Paul "**marveled**" that the Galatians had been so quickly removed from the Gospel. What do Jude, Paul, and Jesus think about all the perversions brethren make of the Bible today?

Jude urged, in this verse, that we realize that the word was "**once for all delivered to the saints.**" We need not look for another revelation. The one we have is all we are going to get!

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# "I AM RE-STUDYING IT!"

Curtis A. Cates

According to the *Commercial Appeal*, "Cold Feet in South Dakota" wrote to Ann Landers about "a lot of divorces among my neighbors, friends and colleagues." She was "becoming increasingly apprehensive" about her plans to be married because the "pastor of our church went to jail for having sex with a teenager," her boyfriend's parents' divorce was recently finalized, and her cousin is "divorcing her husband because he doesn't have enough education to hold a good job." She asked, "What does this mean, Ann? It didn't used to be like this. Is marriage going out of style?" Ann answered: "It is true, however, that too few couples view marriage as a lifetime commitment, and that is the principal cause.

God's universal law on marriage is one man for one woman for life (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:9). The only scriptural reason for a divorce and remarriage is adultery. Adultery is a "heinous crime" (Job 31:11). However, many—even in the church—are "re-studying" it.

Years ago, when I followed "anti" preachers in two congregations, I became aware that many were "re-studying" cooperation and benevolence. In fact, one preacher wrote a tract entitled, "I Have Re-studied Benevolence." In the tract he expressed that he had determined that supporting orphans' homes and non-saints out of the church treasury is unscriptural.

Ann Landers' writes that "50 percent of all marriages today will end in divorce." Since some of those involved are family members of preachers, elders, professors, and other Christians; and as some of those involve those whom brethren are trying to convert, even some in the Lord's church are "re-studying" marriage, divorce and remarriage. I am not opposed to studying what the Bible teaches on marriage, but rather encourage it. On the other hand, to abandon the truth on a subject under the guise of re-studying an issue is folly.

When certain ones have "re-studied" marriage, divorce, and remarriage (some seem never to complete their studying, or if they do, they wish to keep their findings secret), they have reached the most amazing conclusions. 1. Some have "learned" that one's marital situation is nobody's business but their own; elders must not ask any questions nor get involved. 2. Others have "learned" that Christ's law on marriage is not applicable to nor does it govern the marriages of non-saints (non-Christians are not amenable to Matthew 19:9). "Whosoever," they have discovered, does not mean whosoever! 3. Still others have "learned" that repentance does not include restitution. They have determined that making restitution is not required as a condition of being a fit subject for baptism. They say that one can continue to live in adultery and be scripturally baptized. However, see I Corinthians 6:9-11 and Colossians 3:5-7, where fornication had been a way of life in which they had previously—but no longer—"walked" and "lived in these things." "So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an

adulteress..." (Romans 7:3). Why "called an adulteress"? Because that is what she is! 4. Even others have "learned" that the congregation should certainly not discipline (through "due process," of course) those in adultery. Moreover, if one is, through love, disfellowshipped, to save the spirit (I Corinthians 5), other congregations are not under any obligation to honor that effort to lead them to repentance. In fact they may take them in with open arms.

Have you ever "re-studied" the forbidden tree (Genesis 3:1-8); Cain's unauthorized sacrifice (Genesis 4:1-8); Nadab and Abihu's fire which Jehovah "had not commanded (authorized)" (Leviticus 10:1, 2). Joseph refused to "re-study" (in the sense that some are today) God's law on purity (Genesis 39:7-12). Daniel, did not "re-study" forbidden meats and alcohol ["social" drinking] (Daniel 1:8); And Paul and John did not "re-study" fornication (Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8). Let each remember that though one "re-studies" a subject 10,000 times, God's Word changeth not (Matthew 24:35; Psalms 119:89; John 12:48)!

—The Knight Arnold News  
Knight Arnold Church of Christ  
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## A Critical Review of The Peaceable Kingdom

by  
Wayne Coats

There is no keener nor more knowledgeable man in the kingdom of Christ to answer the writing of Carroll Osburn and lay bare his false views than Wayne Coats of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. He is saturated with Bible understanding and penetrating in his analyses. We are indebted to him for the masterful way in which he has responded to the Osburn harangue.

—H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

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# NOTES AND QUOTES....

Maurice Brown, Rockford, Illinois: "I am writing to you...to thank you for **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**. I have known some brethren who have nothing good to say about it, but I want you to know how much I enjoy each issue, and how I greatly admire your stand for what is right and true during these perilous times..."

David C. Dugan, who preaches in St. Louis, Missouri, wrote a letter to the *Christian Chronicle* a couple of years ago, regarding their favorable story concerning "Promise Keepers" which had just appeared in their August, 1995 issue.

"I'm writing to give you the rest of the story," he wrote to *Contending for the Faith* later; "...The Chronicle printed only a portion of the letter written to brothers Horton and Shipp. I'm enclosing my entire letter to them for you to look at and possibly use for publication. Also, enclosed is my response to the editorial that was written by brother Horton in the September issue of the *Christian Chronicle*."

"They have missed the point completely. I'm praying that through a continued effort to tell the whole story on 'Promise Keepers' we make some inroads and maybe save some souls from going down the road of error..."

Following is brother Dugan's entire letter to the Chronicle:

July 28, 1995

Christian Chronicle  
Editor: Mr. Howard Horton  
Managing Editor: Mr. Shipp  
Box 11000  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-1100

Dear Brothers Horton and Shipp:

I have just received the August issue of the *Christian Chronicle* and read with amazement the article about the "Promise Keepers" (P.K.) program. I am amazed that it is spreading through our brotherhood so quickly.

My investigation of "Promise Keepers" has revealed the following unscriptural activities. I recently read the book, "The Seven Promises Of A Promise Keeper," and found the following things in error with God's Word.

1. P.K. promotes denominational faith-only conversion (see Mark 16:15,16; James 2:24).

2. The program includes "P.U.S.H." which stands for "Pray Until Something Happens." This reminds us of the old "mourners bench" routine in many denominational groups and plays off the theme of direct operation of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word of God.

3. The P.K. teaches that men should gather for "P.P.P." which means that they meet in small groups for "prayer, pages (searching the scriptures), pain (sharing their pain)."

4. P.K. pushes "mentoring relationships" which is defined as "the belief that every man should have an older mentor to whom he can be held accountable for his decisions and actions in life." This sounds so much like the old "prayer partners" of the Crossroads/Boston movement that it is pitiful. We have struggled with the effects of this false teaching and now we must contend with P.K.

5. Ecumenicalism is part of the P.K. program. It doesn't matter what denominational group they may belong to, they can all be P.K.'s. That puts every Christian who participates in this program joining hands with and fellowshipping error (II John 9-11). Plus, this is an "inter-denominational" program and not a "nondenominational" program as stated in the article!

6. P.K. plays on the old ploy of putting the MAN "Jesus Christ" into the lives of people, but they reject the PLAN that Jesus Christ shed his blood to bring about (Acts 20:28; Acts 2; etc.), the one church/body/kingdom.

7. P.K. promotes the unscriptural use of instruments with songs of praise at their rallies (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19). For a Christian cannot abuse an act of worship anywhere it is done and an act of worship must always be done. John 4:23 and Colossians 3:17.

I'm concerned that so many do not see these and other clear violations of God's Word, but then it is not new for some to just not see the truth of some things. Yes, we need all men everywhere to respond to the gospel plan of salvation and be added to the one church/one body (Ephesians 4:4; 1:21,22; Romans 16:16). Then upon entering into the "one body" make the appropriate changes to their lives by putting on the "fruit[s] of the spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23), at the

same time pushing out the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21), at the same time "giving all diligence" to put on the Christian graces (I Peter 1:5). A true CHRISTIAN man alters his life by reading God's word (II Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11) and putting it to work in his life and is not just a "hearer" of the word, but a true "doer" of the word (James 2:22). The elders and preachers in every congregation should hold the biblical pattern of truth and help any man to grow spiritually. I am saddened that you brethren at the *Christian Chronicle* did not point out any of "its weaknesses;" but the article sure played up what the P.K. are doing.

If a person becomes a Christian and puts his life in order as taught in the scriptures and being a faithful member of a local congregation, there is no desire for an organization such as P.K. In fact, an organization like this operating in a local congregation can actually tear down the biblical organization of the church for it is an addition to God's will (Revelation 22:18,19). Plus, just as with the feminist movement it tears at such teachings as Galatians 3:28. Or, the fact that each Christian is to "deny self" (Matthew 16:17); but P.K. promotes the male-self and thus makes a mockery of the sacrifice each must make for Christ. Our perfect example "Christ" in all things (I Peter 2:21) wanted us all to come to him and then follow the pattern taught by the inspired writers of the New Testament. That pattern does not include fellowship with, joining hands with any sort of false teachers. The P.K. program is built on false teachings! It has never been right to allow a little sin to enter into one's life or the church of our Lord (I Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9).

Please, brothers Horton and Shipp, reexamine this program in the light of the scriptures. Please then print in the *Christian Chronicle* the other side of these false teachers at work. Please stop and think. "I beseech you brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). Let us all go back to the Bible and investigate the P.K.

In Christian love,

[Signed]

David C. Dugan, gospel preacher

## THE QUESTION

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and sanctification does the  
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ONLY

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## THERE IS MORE THAN ONE KIND OF UNITY

Jim Waldron

A lanky, lean snake got in touch with a fairly fat frog. The frog was flattered by the attention of the snake; yet he was a bit apprehensive as to what was on the snake's mind.

"Unity is on my mind," declared the lanky, lean snake.

"Unity?" asked the fairly fat frog. "What is the benefit of unity between snakes and frogs?"

"Oh, many things!" exclaimed the lanky, lean snake. "I, for example, envision close communion between snakes and frogs. It will provide warmth and energy, especially when snakes and frogs get together at meal time. I mean close communion. Yes, sir, real close communion."

"But how could the two of us ever get together to talk about unity?" asked the fairly fat frog.

"We could have a Summit," declared the lanky, lean snake.

"A Summit?" gulped the friendly, fat frog. "A Summit? Do you mean a Summit like the Russians and Americans have? What would we do at a Summit?"

"Eat...er, I mean plan programs where we can work together," said the snake.

"Where could we have such a Summit?"

"At my place, of course."

"But what would we talk about?"

"There are many things to talk about. But we must discuss ways snakes can get together with frogs. We have been kept apart too long."

"Will we discuss the evenly spaced row of ivory teeth you have?" asked the faintly fearful frog.

"Oh, of course not!" exclaimed the lanky, lean snake. "Only knuckleheads bring up such subjects. If anyone wants to press that subject, we will not invite him."

"Now I wouldn't want to be classified as a knucklehead," said the fairly festive frog. "But there are many who are concerned about your evenly spaced row of ivory teeth."

"Well, I certainly have no intentions of giving up my teeth. I have had this evenly spaced row of ivory teeth for over 100 years and I am joined to them."

"Speaking of 100 years ago, didn't a lot of your ancestors take away a number of our congregating places?" said the fairly fat frog who with flacid fervor sought to stem the failing of his fleeting faith. "In fact," he continued, "as I recall, many faithful friends were forced from their property because of that evenly spaced row of ivory teeth."

Flashing a toothy smile, the lanky, lean snake sighed, "That's negative." We will make this Summit meeting positive. Negatives like the loss of property will not be discussed. Everything must be on the upbeat. We must not dwell on the differences between snakes and frogs. That would be detrimental to our goal. Remember the goal is for snakes to unite with frogs. There are con-artists who want to keep frogs at enmity with snakes. People who point out differences between snakes and frogs are erecting walls instead of building bridges. When they dwell on my evenly spaced row of ivory teeth or my wide mouth for swallowing things, they become architects of anarchy and masons of mutiny. It cannot be expected that snakes will be transformed into frogs. We will just have to accept unity in diversity. Untold harm has been done to the cause of snake and frog unity by stressing differences. Things argued into prominence would long since have died if not given artificial respiration through debate. Snakes do not like to debate; they would rather eat."

"What will we discuss then?" asked the fairly fat frog whose feeble faith had finally fizzled.

"We will discuss cooperation in meetings and missions. We can talk about your coming to my den for dinner and I to your pad for plate lunch. We must emphasize the importance of togetherness between snakes and frogs. In fact, snakes and frogs must unite.

"Jolly," said the fairly fat frog. Then the snake went on to tadpole school to lecture on snake and frog unity.

—Reprinted from *Beacon of Truth*  
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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

A publication of Bible Resource Publications, Post Office Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## NASHVILLE JUBILEE: A Cloned Likeness of the NACC

J. E. Choate

Just about everybody who reads the papers published by churches of Christ brethren knows about *Nashville Jubilee Inc.* By the very same token, the name of the *North American Christian Convention* means nothing in churches of Christ. It is an annual national meeting sponsored by the Independent Christian Church.

It is the thesis of this article that the Nashville Jubilee, Inc., was planned to become a clone-like organization similar to the North American Christian Convention. The calculated purpose was to bring together the churches of Christ under one umbrella-like national convention much like the NACC. This would be a major part of a much larger plan to create a postmodern Church of Christ denomination.

The ground work for this has been laid by **Douglas Foster** and **Richard Hughes** in their books. Their major thesis is that the Church of Christ denomination today began as a small exclusivistic Restoration sect in the early 19th century. The NACC has molded together their fellowship into a great unified denomination without a centralized convention and its officers. On the other hand, Nashville Jubilee has caused bitter divisions in the ranks of the churches of Christ.

A primary goal of the Jubilee "brain trust" is to bring the churches of Christ under the influence of a handful of manipulative "change agents" who are leading a growing number of churches of Christ to buy into postmodern theological and "church growth" paradigms such as the Willow Creek Community Church, and the Vineyard's Third Wave.

This is not a far-fetched allegation, but a matter of common knowledge. [See observations of the Holloway and Weed Disciples of Christ Historical Society 1995 Christian Scholarship Conference paper.] A similar article to this one in 1996 for the *Firm Foundation* drew an analogy

between the Campbell Institute and the clone-like Christian Scholars Conference.

The North America Christian Convention has no connection with the Nashville Jubilee, Inc. However, **Rubel Shelly** as a clever manipulator has managed to establish close fraternal ties with both the Independent Christian Church, and the liberal Disciples of Christ. This is an interesting connection because the two "digressive" denominations have no mutual fraternal, or official ties with each other.

The *First Christian Church* [Independents] allowed the *Woodmont Hills Family of God* the use of their facilities while their church building was under construction, and also shared in joint worship services. In the meantime, Shelly has been an invited guest speaker of the NACC, and contributed an article for the *Christian Standard*. Shelly is a speaker on the Restoration Forum, and a contributor to its official publication, the *One Body*.

Shelly enjoys a similar fraternal relationship, as does **Leroy Garrett**, with the liberal Disciples of Christ. Shelly was a principal speaker in 1995 in Calgary, Canada, before the *World Convention of Churches of Christ*, an affiliate of the *Disciples of Christ*. He was the guest speaker April 10, 1994 in a joint community post-Easter worship service on Hillsboro Road which was hosted by the liberal Disciples.

Rubel Shelly apologized during Jubilee '97 for the likes of **David Lipscomb** for causing the division which led to the U.S. Religious Census of 1906. Does this man's ego know no limits, and has he no sense of shame and propriety?

### WHAT IS THE NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION?

Why is the NACC so important to traditional churches of Christ since the NACC is an organization under the aus-

(Continued on page 7)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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## Associate Editorial...

### Error to the Left of Gospel Truth

I was present to hear and see **Rubel Shelly** deliver his first speech at the 1997 *Nashville Jubilee*. Before getting to his subject Shelly declared that this was an historical occasion because the *North American Christian Convention* of the Independent Christian Church ( see **J. E. Choate's** article for a full discussion of this organization) was being conducted in Kansas City, Missouri at the same time as the *Jubilee*. Shelly informed his audience that his friend **Victor Knowles** of the Independent Christian Church had a letter of apology from him (Shelly) and that he (Knowles) would read it on that particular night to the Convention in Kansas City. Shelly also had a letter of apology from Knowles to the church of Christ which he (Shelly) would read to the *Jubilee*. Shelly read both letters to his audience. Each letter was a personal apology (from Knowles to the church of Christ and from Shelly to the Independent Christian Church) for any problems of the past that caused the present division between the church of Christ and the Independent Christian Church.

I do not know how anyone can apologize for some other person's mistakes, alive or otherwise. Moreover, I do not understand how Shelly, though he said he was speaking only for himself, may apologize for faithful gospel preachers of the past who did not consider their opposition to unauthorized acts in the Lord's church mistakes. However, such trivial matters as these never seem to bother Shelly. He would have us believe that such men as **David Lipscomb, James A. Harding, E. G. Sewell, M. C. Kurfees, H. Leo Boles, N. B. Hardeman**, and a host of other preachers of like faith are the real villains. Wicked they were when they opposed such unauthorized institutions and acts as the *Missionary Society* and mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God. Only those who have repudiated the authority of the New Testament of Christ believe such blather.

As far as Shelley's Independent Christian Church friend, Knowles is concerned, he cannot repent for his ancestors' mistakes either. However, one thing of which you will not find Knowles and the rest of his kind repenting is the fact that those who divided the Lord's church approximately 100 years ago were those who pushed into the church unauthorized institutions and actions which Knowles continues to uphold. If Shelly had lived in that day believing as he now believes he would have been up front leading the apostasy crowd then as he is now. Well, at least he would have led until a **Max Lucado** came along to usurp Shelly's throne as the darling of the denominations and worldly members of the church.

Toward the end of his speech Rubel read an excerpt from a letter written by someone who opposed his false view of salvation by grace only. The quote from the letter reads: "Grace gave us a plan whereby we could save ourselves." Mind you, Shelly read the quote to show how terrible people like me are for teaching that one must do what God said, in the way God said it, and for the reason he said it in order to be saved. A number of the people booed the quote. Have these irreverent and willingly ignorant people never read or do they not believe what the inspired apostle Peter said when he exhorted the people on Pentecost? Peter declared, "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40; also see Philippians 2:12). Do these Jubilee Judases not know that by implication they have booed the Holy Spirit's own words? How many times has Shelly in sermons of which he has now repented quoted this verse? Now because of his warped concept of grace and works he does not believe it at all.

In a letter to the *The Christian Chronicle* Don Edwards of Houston, Texas wrote, "I have attended Jubilee two times. I have listened to the main speakers and many class teachers. I have yet to hear "false teaching" (Volume 54, Number 9, page 21, September, 1997). Yes, and if a Baptist went to a Baptist revival he would also come away declaring that he heard no false teaching there either. Why? Simply because a Baptist thinks that Baptist doctrine is the truth. Of such persons the Lord said, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:14). One thing was obvious at the 1997 Jubilee, there was a lot more "Bible totin'" (if one may call the NIV a true Bible) than there was "Bible quotin'."

## Error to the Right of Gospel Truth

For some months now I have watched with amazement as certain ones have called for only one verse of scripture to prove the scripturalness of an action composed of more than one element. I say that I have watched with amazement because I have a difficult time believing that these persons could have been educated and trained properly and not learned that it is impossible to find all of the elements of the plan of salvation (an action composed of more than one element) in one passage of scripture. Regarding this matter please note the following material.

Is there a single verse of scripture that sets out all the component parts that combine to make the singular worship (an action composed of more than one element) in the assembly of the saints on the first day of the week? If there is, where is it? Is there a single verse of scripture that contains all of the elements necessary

to prove that a preacher may receive his wages from the funds contributed on the first day of the week? If so, which one is it? Moreover, is there a single verse of scripture that contains all of the component parts of the one church (an institution composed of more than one part)? If so, please tell us where it is. Furthermore, where is the single verse of scripture that authorizes the cooperation of churches in support of an orphans' home? If there is, where is it? Moreover, is there a single verse of scripture that authorizes cooperation of churches in an evangelistic effort? If so, which one is it? Again, is there a single verse of scripture that authorizes the church to construct a kitchen in the meeting house of the church? If there is one, please tell us where it is.

I suppose the thing that dumbfounds me the most is that these fellows are evidently willing to affirm a proposition that reads: "The Bible teaches that authorization for every compound action (an action composed of more than one element) must be found in a single verse of scripture." **Question: Where is a single verse of scripture that obligates men to find authorization for a compound action in a single verse of scripture?**

Does anyone remember the following false hermeneutic? It reads: "The Bible authorizes only by explicit statements." Does anyone remember that the previous false premise collapses under its own weight when the following question is asked and answered? "Where in the scriptures is the explicit statement that declares that the Bible authorizes only by explicit statements?" Furthermore, does this kind of reasoning remind you of certain liberals who affirm the following false premise? It reads: "One cannot absolutely know anything." It, too, caves in under its own weight when the following question is asked and answered? The question: "Are you absolutely sure that you know that?" Please remember, "Any doctrine that implies a false doctrine is itself false."

"New Hermeneutics" may be found to the right side of gospel truth as well as to the left of it. One premise binds where God has not bound in his word and the other premise looses where God has not loosed in his word. What they share in common is that they are both erroneous. If and when they are followed to their ultimate and logical conclusions they will lead people away from the strait and narrow way of divine truth that leads to eternal life.

One who employs a "liberal" or "anti" argument is not necessarily a "liberal" or an "anti." However, no "liberal" or "anti" argument is friendly to the truth. Indeed, such erroneous argumentation promotes the efforts of Satan and hinders the search for the truth. If a subject is to be studied correctly it must be "thought through" correctly. Such thinking must be governed by the laws of thought.

—David P. Brown,  
Associate Editor

# MORE CORRESPONDENCE WITH MARK MCINTEER

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, TN 37204

Mr. David P. Brown  
25403 Lancewood Drive  
Spring, TX 77373  
August 23, 1997

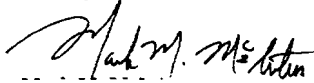
Dear Mr. Brown,

You are welcome to use my letter in the paper you edit. I trust you will use it in its entirety. If we continue to correspond you may need to add me to the staff.

Thanks for your desire to visit when you are in Nashville. We will be working on mailing the magazine the next several days, but I will be able to find some free time. Let me know what works best with your schedule. You can reach me most easily at my office, 292-4739.

In my answer to one of your questions several more were raised in your mind. Our meeting will allow an opportunity to discuss all of these and any others you may have. As you noted one of my comments did not represent your thinking, you can appreciate that you have missed on your understanding of my thinking. Face to face seems to be the best way to handle these differences of understanding, and your visit will afford that opportunity.

Sincerely,



Mark M. McInteer

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, TN 37204

Mr. David P. Brown  
P.O. Box 2273  
Spring, TX 77383-2273  
August 30, 1997

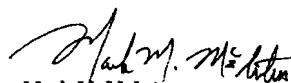
Dear Mr. Brown,

I am very disappointed that you chose not to make contact with me this week. It was my belief from your letter that you were willing to meet with me personally. In fact you stated, "I would appreciate the opportunity to visit with you personally."

This could have been a beneficial meeting. This is my busiest time of the quarter, but I kept my schedule such that I could meet with you at your convenience knowing you were at the disadvantage of being in unfamiliar surroundings.

Do you really want answers? Do you prefer to assume answers? Do you really have an interest in discussion? I await your response, so we can go on to far more important issues. If you are not interested in discussion you have wasted my time. You have accused me of leaving the bedrock of truth, yet you did not take the time to meet with me. I am disappointed.

Sincerely,



Mark M. McInteer

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, TN 37204

Mr. David P. Brown  
P.O. Box 2273  
Spring, TX 77383-2273

August 26, 1997

Dear Mr. Brown,

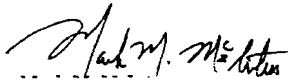
Sorry about the proliferation of mail. Keeping up with paperwork is always a problem and adding to your quantity was not my intent. I failed to give you some information in my earlier letter, and you may need it before we have a chance to meet.

Depending on how much of your response you intend to include in your publication the following may or may not be currently relevant, though I know you will want to be clear for the sake of accuracy.

You have the wrong Walter Leaver. I knew you would not want to have that error published as it may confuse the intent of your question. If that is not a part of your current issue I can give you details when we visit. If it is I trust there is time to get it corrected before distribution.

Until the opportunity of a visit I remain,

Sincerely,



Mark M. McInteer

## *Brown's Response To McInteer*

### Contending for the Faith

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

Mark M. McInteer  
P.O. Box 40304  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204

September 11, 1997

Dear brother McInteer:

I now have in my possession each one of your three letters dated respectively August 23, 26, and 30, 1997. The reason that I did not reply to your first two letters is a simple one; no one was at our home when they arrived in Spring. Before and after the *Robertson County Lectures* we vacationed in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

I do appreciate your correction in your August 26, 1997, letter regarding who the **Walter Leaver** of the July 17, 1997, *Banner* article is. That part of my August 20, 1997, letter to you was removed before it was published in the August issue of *Contending for the Faith*. Indeed, we do not knowingly print any error in *Contending for the Faith*. If and when we do we will correct it. However, are you not

with the *Brentwood Church* where the **Walt Leaver** I had in mind in my August 20, 1997, letter to you preaches?

#### PRAISING WALT LEAVER

Therefore, concerning the **Walt Leaver** of the *Brentwood Church*, I am asking you the same questions that appeared in my August 20, 1997, letter to you.

**Do you or your father uphold Walt Leaver's preaching in a *Donelson Presbyterian Church* (if it was not a Presbyterian Church it was a denominational church) the subject of "The meaning of Palm Sunday?" Do you think he is scripturally right to encourage the Antioch, Tennessee church to visit a "nativity scene" at a Methodist Church for the purpose of being edified by it? If you or your father thinks these activities by Walt Leaver are wrong, have you sought to correct him? Do you love him enough to correct him?**

Has your father not praised Walt Leaver? Why does he praise men who are leading the church of Christ into apostasy? Furthermore, why was your father and *21st Century Christian* absent from the 1997 *Jubilee*, but you were one of the speakers?

Remember **Winston Moore** of *21st Century Christian* was one of **Rubel Shelley's** big promoters when Shelly first came to Nashville. It was "the powers that be" at *21st Century Christian* who made **Rubel** Editor-in-Chief of *21st Century Christian Literature*. Furthermore, it was *21st Century Christian* that published **Rubel's** book, *I Just Want To Be A Christian*. Am I correct in saying that when sales at *21st Century Christian* began to fall off, **Winston Moore** fired **Rubel**? If he did not do it someone there did. Does *21st Century Christian* continue to sell **Shelley's** books? Does *21st Century Christian* sell **Max Lucado's** books? **What may we look for next from *21st Century Christian*?**

#### WHAT ABOUT MY INVITATION?

Though I did not receive your invitation to visit with you until it was too late to do anything about it, please remember that I invited you to the *Robertson County Lectures*, but you did not come. You never even mentioned my invitation to you to attend the *Robertson County Lectures* in any of your correspondence to me. Even though the *Jubilee* is a tool for the "change agents" in the church, I attended the first night and several of the sessions on the following day. I do not think that your schedule is any more busy than mine. However, I made time to travel from Houston to Nashville at my own expense to hear in person some of the speakers at the 1997 *Jubilee*. Could you not have driven the short distance from Nashville to the *Robertson County Lectures* for a visit with me? After all I had already driven many miles to get to Nashville and the *Robertson County Lectures*. You could have at least come to hear one of your former teachers at *Lipscomb*, **J. E. Choate**, speak.

I fail to realize how you could miss the points I made in my June 1997 Associate Editorial regarding what your father has omitted in his responsibility as a gospel preacher pertaining to exposing error and false teachers. Moreover, **Wayne Coats** in the same issue of the paper made the identical points that I did in his article entitled "*The Still, Silent Voices In Nashville.*"

#### OUR POINT MADE

**Your father has made our point and emphasized it better than we could.** I have before me an advertisement from the *Church Street Church of Christ*, 305 West Church Street, Lewisburg, Tennessee. It announces an "OLD TIME TENT REVIVAL." The speakers are **Willard Collins**, **Jim Bill McInteer**, **Steve Flatt**, and **Harold Redd**. It was conducted on the nights of September 7, 8, 9, and 10. If your father is able to appear in this "revival" and not neglect all of the things he needs to do regarding your mother, he could, if he desired, speak out against the false teachers and doctrines of the *Jubilee* speakers. Instead he appears with them. Of course, he would have to rebuke his own son for being a speaker on the *Jubilee*. Moreover, before your mother's health declined, where was your father, to borrow the words of an old hymn, "In the fight for the right?" Why did your father not "dare and do?"

**I do not mind answering your questions.** Why will you not answer mine? When something is written down and signed by the person who wrote the material many mistakes and misunderstandings are avoided. That is one reason why courts have written transcripts of the oral proceedings of trials. It is also the reason there are written and signed contracts. One does not usually mind answering a multiplicity of questions on a hospitalization insurance application and signing his name to it. However, for some strange reason certain preachers really do not want people to know what they believe. Maybe you can explain to me why that is the case. Therefore, why will you not write your answers to my questions found in my August 20, 1997, letter to you? Why are they so difficult to answer? If we had met or could yet meet "face to face" I would ask you the same questions that I had written to you. Furthermore, I would have wanted (and still would), for the reason previously given, the conversation tape recorded.

#### HONESTY HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM ANSWERING QUESTIONS

We expect students writing term papers to document their material. Aside from learning from the research done in preparing term papers as well as how to write a research paper, the documentation process should be one assignment that trains the student for life to document his beliefs as well as other matters. **Just what is wrong with proof and documentation** (I Thessalonians 5:21, I John 4:1)?

Regarding answering questions, it is reported of **N. B. Hardeman** while he was president of *Freed-Hardeman College* that he said, "I can state the position of *Freed-Hardeman College* on a penny post card and still have room to ask, 'How is your aunt Susie?'" Therefore, once again I am submitting the questions of my August 20, 1997, letter to you. Would you please answer them?

**Do you support the teaching of *Rubel Shelly* regarding the fellowshipping of denominations? Do you agree with *Rubel Shelly's* apology to the *Christian Church* for the division that took place and was officially recorded in the U. S. Census of 1906? Furthermore, though he is "retired" and not on the paid staff of *Woodmont Hills*, **Jim Woodroof** has been added to their work force. According to their bulletin, he will do most of the preach-**

ing when Rubel is away (*Love Lines*, Volume 23, Number 33, August 13, 1997). Are you in fellowship with Woodroof? Is *Max Lucado* faithful to God? Do you agree with Max Lucado's view concerning baptism? Do you think Max Lucado is scriptural when he tells alien sinners only to pray to God for forgiveness of their sins? Along with the men just listed, are the following *Jubilee* speakers, to name a few, faithful to God: *Randy Harris, Roger McCown, Joe Beam, Mark Henderson, Dan Dozier, Gary Holloway, Nila Sherrill, Rick Atchley, Harold Hazelip, Roy Osborne, Jim Mankin, Joe VanDyke, Steve Flatt, Buddy Bell, Jeff Walling?* With the few aforementioned errors and many other documented errors from the people previously listed, how can you consider yourself faithful to God while supporting and appearing with such men as just noted on the *Jubilee* (I Corinthians 6:17; Ephesians 5:11)? Have you lost sight of the infallible New Testament pattern for the Lord's church? If the above mentioned persons are not false teachers, what must one believe, teach,

and do or not believe, not teach, and not do that would qualify one to be correctly labeled a false teacher?

I am disappointed that you are in fellowship with the people who support and speak on the *Jubilee*. (If you are not, what would it take for you to be in fellowship with them?) Furthermore, what does this say about the stand of the *21st Century Christian* now and in the future? Please know that I have no personal ill-will toward you, your father, or *21st Century Christian*. It is my prayer that you and all others of the apostate "*Jubilee Church of Christ*" will repent of your sins and come back to the New Testament pattern for primitive pure apostolic Christianity. I beg of you and all others who support false doctrine and false teachers to repent before it is eternally too late.

In His Service,

David P. Brown

## Hugo McCord and the NIV

Gary Summers

In an article by **Hugo McCord** in the April 1997 issue of the **Firm Foundation** to which strong exception must be taken (even though I have no personal ill will toward either the fine publication or the author of "The NIV in Psalm 51:5"), McCord says he was asked by a "younger preacher" what was wrong with the NIV translation of Psalm 51:5. But even as the "younger preacher" asked the question, he affirmed: **"I do not believe that there is any material discrepancy between the Hebrew and the NIV"** (page 8). (There is nothing like answering your own question.)

What is so ironic is that McCord's literal translation of the Hebrew text shows clearly the difference between it and the NIV, but he apparently does not see it. Below are various versions with their renderings of the verse.

*KJV*: "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

*ASV*: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

*NAS*: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

*NKJ*: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

*Jewish translation*: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Even McCord's literal translation reads: "Behold, in iniquity I was born, and in sin she conceived me, mother mine."

How is it that our scholarly brother failed to see the shift in focus from the *mother* to the *son*? None of the above agrees with the NIV:

"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." "In iniquity" is an adverbial

phrase (which allows for an ellipsis); "sinful" is an adjective (which does not). "In sin" is an adverbial phrase modifying the verb "conceived;" "sinful" is an adjective modifying David. The NIV did not render the verse properly, as did the reliable translations; the NIV paraphrasers allowed themselves to become dynamically derailed once again in an effort to bolster their erroneous Calvinistic theology.

Although we agree with the point that this verse is a hyperbole stressing the permeation of sin upon all mankind, nevertheless the focal point of the sin is David's mother (the conception and the birth). The text does NOT say that David was sinful in the womb or sinful at birth (except in the NIV). Also, the use of hyperbole does not negate the possibility of ellipsis. Being born into a world of sin also stresses the domination of sin upon all the creation.

Faithful and knowledgeable brethren have for years been protesting the NIV in general and Psalm 51:5 in particular and rightly so! Some of us (with sufficient reasons) will continue to do so.

—920 Imperial  
Denton, Texas 76201

### QUIET PLEASE

A little boy was playing with his blocks when his father entered the room.

"Quiet, Dad, I'm building a church."

The father thinking that he would test his son along the lines of religious knowledge, said, "Why do we want to be quiet in church?"

"We have to, because the people are sleeping."

# NASHVILLE JUBILEE

(Continued from page one)

pices of the Independent Christian Church? In the first place, the NACC was organized to fight off control of the Christian Church by the liberal Disciples. The battle line was first drawn in a controversy over the infiltration of the new liberal theology. The College of the Bible was lost in 1917 in a showdown fight with the liberals.

But the stakes were much higher. It was a matter of domination over the Christian Church and control of their assets. Societies and conventions run on cash flow. The liberals had succeeded annually winning by majority votes on every convention floor year after year. The conservatives were finally fed up, and they took decisive action.

During the National Convention of 1926 in Memphis, a conservative group initiated plans to set up the machinery for the North American Christian Convention. The NACC met for the first time October 12-16, 1927 in Indianapolis. There were no business meetings, no resolutions, no voting, no in-fighting. It was a great success and a wonderful celebration of victory. The NACC meets annually in a big American city. The scope of the NACC is now international. It is a major principal unifying influence which holds the Independents together in a giant display of strength and solidarity.

## NASHVILLE JUBILEE, INC.

"Jubilee began as a dream of **Steve Flatt**, **Walt Leaver**, and **Rubel Shelly**, who wanted Nashville churches to do something positive [?] as a celebration of the good things Christ is doing in Nashville." Whatever they may have had in mind, Dr. Shelly surely had visions of the NACC dancing in his head. [I attended the NACC in the early 1980s while researching *The Christian Scholar: Biography of Hall Laurie Calhoun*. I had never seen anything quite like it with the exception of the FHC lectureship with **Guy N. Woods** chairing.]

I witnessed a tremendous outpouring of unity and resolve of purpose. The NACC has never been controlled by a handful of power-motivated pious zealots. I can just see Steve Flatt and Rubel Shelly salivating over the prospect of dominating churches of Christ everywhere through carefully planned and orchestrated Jubilees. They lack the savvy and the knowledge to pull off something on the order of the NACC.

This idea came crashing down with Jubilee '97 which was a "bust." The Jubilee '97 "change agents" used every lure in their tackle box to entice **Willard Collins** and **Jim Bill McInteer** onto the Jubilee floor. They did not bite. And other high-profiled church leaders in Nashville turned down similar offers.

However, Steve Flatt was all over Jubilee in all of his shining glory as the incumbent David Lipscomb University CEO. We hope to encourage Steve to mind his "P's" and "Q's" and to decline all future endorsements of the likes of Jubilee '97. Jesus had something to say about serving two masters. The Nashville Bible School charter demands that Steve Flatt honor the principles of the charter of the Nashville Bible School hand written by David Lipscomb. The incumbent DLU CEO must concede that his name and how he manages DLU is not taboo.

Before Rubel Shelly came to Nashville some 15 years ago, the churches of Christ were at peace with a wonderful spirit of mutual good will and cooperation which had prevailed since the 1922 Hardeman Tabernacle meetings. It became abundantly clear in 1991 that the Jubilee promoters were out to **take over** the traditional churches of Christ, not to *save* or to *preserve* them from postmodern liberalism.

This is in sharp contrast to the NACC Independents who had beaten back the liberal Disciples. They served notice in 1947 in the *Christian Standard* to the liberals that they were finished with them. Members by the thousands and churches by the hundreds "stood up" to be counted. It is time for the members of the churches of Christ to do the same.

The Nashville churches are now divided into *Jubilee* and *anti-Jubilee* churches since 1991. Families are alienated; their children no longer play together, and they don't know why; and once friends now find it awkward to carry on civil conversations.

The leader of the postmodern liberals in the Church of Christ is apparently Rubel Shelly. He belongs in the class of chief troublemakers of that breed identified with **Jesse B. Ferguson**, **Don Finto**, and **Leroy Garrett**.

There is no turning back for the Nashville churches. More than 60 elders, preachers, and members from a large number of churches of Christ met July 3 in the Concord Road church of Christ building to express their *unanimous disapproval* of Jubilee and Rubel Shelly.

However, if Jubilee manages to survive, which is doubtful, and if *Wineskins* survives for a season by merging with the defunct *Image* magazine, **Max Lucado** and Rubel Shelly have already delivered *Jubilee* mortal blows from which there is no recovery. Only nine churches out of 300 churches of Christ within easy driving distance of Nashville supported Jubilee this year.

Who will forget the 1991 headlines in the Nashville *Banner* and *Tennessean* which reported **Gayle Napier** accusing the traditional churches under authoritarian elders causing incest and sodomy in the local church families. It is not surprising that Napier remains the family counselor for the Harpeth Hills Church of Christ.

There is little question that the mounting division between the traditional churches of Christ, and postmodern Church of Christ has now come to a head. A similar worldwide struggle is taking place among the Catholics, Methodists, and other denominations who are fighting off this postmodern "**Gog and Magog**." The postmodern Catholics would have nun-priests presiding over high mass, and the postmodern Protestant denominations would elevate gays and lesbians to their pulpits. How far behind are the postmodern "Churches of Christ"? I would not venture to say at the present time.

## POSTSCRIPT:

Follow the sign posts, read the words, pay heed to the symbols (semiotics). There is not one good sign that Jubilee can survive without rich sponsors. Area churches shun Jubilee. What is dead ought to be buried without a bone above ground.

—37141/2 Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215



[EDITORIAL NOTE: A commendation is in order for the Schertz congregation and her faithful preacher, **Kenneth E. Ratcliff** from faithful brethren everywhere. By their efforts they have from the pen of the Oak Hills' elders produced more proof of the apostasy of that church and her preacher, **Max Lucado**. "For the elders" of the Oak Hills church **Dennis McDonald** declares concerning their involvement in the **Billy Graham South Texas Crusade**, "Certainly we recognize our differences, however, we choose to celebrate our similarities." In view of this statement from the Oak Hills' elders is it any wonder that **Lucado** does not believe or teach that an alien sinner must be immersed in water by the authority of Christ in order to obtain the remission of sins?

There are similarities between rat poison and wholesome food. However, it is that small amount of poison that contaminates the whole thing. Paul said to such persons as the Oak Hills elders, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (I Corinthians 5:6).

By their explicit statement the Oak Hills elders imply that they willfully ignore doctrinal poison and "celebrate" the good part. Are the Oak Hills elders attempting to tell us that every component of the Baptist church must be sinful before the whole thing is sinful? If that is what they are trying to do, they are wrong. However, the very foundation of the Baptist church is sinful (Calvinism). Baptists are not Christians (including Billy Graham). They have not believed or obeyed the plan of salvation. Hence, the whole of the devilish institution is leavened by man's doctrine and not the doctrine of Christ, "similarities" between the church of Christ and the Baptist Church notwithstanding. The Oak Hills Church is a denominational, sectarian "Jubilee Church of Christ." Its policy is to "celebrate" similarities, not the distinctive marks of New Testament Christianity that makes a people the Lord's church.

The faithful churches of San Antonio, the state of Texas, and faithful brethren everywhere must separate themselves from the Oak Hills Jubilee Church of Christ and all others who choose to "celebrate our similarities" with any denominational (man-made) church. The time is late and the night far spent.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

**Schertz Church of Christ**

501 SCHERTZ PARKWAY  
SCHERTZ, TEXAS 78154  
(210) 658-0269  
October 14, 1996

MINISTER  
Kenneth E. Ratcliff  
(210) 658-8094

Elders  
Oak Hills Church of Christ  
8308 Fredricksburg Rd.  
San Antonio, Texas 78229

Dear Brethren:

The enclosed material pertaining to the Billy Graham South Texas Crusade, scheduled for April 1997, recently came to our attention. As you will notice, on the second page it indicates one of the seminars, relating to the campaign, is to be held at the Oak Hills Church of Christ on October 21. It is for this reason I am writing on behalf of the church of Christ in Schertz.

Some members of this congregation are aware of the announcement; therefore, it seemed appropriate to seek clarification. We realize that involvement of the Oak Hills congregation may be erroneously reported. It would be a pleasure to announce that an error has been made and that Oak Hills is not lending support to the Billy Graham campaign (whether by hosting a seminar or otherwise).

If Oak Hills is assisting the campaign, we earnestly solicit some explanation. It is our understanding that Billy Graham, and others involved in his campaigns, do not proclaim the truth regarding salvation. Under the circumstances, we should not even bid them God speed. The implication is you have cast your lot with the denominational world and not with the church of our Lord. We pray this is not the case. Our request is not because we feel you must account to us for your actions but that we may know the truth.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Christ,



Kenneth E. Ratcliff  
On behalf of the  
church of Christ in Schertz

**Schertz Church of Christ**

501 SCHERTZ PARKWAY  
SCHERTZ, TEXAS 78154  
(210) 658-0269  
November 26, 1996

MINISTER  
Kenneth E. Ratcliff  
(210) 658-8094

Elders  
Oak Hills Church of Christ  
8308 Fredricksburg Rd.  
San Antonio, Texas 78229

Dear Brethren:

Over a month ago I wrote to you on behalf of this congregation. To this date we have not received a reply. We can appreciate that everyone is busy and elders have many pressing matters. There is also the possibility that our letter was never delivered. Under the circumstances, I have been asked to follow-up on the initial inquiry. I am enclosing a copy of our October 14, 1996 letter with attachments. An additional attachment is a copy of the article that appeared in the Express-News.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Christ,



Kenneth E. Ratcliff  
On behalf of the  
church of Christ in Schertz

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Schertz Church of Christ  
501 Schertz Parkway  
Schertz, Texas 78154

Re. Brother Ratcliff's letters of October 14 and November 26, 1996.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The material you received was correct. The Billy Graham South Texas Crusade used the Oak Hills church of Christ building for two hours on Monday, October 21, 1996.

We have been invited to participate in teaching those who respond to the crusade. We feel we cannot pass up the opportunity to teach Jesus to those who are seeking.

Certainly we recognize our differences, however, we choose to celebrate our similarities.

Yours in Christ,

Dennis McDonald  
for the Elders

### Schertz Church of Christ

501 SCHERTZ PARKWAY  
SCHERTZ, TEXAS 78154  
(210) 638-0269

April 21, 1997

MINISTER  
Kenneth E. Ratcliff  
(210) 638-8094

Elders  
Oak Hills Church of Christ  
3308 Fredricksburg Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78229

Dear Brethren:

We very much appreciate your consideration in responding to our letters dated October 14 and November 26, 1996.

We are not sure that we understand when you say that you recognize your differences but choose to celebrate your similarities with the Billy Graham South Texas Crusade. We of course recognize that the decision and responsibility is yours and not ours. At the same time, we have no doubt that you are aware that the scriptures teach of only one church, one gospel and one way of salvation. Based on past history, we have little doubt that the campaign did not result in preaching the truth regarding salvation.

We understand that Oak Hills has exchanged pulpits with the Baptists and both speak and act as though those of the denominational world are brethren. If this is correct, it does not harmonize with God's word. As you choose to celebrate your similarities with denominations you likewise choose to separate yourself from congregations such as Schertz. We cannot close our eyes as though nothing has happened.

The Schertz congregation stands with other congregations that plead with you to repent and return to the Lord. Though we do not claim any authority over your actions, we cannot condone nor fellowship Oak Hills in the path you have chosen to follow. We pray and look forward to your return to the Lord. If that is beyond consideration; then please seriously consider taking the name of "Community Church" or of a denomination that you may closely resemble.

Yours in Christ,

On behalf of the  
Schertz church of Christ

# 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., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423. *Publishers of Matters of THE Faith.*

## — England —

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, Tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."

## —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.: 7:00 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.

## —Missouri—

**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.

## —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. **Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures** each third week in June.

• • • • •

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, Tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Minister.

## —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.



# WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE “UNITY IN DIVERSITY” MOVEMENT?

Jimmie B. Hill

“Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased” (Jeremiah 5:6).

In this Old Testament verse we find highly figurative language used in comparing the Babylonians to animals of the wild. The literal meaning of the verse is that God was going to suffer the enemies of his children to come against them “because their transgressions are many.”

Merciful Jehovah constantly warned his children of the impending doom of captivity and tried to bring them to repentance many times and in many ways. Israel, however, in refusing to listen to the word of God, laid transgression upon transgression and finally went into Babylonian captivity.

## TODAY MANY REFUSE TO LISTEN

Many of the children of God under the New Testament are refusing to listen to the word of God. They, too, are be-

ing taken “captive” by animals of the wild. More specifically, they are being led astray by “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”

The apostle Paul gives this warning in Acts 20:29-31: “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

Many, in refusing to listen to God’s word today, are laying transgression upon transgression and, if they do not repent, will finally receive the doom of eternity.

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY

This misnomer, “unity in diversity,” was not too long ago the watchword of the liberal and digressive element among the churches of Christ. While the phrase is seldom heard today, the old cry of “unity in diversity” is still alive. To quote the poet, “A rose by any other name is still a rose.” The proponents of “unity in diversity” envision a kind of coalition where every one simply “agrees to disagree” regardless of any differences in worship, practice and/or doctrine.

Don’t be misled! This is a mere pretense at unity and a toleration for every false doctrine imaginable in the format. With this liberal, digressive element in the churches of Christ today, there are no clear lines (if any lines at all) for fellowship or the breaking thereof.

However, the Bible says, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (II John 9-11). Therefore, to be pleasing to God, we must agree only with those who agree with him.

—Lantana Exhorter  
Lantana Church of Christ  
Crossville, Tennessee

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# GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD!

Bill Jackson

This is one of the greatest New Testament principles. It brings us in direct conflict with others in the religious world. Merely to turn on the radio or TV to a religious program any time is to be bombarded with every kind of declaration from speakers to the effect that "God spoke to me..., Jesus appeared to me..., the Lord said to me..., and like comments. What then follows is usually a pitch for dollars and those dollars flow in! People are reached and affected by that kind of thing due to faith in the person. Of course, if God actually appeared to that person, and gave him certain directions, and uttered to him certain desires, then most assuredly we should help aid God in this work!

Paul, to the Corinthians, laid down a picture of the working and the motivation of false teachers. It was a picture of method and motivation that the teacher of truth does not have to use. These false teachers, Paul said, are persons of dishonesty, who walk in craftiness, and who handle the word of God deceitfully (II Corinthians 4:2). The teacher of truth elevates God and Christ. He has nothing to hide since he deals in truth, which is the word of God (John 17:17). He need not be crafty and sneaky in his methods, since he wants men, out of a sincere heart, to render sincere obedience to the gospel. He wants to handle, or divide, the word properly (II Timothy 2:15), because the very truth he has in his hand will one day judge him! The worker for God uses none of the methodology of the deceitful worker!

Important it is for us to note that God speaks to man, in these last days, through his son (Hebrews 1:1-2), and the Son speaks through his word (John 12:48), known as the gospel, or, new testament of the Christ. Away with the idea that God intervenes into the affairs of this life, speaking directly to a man with the giving of advice or stating intentions he has. God is no respecter of persons, and deals with all men, through the word, and for as long as the world stands, by the message, the word (Mark 16:15-16; II Timothy 3:16-17).

The following should be a most important tip-off for all of us, and for all. As soon as a religious teacher informs you that God spoke directly to him...put him down as a false teacher and turn away from him completely. Another tip-off, following the first one, has to do with the subject of God's "speaking" to the man: A job needs to be done, it is going to require a lot of money, the teacher is to take care of the doing of the job, and miracle of miracles, you in the audience can have a part. Therefore, send in the dollars!

May we never leave the truth that all the word of God is truth (John 17:17), and the word furnishes us completely (II Timothy 3:17). God speaks to us in that way, and in NO OTHER WAY IS HIS WILL REVEALED TO MAN!

—Deceased

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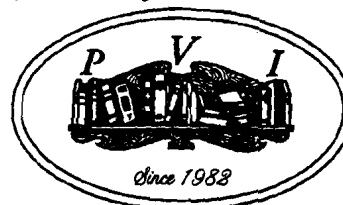
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# THE PHOENIX WITCH HUNTS,

## Or: Standing in Good Company

Darrell Broking

**“And 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”** (I Kings 18:17-18.)

Why is it that Ahab charged Elijah as the troubler of Israel? Was Elijah a false prophet? Did he go about spreading error and telling lies? Or was it because of his willingness to stand for the Lord, and his righteous cause? Any student of the Bible realizes that Elijah was not about to let Ahab and Jezebel corrupt Jehovah's kingdom any longer. Any time that a man stands with honor, diligence, and intestinal fortitude, defending the right way of the Lord, he will be slandered!

Defenders of darkness realize that they cannot answer the truth. Therefore, it seems that with one mind, they unite in an assassination campaign. Time and time again this is the case. Jeremiah was a great prophet of God. His enemies grew tired of his stand for Jehovah's righteous cause. Thus, the campaign was enacted against Jehovah's faithful one. Jeremiah said:

**“For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him”** (Jeremiah 20:10).

The Bible contains no greater example of this, than that of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the rebellious Jewish leaders grew weary of the Lord's truth, they enacted their malicious plot against him. When their attempts of character assassination failed, they set out to kill the Christ. Jesus said to them, **“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham”** (John 8:40). Likewise the apostle Paul had to chide the Galatians; **“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”** (Galatians 4:16).

It seems that my dear friend, **Goebel Music**, stands in good company. As the church of our Lord entered into the last decade of the 20th century, brother Music stood like the prophets of long ago, and set out to slay the modern Baal worshipers in the Lord's Kingdom. *Behold the Pattern* seems to be achieving that goal. The attacks which have been hurled against this faithful man, once again prove that darkness hates the light and will seek to destroy it. Thus the witch hunts are on!

Why the reference to the “Phoenix Witch Hunts?” Maybe it is because I have spent most of the 90's in the Phoenix area. At times I wonder why Phoenix isn't called “Little Nashville?” Maybe it is because there are more faithful men in the Nashville area, exposing its error, than there are in the Phoenix area. Because I, for one, will not cease exposing Phoenix's Baal worshipers, an elder in this area set out to analyze my problem. His diagnosis? “You

read too many of Goebel Music's books!” Ah! What a refreshing compliment!

Recently, a young member of one of Phoenix's more liberal congregations, was asked by her mother to give a biblical answer for her apostasy. Have you ever asked a liberal to give you a biblical answer? Try it sometime and watch that liberal love begin to flow! This young lady said that she was not going to allow her mother to unload on her with the scriptures. Oh, no! Alas, in the spirit and power of Jezebel, she had yet another bit of information for her mother: “That Goebel Music fellow has been divorced and remarried three or four times!”

Last week, on a church of Christ orientated internet discussion group, a man many believe to be located in the Phoenix area, refused to identify his congregational locale. Oh, no, he said, I am not going to be the subject of a witch hunt! And it seems, at the same time, he was stooped over attempting to ignite the kindling which he planned to use to burn brother Music at the stake. I must say, Ahab could not have done better himself.

Exactly what is this person's charge? In his own words: “Goebel Music is a convicted spouse abuser with a record with the Dallas Police Dept. Is this really the guy we ought to be quoting?”

After contacting brother Music, I responded for him. Here is my reply. “Brother Goebel has never been in the Dallas police department. You need to be careful when you slander another. You know that since 1980 Goebel has lived in Tarrant County. If he were arrested, he would have been jailed and tried in Ft. Worth. Dallas is in Dallas county. Your accusation is an out-and-out, bold-faced lie.” To this the accuser has simply cried, “liar, liar.”

Sadly, however, this information went out to several hundred people all over the globe. The witch hunt is on, you see, the liberals cannot answer brother Music with the truth. Therefore, the only alternative they have is character assassination.

When you hear this kind of garbage being hurled against Jehovah's faithful, remind the gossiper of the following. 1) The burden of proof is upon you. If these allegations are true, then there is a paper trail. Either prove the allegations, or repent of your sinful gossiping. 2) Learn a lesson from Goebel. Read *Behold the Pattern* and notice how Goebel documented everything he discussed. Notice his humble, meek spirit. Consider his dignified, honest, godly approach when dealing with error. Then ask yourself, “Am I displaying the same spirit and integrity that brother Music has displayed?” 3) Point out that slander is criminal, not to overlook the fact that it is an abomination before Jehovah God (Proverbs 6:17). If this person continues to cry “liar, liar,” instead of offering proof, then consider the source. Remember that Goebel is in good company!

—5098 Bowie  
Memphis, Tennessee 38109

# WOMEN MAY NOT LEAD IN WORSHIP!

Bob Berard

Assumptions permeate a recent article by Eric R. Waller headed, "Women Prophets in the Church." He concludes that "In the first century church, women were active, vocal participants in the public worship and served at time of prayer and in teaching even with men present." He is not speaking of authorized speech, such as singing or confessing, he is speaking of women exercising the lead in prayer and in teaching; therefore, he is advocating the woman's exercising dominion over men. Clarifying this, he says, "Our tradition of prohibiting women from audible prayer in worship or from teaching when men are present runs counter to the biblical examples."

Waller ASSUMES that the Joel 2 prophecy of gifts for both men and women (even though the passage does not delineate the setting for the practice of such gifts) warrants the conclusion that New Testament women prophesied in the public worship assemblies. He likewise ASSUMES that the mere mention of women prophesying in I Corinthians 11:5 justifies her leading in prayer and in teaching in the worship assemblies of the church.

## MULTIPLYING ASSUMPTIONS

Waller compounds error by using his assumption-based doctrine of women leadership in worship as his standard for misinterpreting other passages. Particularly he discusses I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2, declaring,

Several problems exist if one uses 1 Corinthians 14:34 or 1 Timothy 2:12 to negate Joel 2, Acts 2, Acts 21 and 1 Corinthians 11. The most obvious problem is contradiction in the texts. Since God is not the author of confusion, it seems most logical to assume that 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 (the alleged "prohibition" passages) or either the Joel 2, Acts 2, Acts 21 and 1 Corinthians 11 passages mean something other than what many allege.

Having accepted as fact his ASSUMPTION that women were prophesying and leading prayers in the church's worship assemblies, Waller now, for consistency's sake, interprets other scriptures to be minus their apparent prohibitions of such leadership functions. Presto, pronto, ASSUMPTION again leads the "assumer" to conclude what he has not proven.

## ERRONEOUS ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT I CORINTHIANS 14:26-40

In I Corinthians 14:26-40, Waller makes more colossal ASSUMPTIONS, saying,

It should be noted that the *same command of "silence"* that was issued to the women in verse 34 was issued to the others (whom some suppose to be only men) in verses 28 and 30. It would *seem* that in *fairness* and to avoid *selective enforcement*, that if women were to be totally silent forever, men too, would have to follow suit.

This perplexing *inequity of silencing women but not men* has caused some to attempt circumvention of the problem by relating it to spiritual gifts. They reason that since miraculous gifts ceased the men are no longer bound by the command to silence. It should be noted that the text does not say that only men were involved. In fact, it is *likely* that both men and women were involved in the tongue speaking and prophecy based on I Corinthians 11:4-5 (all emphasis mine, BB).

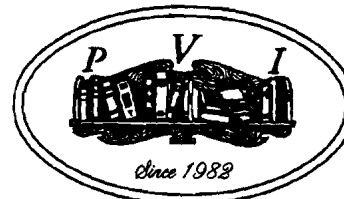
He's on a roll. He builds on his earlier ASSUMPTIONS and now ASSUMES that the use of the same word, the word commanding silence, must involve the same breadth of prohibition in every sentence. Could it not be that other words in a sentence (those besides the word commanding silence) have some bearing on the application of the commanded silence? The commands to the speakers in verses 28 and 30, are commands intertwined with conditions; for example, the tongue speakers are to be silent IF they have no interpreter, but some tongue speakers (two or three, with interpretation) were not commanded to be silent (verse 27). Those of verses 28 and 30 are rightly supposed to be men and not women in view of Paul's commands in verses 34-35 categorically demanding the silence of women in these special assemblies. If NONE of the women are to speak at ANY time, then the command for

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only SOME people to be silent at only SOME times must be commands for men only. Read the verses, please:

**“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church”** (I Corinthians 14:34-35).

Whether or not a special group of women, the prophets wives, are in view here, all women are prohibited from speaking. Paul says **“it is a shame for women to speak”** in the special assemblies here considered.

Waller says, **“It would seem that in fairness and to avoid selective enforcement, that if women were to be totally silent forever, men too, would have to follow suit”** (emphasis mine BB). He ASSUMES that what “seems” best would be best and decides based on this subjective standard that selectively prohibiting women's speech would be undesirable. Does Waller not know that he (Waller) is not able to ascertain what is right or wrong in this matter except by logically consulting God's word (Jeremiah 10:23; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:21-22)? Waller calls it unfair, “inequity,” or “selective enforcement,” but the submission of woman to man is God's will dating back to Eden (I Corinthians 14:34; Genesis 3:16).

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### Special Assemblies

That these were special assemblies (assemblies peculiar to the first century and not the regular worship assemblies) is implied by the facts that (1) no speaker other than inspired speakers spoke and that (2) Paul was specifically regulating inspired speaking. How could an inspired speaker be silenced and uninspired men be permitted to speak? If the second and third *tongue speakers* had to wait their turn and the fourth and subsequent prophets were forbidden to speak at all, when were the *uninspired* speakers authorized to speak? No doubt miraculous speakers were present in many regular worship assemblies in the first century, but Paul, in this text, is specifically regulating the use of the miraculous gifts of inspired speakers and also ordering the complete silence of the women present. Specific allowances and restrictions on the use of miraculous gifts cannot be applied today when there are no miraculous gifts to allow or restrict. Obviously, then, all the authorized speech considered in this text took place in a special assembly characteristic of the miraculous age and impossible for subsequent non-miraculous ages.

The principles like the woman's subjection and the requirement of doing things decently and in order abide for all time, but the specific proscriptions and prohibitions apply *only* to the special assemblies in which miracles were performed. Since the prohibition of all women's speech was one of the specifics in such special meetings, that prohibition did not extend to regular worship assemblies in the first or current century. If it were applied to worship services of the church there could be no women singing or confessing their faith or faults. Let those claiming that this text is a regular worship assembly of the church explain why they allow confessions by women in today's worship assemblies. If no woman could ask a question as verse 35 indicates, could a lady come forward at the invitation and ask the preacher to repeat what he said about baptism? Should the preacher rebuke her if she asks such a question?

A woman may speak in a worship assembly if she is in subjection, does not teach over or exercise dominion over men, or sin in some other way (I Timothy 2:11-15; Ephesians 5:19; James 5:16; Colossians 3:17). Waller, however, is not advocating acceptable woman's speech, he is contending for women to be “active, vocal participants in the public worship...at time of prayer and in teaching even with men present.” By such approval of women leading men in worship (the most serious activity in which man can engage), Waller is encouraging the woman to step outside the restriction God has placed upon her to be in “all subjection” and thus, has encouraged women to step outside of the doctrine of Christ (I Timothy 2:11; II John 9-11).

### Erroneous Assumptions about I Timothy 2:12

In I Timothy 2:12, Waller rides ASSUMPTIONS again saying,

.....Probably the Greek word which can refer to either “women” or “wives” should be translated here as “wives” based on the reference to Adam and Eve (2:14), but it is not crucial to our understanding. At least two things *seem* clear: 1) women were involved in public worship or teach-

ing; and 2) they failed to exhibit demeanor becoming of Christian wives.

If Paul here prohibits all women from vocal public worship or teaching, he contradicts his instructions to Corinth and opposes God for giving females the power to prophesy. If Paul here prohibits all women from vocal public worship or teaching, then this verse *alone* nullifies all the other verses permitting women's participation. Using the verse in such manner would truly be a case of the tail wagging the dog. (all emphasis, except word "*alone*," mine, BB)

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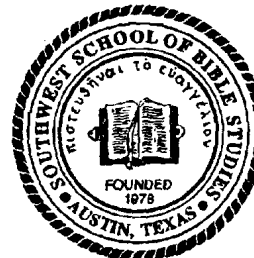
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HI, HO, ASSUMPTION! To an "assumer," a "probably" here and a "things seem clear" there are as certain as need be to get him to where he wants to be, sitting on a conclusion which rests on nothing but ASSUMPTION. How can he be wrong in limiting Paul's prohibition to just a few women? To make Paul's prohibition applicable to all women would cause a contradiction with his earlier ASSUMPTION. May it not be so, Waller concludes, let us ASSUME some more.

### CONSEQUENCES OF ASSUMPTION

Waller does a great disservice to the cause of Christ in disseminating his assumption-based false doctrine encouraging women leadership in worship services of the church. He urges a practice which God forbids. Given the gullibility of men, and especially of novices, his words will likely sway some into his erring way. Waller should ponder the consequences (Revelation 22:18-19; Matthew 18:6; Galatians 1:6-10; 2 John 9-11; James 3:1).

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# SOFT-PEDAL JOURNALISM

Foy E. Wallace Jr.

Personalities in journalism, which means naming teachers of error along with systems of error, are not any violation of courageous, dignified, religious journalism. Naming the men who teach error and practice deception in religion, even in the church, "can be done in a courteous and Christian manner," but it should be done.

To talk and write of courageous, dignified, courteous methods of religious journalism is to deal only in broad generalities. For some of our old landmarks as gospel papers to recede from former drastic policies and retreat behind the verbiage of carefully worded resolutions of editorial committees to restrain the powers of pens, is a keen disappointment to many of us who have looked to these papers to take the lead in a major fight, without generalities, relentless offensives against false movements and the men who promote them

Whether some "temptation or scheme of intimidation" has "seduced" and "provoked" the editors and publishers to modify policies we cannot say, but it is obvious that something has caused them to seek retrenchment. Our only point here is that it is no time to be saying pretty platitudes and dealing in generalities. We are in a fight for the truth and the cannon fire cannot cease until the enemies of the church stack arms.

Calling names of false teachers and their aides and sympathizers is neither undignified nor discourteous, because Paul did it, and he was courteous, dignified and educated. He said, "Demas forsook me, having loved this present world." Again he said that Hymenaeus and Philetus had shipwrecked their faith and were overthrowing the faith of others by their theory of the resurrection and he wrote it down in the New Testament (a rather dignified book) that he had turned those brethren of his over to Satan. He clashed with Barnabas upon one occasion and withstood Peter to his face and rebuked him publicly. Neither incident ruined the church, nor marred the dignity of the New

Testament. He further said that Alexander the coppersmith did him much evil and declared that the Lord would reward him for what he did. Paul did not seem to covet the kind of reward he intimated Alexander would get. He told a perverter of the truth one time that he was full of guile and villainy, called him the son of the devil, and asked him if he ever intended to quit perverting the way of the Lord.

When a paper develops better manners than the New Testament and a preacher becomes more dignified than the apostles, neither is worth anything to the defense of the truth nor to the cause of Christ.

— Deceased

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## A THRICE-TOLD TALE OF THREE RESTORATION CHURCHES

J. E. Choate

Our tale begins with **Richard T. Hughes**, Pepperdine professor, a principal speaker for the *Forrest F. Reed Lectures* on September 26, 1997 sponsored by the Nashville-based Disciples of Christ Historical Society. The Lectures established in 1964 are named in memory of **Forrest F. Reed**, a prominent Nashville publisher, and long-time chairman of the DCHS Board of Trustees.

The purpose of the Reed Lectures is to provide a periodic series of lectures and to create and nurture interest in the history of the Restoration movement which identifies with the general history of the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, and Church of Christ. Hughes' lecture is titled "Founding Vocation and Future Vision: Self Understanding of the Churches of Christ."

A significant question is raised as to why the Reed Lectures, sponsored by the Disciples of Christ, is hosted by Lipscomb University. No fraternal relations have existed between the Disciples of Christ and churches of Christ for more than a century. Why now?

And who is Dr. Richard T. Hughes that he is again a principal speaker on the Reed Lectures? Professor Hughes was educated at Harding University, Abilene Christian University, and has a Ph.D. from Iowa University. Dr. Hughes is listed as Distinguished Professor, Religion Division of Pepperdine University.

Dr. Hughes is your typical *avant garde* postmodern theologian with the yen to be recognized in eminent scholarly circles. He does not identify with the traditional churches of Christ. Dr. Hughes speaks to a small group in the postmodern Church of Christ who give mixed non-substantive reviews of his writings.

Dr. Hughes has gained a measure of notoriety with his published book titled *Reviving the Ancient Faith*. The ma-

JOR thesis of the book is that the Church of Christ is a post-modern denomination whose roots are traced to an early 19th century exclusive Restoration sect.

**Douglas Foster's** book, titled *Will the Cycle Be Unbroken?*, published before the Hughes book, develops the very same idea of the sectarian origin of the Churches of Christ. Both Hughes and Foster especially aspire to be numbered with such notable Restoration historians as **J. H. Garrison** and **Earl West**.

The logic of the simple facts is that both Foster and Hughes choose to identify with the Disciples of Christ, and not at all with conservative churches of Christ. This is true in spite of the fact that both were brought up in churches of Christ.

Dr. Hughes serves on the Editorial Committee of the DCHS, and Douglas Foster serves on the Consultants Committee of the DCHS. This could be considered a matter of little importance. Their recognition for deserting the "faith of their fathers" in the scholarly places of the Digressives is of small glory and little recompense. But their influence is considerable among church members who are not aware that they are marching under the banner of the Digressives. This is changing!

### THE FORREST F. REED LECTURES NEWS RELEASE

The information for the 1997 Reed Lectures came off the ACU internet server from **Edward W. Dodds**, Managing Editor for the Disciples of Christ Historical Society:

The Reed Lectures are sponsored by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and hosted by the University as a part of special events and celebrations related to the inauguration of **Stephen F. Flatt** as the sixteenth president of the university.

(Continued on Page 14)

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVIII, No. 10

October/1997

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

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## Editorial...

### J. E. Choate Named to *Contending for the Faith* Editorial Staff

It is not often that *Contending for the Faith* names a writer to its Editorial Staff—and when it does so, there is a reason.

When long-time Staff Writer Archie W. Luper, of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, recently suggested that **J. E. Choate**, of Nashville, be named to our Editorial Staff, the reasons were obvious.

Like two minds with a single thought, this appointment had been imminent for several years. Certainly, within the past decade, no writer among the churches of Christ has made a greater contribution to the editorial pages of *Contending for the Faith* than J. E. Choate.

#### QUALIFIED IN MANY DIRECTIONS

Of the several qualities we look for in Staff Writers, brother Choate has them all in abundance.

Above all we seek writers whose *first* loyalty is to the truth of the gospel (Philippians 1:7, 17)—writers wholly committed to the cause of Christ and his church, just as Paul and Timothy were so committed (I Timothy 6:20; II Timothy 1:12).

We seek writers who not only are genuine Christians themselves but who are genuine scholars in the scriptures “**who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil**” (Hebrews 5:14).

#### CHOATE'S ROOTS IN RESTORATION MOVEMENT

In a day when some of our *pseudo*-scholars are doing their utmost to undermine the truth of the gospel and change the true church of our Lord into “just another denomination,” it matters to us that our staff writers' religious roots are deep in the movement to restore Christianity to its original faith and practice.

Brother Choate was born February 27, 1916, in the Stubblefield community near Wingo in Graves County, Kentucky. [A street in Wingo recently has been named “Choate Drive” on the county grid by the Graves County, Kentucky court.] His maternal grandmother **Susan Carrol**, was born in Chester County, Tennessee. She grew up with **N. B. Hardeman**, whose parents lived on the adjoining farm. They were about the same age.

#### EARLY EDUCATION IN ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

As to education, brother Choate first attended a one-room (all eight grades) school in the Poyners Chapel community where his family lived five miles out of Wingo. He finished the second grade in Cuba,

Kentucky, after the Poyners Chapel school was closed. **John B. Hardeman** was principal of the Cuba school.

Graduating from the Wingo High School, when he was 18, he and **Florence Marie Jones**, his only wife, having been sweethearts since 16, slipped across the state line into Illinois before graduation to be married, since their parents would not have given consent because children of that age were expected to wait a while and bring their families into their plans. [At this writing, J. E. and Marie have been married to each other for 63 years.]

#### ENTERING FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE AT 22

Leaving the farm at 22 years of age, the Choates moved to Henderson, Tennessee, to enter Freed-Hardeman College. Their son **Jerry** then was 13 months old. [J. E.'s mother had attended college one year there when she was 17.] His reason for going to Henderson was for an education to become a preacher.

In 1940, brother Choate and his family moved back to Wingo when he entered Murray State College, graduating in 1942. After that, he was principal the first year in the Water Valley Junior High School. He taught history the second year in the Wingo High School, when **Adron Doran** was principal. Subsequently, he moved to Gleason, Tennessee, to be the school principal at the same time that he was preaching to the church in Dresden, Tennessee.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION IN NASHVILLE

Moving to Nashville, in 1946, brother Choate earned an M. A. degree at George Peabody College for Teachers. He began teaching in David Lipscomb College that fall and taught there for 40 consecutive years before retiring as Professor of Bible and Philosophy.

Enrolling for a class in 1950 in the Vanderbilt Graduate School, Choate was personally invited by



the head of the English Department, **Dr. Walter Clyde Currey**, to pursue a Ph.D. in English, which he completed in 1954.

Immediately then entering the Vanderbilt School of Religion, Choate came out with the B. D. Degree. This was at the height of the neo-orthodoxy, theological movement which produced the likes of **Karl Barth**, **Rudolph Bultmann**, **Paul Tillich** et al.

Since completing those rarified studies, Choate has maintained his interest in postmodern theology and philosophy, now writing extensively in these areas and maintaining a high level of ongoing study and research.

#### CHOATE'S BOOKS RECEIVE WIDE RECOGNITION

Brother Choate's doctoral dissertation was a study of the frontier days of the Old West with special emphasis on the colorful history of the longhorn trail drives out of Texas into Kansas and America's folk hero, the cowboy. His dissertation was published by the University of Oklahoma under the title, *The American Cowboy: The Myth and the Reality* (1955).

This book since has gone through three printings by the University of Oklahoma and one printing by Thames and Hudson, Ltd., London, England (1956). It still is being printed by the Greenwood Press, in Connecticut.

At the time of its publication, Choate's book was reviewed by *Time Magazine*, the *New York Times Book Review* section, the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and major scholarly journals such as *American Literature*, the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, and other equally scholarly journals. The Library of Congress declared the book to be the top scholarly book in its category and, in 1955, it also was so named by *Time Magazine* in that respect.

## GOODPASTURE RECOGNIZED CHOATE'S ABILITIES

Without doubt, brother Choate could have had a noteworthy career as a frontier historian—but his major interest was elsewhere.

**B. C. Goodpasture**, himself widely recognized for his scholarly interests, took an early interest in Choate's writings. As a result, Choate not only became a Staff Writer for the *Gospel Advocate*, under Goodpasture, but he went on to write four published biographies for the *Advocate*, including, *I'll Stand on the Rock: Biography of H. Leo Boles*; *Roll Jordan Roll: Biography of Marshall Keeble*, now being reprinted by **Dr. Sam Hester**; and *The Anchor That Holds: Biography of B. C. Goodpasture*. The book that Choate and Adron Doran wrote together, *The Christian Scholar: Biography of Hall Laurie Calhoun*, also was published by the *Advocate*. His latest book—co-written with **William Woodson**—was *Sounding Brass and Clanging Cymbals*, published by Freed-Hardeman University.

## GOSPEL PREACHER AS WELL AS WRITER

Across the decades of J. E. Choate's scholarship and writings, he has steadfastly maintained the truth of the gospel, having preached to Nashville area congregations over the past 50 years, including the Donelson, Reid Avenue, Eighth Avenue, Buena Vista, and Eastview churches of Christ. Now 81, he retired from full time preaching at age 73.

After being named Staff Writer for the *Gospel Advocate* by B. C. Goodpasture, Choate remained in that capacity until Goodpasture's death. Now writing for *Contending for the Faith*, *Firm Foundation*, *First Century Christian*, *Yokefellow*, and *Plumblin'*, he plans to continue so doing until the infirmities of the flesh, or death, cut off the power of his word processor.

## J. E. CHOATE TAKES HIS STAND

In accepting our invitation to the Editorial Staff of *Contending for the Faith*, our venerable brother wrote, saying,

I believe in the inerrant inspiration of scripture under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. I believe Jesus Christ established his church in 33 A.D. in Jerusalem on the foundation truth that he is the Son of God. I believe the churches of today follow, certainly not perfectly, the pattern set forth in the New Testament for the worship and practices of churches of Christ.

I abhor the very idea, just as nature hates a vacuum, that the churches of Christ today form a sectarian denomination whose roots are traced to a narrow, bigoted, self-centered, exclusivistic Restoration sect of the last century.

If the postmodern liberals in major urban pulpits and our Christian universities think they are going to pull this one off, I bid them just wait and see their little "sick denomination" sputter along like the liberal Disciples of Christ today. They take great comfort and confidence in sharing with each other their nonsense theology and "church growth" paradigms. Their fatal error has been in the selection of their leading gurus, namely, Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Joe Beam, and Mike Cope, as Lynn Anderson and Marvin Phillips fade away.

Their endorsement and promotion of postmodern theology and "church growth" paradigms are their total obsessions, and their "final solution." Already this postmodern apostasy is beginning to come apart at the seams.

\*\*\*\*\*

Such is the magnificent, accomplished, true-to-the-Book writer—J. E. Choate—whom we now welcome to the Editorial Staff of *Contending for the Faith*. We wish him many more years of faithful service as he continues both to *extend* as well as *defend* the faith which once for all was delivered unto the saints.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

## A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHERS

*We know that we are controversial; but since when has controversy in and of itself alone been wrong? We are amazed that anyone can engage in a mere casual reading of the Bible and not see controversy leap out at him. Of course we speak of the kind of controversy wherein faithful persons are engaged with those who oppose the Lord, his doctrine, and his people. If one cannot read the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts alone and see the controversial nature of Christ, his apostles, his gospel and his church, that person has a severe problem with perception and understanding. Yet, today the Lord's church has been sold a bill of goods concerning Christian living that in no way reflects the Christian conduct of faithful brethren revealed on the pages of the New Testament.*

*Several thousand of you who receive this paper have never subscribed to it. Someone cared enough for your soul to pay for it being sent to you. Some of you hate it and some of you love it. Many of you have told us that you were unaware that your elders were supporting false doctrines and teachers until you read it in this paper. Some of you have expressed amazement that churches of Christ could espouse so many denominational and other false doctrines. Frankly, many of you have confessed outright ignorance that the Lord's church could be as far down the road to apostasy as it is.*

*On the other hand some of you have declared that the Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Nashville Jubilee, and Tulsa Workshop view of unity and the church are exactly what you love. In no uncertain terms you have attempted to practice on us what you think you have seen in us; which thing you have condemned. Your self-inflicted blindness to such inconsistencies would be amusing if it were not so very sad.*

*However for those of you who genuinely appreciate what we are attempting to do in fighting the present digression in the Lord's church you too can help by financially supporting *Contending for the Faith*. If you have received this paper because someone else has subscribed for you, why not pay your own way as well as subscribing for someone else? The money being used to send the paper to you will then be employed to place the paper in someone else's hands. A one year subscription is only \$12.00; a two year subscription is \$22.00. If you desire to contribute to the "Special Mailing Fund" please make your checks out to the Spring Church of Christ. Designate on your check that you desire your money to go to the "Special Mailing Fund" for *Contending for the Faith*. Send all correspondence to: *Contending for the Faith*, P.O. Box 2273, Spring, Texas 77383-2273.*

## INFORMATION PHOBIA

When I was in Russia I resided in a flat (apartment). Therein, remained the old radio from the Communist era. It was designed to receive only one radio signal. Of course, that signal came from a government controlled station. Typical of any totalitarian despotic system, the old USSR did not want anyone exposed to anything that would oppose their communist ideology. Thus, all official news disseminating agencies had to walk the communist party line. The reason that such governments operate accordingly is that they are afraid of information that might expose the error of their system. They are not concerned about right or wrong, only controlling the people.

### RELIGIOUS DEPOTISM

There are religious systems that are also totalitarian and despotic. Examples of such religions are Roman Catholicism and the "Jehovah's Witnesses." Some 20 years ago such a despotic tyrannical faction arose within the Lord's church. Although known by different names, it is best known as the "Crossroads Movement" or "Boston Crossroads Church." It has a hierarchical form of organization and doctrine designed to maximize the control of her leaders over every member of that false religion.

While religions previously noted are not the only ones of their kind, they are prime examples of religious despotism. Members of such religions are taught to listen only to the church hierarchy and only read literature approved by them. They are not encouraged to read the Bible for themselves. Neither are they to examine matters or think for themselves. Therefore, they are never to form conclusions from their own personal Bible study. Furthermore, they are not to question their superiors. They are the blind leading the blind to the nearest ditch (Matthew 15:14). In some instances that ditch is one they have dug themselves.

Elders, preachers, teachers in particular, and all Christians in general have a tremendous responsibility to uphold and defend the truth of the gospel. As Paul wrote, "...I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17; also Jude 3). Therefore, we are to uphold the gospel and oppose every false way. Moreover, Christians are to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). We are to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (I John 4:1). But this is a far cry from the attitude that seeks to prohibit questions; even disdain and belittling those who have enough concern to raise questions about doctrine and practice or to challenge them.

### THE LIBERAL "RUN-AROUND"

The Bible says, "...be ready to give an answer (**"apologia:"** make a defense) to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (I Peter 3:15). In the hands of capable defenders of the faith, truth has never had anything to fear from controversy. Indeed, such activities make the truth shine brighter. Therein is the reason most false teachers in the church refuse to meet on the polemic platform of honorable discussion. Those few heretics who will debate learn quickly from their denominational counterparts that debating is unproductive to and for their cause.

How is it possible for something to be proved, tried, and defended when all efforts to accomplish such are considered unkind, unloving, harsh, judgmental, and mean spirited? There you have the liberal "run-around." They do not want "a spade called a spade." Liberals do not want face to face public discussions with those whom they know are able to deal with their false doctrines. They do not want their people to be exposed to such papers as this one. There just might be information contained therein to which they do not want their members exposed. Elders, preachers, and their supporters of such churches use the same tactics as all totalitarian despotic governments toward those under their superintendency. Indeed, they desire to keep one radio that receives only one radio signal from only one radio station to which the people are to listen; no questions asked. It, of course, is controlled by them. If there ever was a "**lording it over the flock,**" this is one example of it (I Peter 5:3).

### "A VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS"

For almost a third of a century *Contending for the Faith* has attempted to be another "broadcast" over the religious journal "airways." Our purpose and design is to inform our readers concerning "who is who," "what is what," and "where is where" in the battle for truth against error. We do not apologize for naming names and exposing specific false doctrines, papers, and institutions. Such conduct is nothing more or less than following the examples of the holy prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, the apostles and the evangelists found on the pages of the Bible. Indeed, from of old, God has had a controversy with sinful man (Jeremiah 25:31; Hosea 4:1; 12:12).

*Contending for the Faith's* perpetual challenge to all is to show where we have mishandled the truth of the fundamental and obligatory matters of the gospel. Moreover, it has always been our policy to correct any mistake we may make regarding the truth. This policy also includes any mistakes we may make regarding "who's who," "what's what," and "where's where." Moreover, we do not intend to be guilty of binding where God has not bound or loosing where he has not

loosed in his word. We urge all to do only what the New Testament has authorized (Colossians 3:17; Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7). We challenge anyone anywhere in his or her daily conduct to set any higher goal or to do any better. With these points in mind please consider the following episode.

#### NO DIFFERENCE IN ACTION

Recently, **Bob Deister**, an elder of the *Lake Houston Church of Christ*, Humble, Texas, announced to the church that the elders had not sent *Contending for the Faith* to the members of that church, that he did not recommend it, and that they should call me to have their names removed from the mailing list. He then recommended another religious paper to the church. What is highly interesting about Deister's announcement is that his **action** is no more or less than what comprises our **action** on the pages of this paper. Let us analyze what Deister did.

1. He made a public announcement.
2. The announcement was negative in nature.
3. He specified whom he opposed, namely *Contending for the Faith*.
4. He also called my name and instructed the assembly to call me and have their names removed from our mailing list.
5. He recommended another religious paper for the church in place of *Contending for the Faith*.

The **action** Deister took was not wrong. As far as his **action** is concerned his problem is this: he is blind to the fact that the **actions** of *Contending for the Faith* are no different than his previously enumerated **actions**. As far as his **action** is concerned, the only difference in it and ours is that his words were oral and ours are written. In the **action** *Contending for the Faith* takes in exposing error and upholding truth, will Deister or anyone else please show us the difference in his **approach** in dealing with matters that he deems bad and ours? However, Deister thinks that if *Contending for the Faith* follows his own **method of action** we are unkind, unloving, rash, judgmental, and unChristian persons. Is "the Deister approach" to opposing what he deems wrong any more or less unkind, unloving, rash, judgmental, or unChristian than the approach we take in opposing error? If it is, please specify the difference (s)?

I have not called Bob Deister's name and noted what he did simply to pick on him. It just so happens that I am fully aware of the **public action** that he took regarding *Contending for the Faith* before the assembly of the *Lake Houston Church of Christ*. Indeed, his **inconsistent conduct** is typical of a multitude of other brethren who believe and operate as he does. "**The legs of the lame are not equal:...**" (Proverbs 26:7).

#### THE REAL DIFFERENCE

Now the real difference in Deister and his spiritual kin and *Contending for the Faith* and our spiritual kin is **not** in the **method of action herein noted**, but in *who* and *what* is opposed. Deister and company wants to silence us and all of those who believe and stand where we do. Please remember that one Russian communist radio, its one radio signal, coming from the government controlled station, and you will have Deister and crowd in the right slot. They will employ **wholesome actions** (*actions which they condemn in others*) to attempt to shut up their opposition. Of course, such conduct is hypocritical, but since when has that ever bothered any false teacher? Such inconsistent and self-contradictory actions by elders and preachers like Deister are some of the reasons why the church is in the terrible apostasy that we are presently experiencing. It is nothing less than pragmatism, namely; the end justifies the means.

#### DIOTROPHES' DESCENDANTS

Despotic totalitarian mentalities as previously discussed govern the thinking of every "change agent" in the church. The Diotrophes mind-set is alive and well in many churches (III John 9-11). Many of these elders are qualified at best to be on a board of Baptist deacons. However, they are the ones who determine what churches will and will not believe and do. Of course, this determines the doctrinal direction in which they are headed. Sadly, the average church member does not know enough Bible to fill a gnat's thimble (Hosea 4:6). Hence, they are without the knowledge necessary to determine what is right. Moreover, too many church members do not care one way or the other regarding what goes on. They are so "lukewarm" they have a hard time keeping their spiritual brains from running out of their ears (Revelation 3:15-17). Hence, such silly members are pawns in the hands of such "tinhorn" dictators who "**...with feigned (pretended, hypocritical-DPB) words make merchandise of you:**" (II Peter 2:3).

If this previously mentioned mind-set in elders is not one way of: "**lording it over the flock,**" pray tell, what would it take to so do? Men may think it is wonderful, but God calls it sin (I Peter 5:3; I John 3:4).

Nowhere in the New Testament has God authorized church members to submit to elders who lord it over the flock or who otherwise conduct themselves contrary to the "chief Shepherd's" will (I Peter 5:4; Acts 20:29, 30). Hebrews 13:17 applies **only** to faithful members under faithful elders, not those "change agents" with hidden agendas who seek to lead the church into apostasy.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

# “UNIFIED IN RELATIVISM AND ALLEGIANCE TO EQUALITY”

Tom Wacaster

**Alan Bloom**, in his book, *“The Closing of the American Mind”* wrote:

There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative... The students' backgrounds are as various as America can provide. Some are religious, some atheists; some are to the Left, some to the Right; some intend to be scientists, some humanists or professionals or businessmen; some are poor, some rich. **They are unified only in their relativism and in their allegiance to equality.** [emphasis mine, TW.]

This particular philosophy (if we can call it that) has literally saturated the American society, yea, the whole of the western world.

The first plank in this insidious philosophy is the desire for unity at any cost. Bloom calls it “allegiance to equality.” On the moral front this battle is being waged against those who want to “impose their morality upon others” (have you ever noticed that certain words and phrases have a connotation that will actually bias the thinking of otherwise reasonable thinking men and women? “Homophobia” is a good example here). The homosexual community is presently pushing for this particular *equality*. It is not an equality with regard to human rights, but an equality that wants acceptance, regardless of life style. The bottom line is that they desire a muzzle be placed on the mouths of all those who oppose their practice. This, my friends, is the kind of equality under consideration. If law makers can be convinced that opposition to ungodly behavior is really inequality gone to seed, then they will succeed in muzzling the mouths of those who presently oppose their practice by passing laws favorable to immorality.

On the religious front it is toleration and agreement to disagree. It is not so much the desire on the part of the leaders to become united in practice as it is the desire to muzzle any opposition. “You do your thing; I’ll do mine; and let’s not criticize one another.” But in order to attain to such “equality” it is necessary that there first be a removal of any absolute standard. Hence, the second plank: the modern gospel of relativism. “Nothing is absolute; nothing is certain; you can’t know anything for sure.” Now, one might expect the world to think this way. Wickedness and error have always sought to cast off the restraints of God’s will (Psalms 2:3). But of late we are hearing some of our brethren advocate the same kind of thinking. On the far left we find those who are nothing more than relativists. They have climbed aboard the bandwagon of relativism and proclaim without fear of God or man, “You can’t know anything for sure!” (I wonder how they can be so sure about that!). But what is it that has backed them into this corner? It is, I believe, the desire for the kind of equality spoken of above - equality to do as they please, and simply agree to disagree, while muzzling the mouths of those who might criticize

them. Again, to accomplish their desired end, there must be a removal of any absolute standard.

We are presently witnessing a headlong plunge into a full acceptance of this two-planked error. First, there is the desire for some kind of unity. A noble desire, based of course upon the prayer of our Lord recorded in John 17, but alas *not* the *type* of unity of which Jesus spake. Enter plank one: “Let’s agree to disagree.” Workshops are organized which invite men of every shade and color (doctrinally speaking) with no intention of addressing error, but rather presenting a “united front” regardless of differences in doctrine. No false teacher is to be revered and respected.

Opposition is squelched by subjective thinking rather than objective reasoning. No longer is it the false teacher who is the enemy, but those who cry out for truth and justice. Enter plank two: remove or ignore the standard. Lip service is given to a “thus saith the Lord” while sound, biblical arguments are ignored. The “fruit” which error bears is viewed through colored glasses, and the circle of relativism and equality is now complete.

**“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruit ye shall know them”** (Matthew 7:15-16). **“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.”**(Romans 16:17).

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# "GULF COAST SPIRITUAL GROWTH WORKSHOP"

David P. Brown

For some time now we have been hearing about a great gathering of brethren at the Sheraton Astrodome Hotel, Houston, Texas, slated for November 6-8, 1997. The theme is *"The Compelling Christ."* According to the advertising the workshop will focus on "Evangelism," "Unity," and "The Home."

According to **Bill Yasko**, preacher for the *Westbury Church of Christ*, (undated letter) the cost of the workshop is \$50,000. In a letter dated September 9, 1997, **Nick Hamilton**, preacher for the *Memorial Church of Christ* noted that most of the money for the workshop had been raised, although they could use an additional \$15,000. Accompanying a letter from Hamilton was an August 25, 1997, financial report of contributions totaling \$34,930.00.

**John H. Qualls**, "Personal Evangelism," *Church of Christ In Champions* is serving as "Room Coordinator" for the workshop he reported in a letter dated September 25, 1997, the congregations committed to housing guests. The number of rooms committed at that time was 683. 700+ rooms were reserved at the *Sheraton Astrodome Hotel*. As of September 25, 1997, 517 persons had registered with the hotel.

Some of that financial support and housing of guests has been provided by the following churches of Christ in the Houston area. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** Angleton, Champions, Channelview, Jersey Village, Clear Lake City, Crosby, Deer Park, First Colony, Impact, Lake Houston, Lakewood in Bay-

town, League City, Lindale, Memorial, Northwest, Seven Oaks, South Union, Southside, Southwest Central, Stafford, Watters Road, and Westbury. **HOUSING:** Westbury, Highway 249, Jersey Village, Lake Houston, Angleton, Stafford, Champions Lakewood, Memorial, Seven Oaks, Lindale, League City, Deer Park, Hidden Valley, Fifth Ward, Watters Road, Crosby, Sweeny, Northwest, Bammel, Channelview, and South Union.

**"WE MISSED PENTECOST - LET'S NOT MISS THIS LIFE CHANGING EVENT."**

Of the workshop Yasko wrote in his letter: "Our mission is to motivate the Churches of Christ to move forward in the areas of evangelism, unity, and sanctity of the home. This effort is under the oversight of the *Westbury Church of Christ* assisted by the elders of *Memorial Church of Christ* (both congregations are in Houston)." Furthermore, Yasko wrote: "Let's make this a family event. Our lives will be enriched forever. We missed Pentecost — let's not miss *this* life changing event!" (undated letter). Hamilton, preacher for the Memorial Church, declared of the workshop in his letter: "This may well be a life-changing experience for many, and who knows how many might be reached for the Lord through this special effort."

Before I address some of the previous glowing comments about the possible accomplishments (before the fact) of the workshop, our readers deserve to know the schedule, speakers, and subjects of the same.

November 6-8, 1997.....

## Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop

Theme: "The Compelling Christ"

Direction of Classes: "Evangelism" - "Unity" - "The Home"

Where: The Sheraton Astrodome Hotel

*Special attention will be given to English-speaking, Spanish-speaking and Youth, with classes for all ages, including a nursery and children's classes. All classes will be taped.*

Interpretation for the Deaf

Exhibit Area (some 50 exhibits), Book Stores, etc.

Cost: \$50,500 - filling up the Sheraton with Christians (1,000 rooms — Thursday & Friday nights)

Speakers: Approximately 25 individuals from our region and 25 from around the brotherhood

"The Lost Nations" - Flag  
Presentation- Sunset Institute  
of Biblical Studies

Joe Beam

Juan Monroy

Charles Hodge

Don McLaughlin

Kirk Castleman

David Esparza

Bailey McBride

Dale Foster

Juanita Rosas

Gayle Napier

Nick Boone

Luis Rosas

Kirk Castleman

Dot Yasko

Truitt Adair

Tom Foster

David Yasko

Ignacio Barcenas

Beth Wade

Jim Middleton

Don Pharis

Juanita Rangel

Wayne Kilpatrick

Willie Franklin

Saturnino Gonzales

Bonnie Elrod

Silbano Garcia

Tim Hunt

Larry Frank

James Roberson

Salvador Del Fierro

Steve Grubbs

Paul Arnold

Yesenia Esparza

John Gipson

Harris Goodwin

Joy McMillian

Silbano Garcia, Jr.

Fred McClure

Cline Paden

Glenn Owens

Elizabeth Gonzales

Mardell Hamby

Isabel Garcia

Jo Bryant

Terry Northcutt

Ken Lewis

Bob McCloy  
Ken Lewis  
Damian Mata  
Leland Rogers  
Virginia Johnson  
Sandra Gonzales  
Abel Ortiz  
Gail Matthews

Lloyd Williams  
Jay Jarboe  
Truman Spring  
Ameta Crawford  
Milton Wilson  
Karen Gibson  
Dora Del Fierro  
Tom Foster

Jay Jarboe  
Angela Knauss  
Kurt Picker  
Marilyn Blaker  
Travis Bryant  
Fred McClure  
Don McLaughlin  
Leroy Burrell

Charles Davis  
Thommy Scott  
Kenny Wright  
Brian Mashburn  
David Meredith  
Steve Lehman  
Darrell Newton

### BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

On page 19 of this issue is the advertisement for the *Pearl Street Church of Christ*, Denton, Texas lectures. It should be noted that the speakers who appear on the Denton lectures series and others of its caliber are not men who are questionable in doctrine. Can this be said of the speakers appearing on the "*Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop?*" Does anyone care enough to inquire? Let us consider a few of the more prominent speakers appearing on the workshop. We shall note them as they appear in the schedule of events.

#### NICK BOONE

**Nick Boone** is scheduled to lead singing and speak. He is a member of the *Madison Church of Christ*, Madison, Tennessee where **Steve Flatt**, the new president of *David Lipscomb University*, has preached for several years. Flatt has regularly appeared, as he did this year, on the *Nashville Jubilee*. He is a supporter of and worker with **Rubel Shelly** and company. To be an active part of the Madison Church (as Boone is) is to be an active supporter of the *Nashville Jubilee* and all that it stands for and attempts to accomplish. If Boone does not support the goals as well as fellowship the speakers on the *Nashville Jubilee*, let him precisely say so. **Were those who planned the workshop ignorant of Boone's beliefs and with whom he fellowships, or was it because of such that he was invited to speak on the workshop?**

Steve Flatt was scheduled to appear on the workshop, but due to his new duties as CEO of DLU he decided that he could not appear. Flatt is a full-fledged "change agent." He cares not one whit for the New Testament as a divine infallible pattern. As the preacher at Madison he worked "arm in arm" with Shelly, **Max Lucado**, and company. If Flatt does not support the goals as well as fellowship the speakers on the *Nashville Jubilee*, let him precisely say so. **Were those who planned the workshop ignorant of Flatt's beliefs and with whom he is in fellowship, or was it because of such that he was originally invited to speak on the workshop?**

#### JOE BEAM

Was **Joe Beam** invited to speak on the workshop because he is a regular speaker on the *Tulsa Workshop* and the *Nashville Jubilee*? Do the planners and promoters of the workshop know Beam's doctrine on marriage, divorce, and remarriage? Did they know that he teaches that there are other reasons other than the one given by Jesus in Matthew 19:9 for a marriage to be dissolved with God's bless-

ing, and that such persons who have divorced for reasons other than fornication may marry with God's approval?

#### GAYLE NAPIER

On Thursday, June 13, 1991, page 1A, *THE TENNESSEAN*, a Nashville, Tennessee, newspaper reported the following episode under the caption "Churches May Foster Incest—Panel," by **Ray Waddle**, Religion News Editor. Waddle reported this as a matter "sent forth" from a panel of four male church professionals at the *David Lipscomb University Lectures*. **Gayle Napier** was one of the four panel members and the last of the four to speak. Napier, however, was the first to be directly quoted in the newspaper. Did Waddle report the plain unvarnished truth?

**Goebel Music** listened to and transcribed the audio tape of the panel discussion. The transcription double-spaced was 40 pages long. Music pointed out that the question that prompted the following comments from Napier was rooted in "...the fact that he had said that there were 6 different kinds of divorces, such as psychological, emotional, social, legal,..." and so on. Napier said:

I want to pick up first with what Gary was talking about submission. I think one of the biggest problems I see in the church of Christ is that we have so distorted this idea of headship and submission that we have created a pathological marriage model.

We have equated, and we have preached, folks, the idea of headship means power and control. I am in charge. I am primary. I call the shots. I am the most important one in this family. And that's my heritage. As far as the family is concerned, mother was to be in submission to dad and the relationship was that he was important and she was unimportant. In her submission role...second class...emotions weren't important and she was treated like one of the kids.

And I hear this in therapy all the time. And the relationship takes on...mood of he is the big daddy, and she is the daughter. He has all the power and control, and he is primary and she is like one of the kids. **I hear women saying, Gayle, he treats me like my dad. He sounds like my dad, and I don't want to have sex with my dad. I call that emotional incest.** (emphasis mine, D.P.B.)

...infidelity, which is psychological in my judgment. Uh, I want to know why there was an affair. There are as many reasons to have affairs as not to have affairs. And if somebody has an affair in town where they live, they're dumb. Cause eventually they get sloppy; they're gonna get caught. A blind person could follow that trail. So my assumption is you wanna get caught. Do you want to get caught (1) to punish your spouse, (2) to make them angry, because if they're angry it's easier to walk away from it, (3) you want their attention, (4) power play, (5) you're tired of making love to your mom or your dad, and there are other reasons.

I'm glad this is the last. I want to put it in a broader perspective, and, uh, into the church perspective. I think theologically we have taught on organization of the church, and social, spiritual organization that is power addicted. And I think we have, uh, a perfect church setting where men in pulpits and men who are elders are power addicts, and we have taught churches to be co-dependent, to use Gary's term and we attract people who want to be co-dependent and have people tell them what to do. We don't want to change.

I think the first thing we have to do theologically is to understand the leadership is servant leadership. It is not power and control. And being the head of my wife is not a power and control, it's a servant leadership and I think our whole theology has to change.

I'm going to say something that's going to get me in hot water, folks. I have made quite a play over this power addiction, and I really believe this. and there is one socially approved place where power controlling addicts, beside marriage, can exercise their addiction - that's the pulpit. So we attract a lot of men, and I'm not gonna put a percentage on it who love to beat us up. and they get a lot of needs met, and that's power control. And I think we've got to turn this around somehow. I don't think Paul or Peter or John or anybody else ever beat up folks like I have been beat up from the pulpit. I think it's a theological issue as well. [Goebel Music, *Behold the Pattern*, (Austin McGary and Company, 1991)pp. 640 -642.]

If anyone ever needed help it is Napier. I am almost 51 years old and I have been preaching for almost 33 years. I have associated with a host of brethren and I have never heard of such a mess as Napier has concocted. On what scientific basis, much less the Bible, does he draw his conclusions? All he says is "I think thus and so." He says that the reports to him of his councilors have caused him to conclude what we have just quoted from him. He simply draws conclusions based on comments from dysfunctional people. After all they are undergoing counseling and therapy with Napier. Whew! With the kind of biases and phobias Napier's words reveal about his own psychological makeup, how confused will his patients be when he finishes with them? By the way, did you notice how authoritarian and final his opinions are on this matter? Must be some "emotional incest" somewhere. Councilor, take your own medicine. None of his conclusion is warranted by any credible witnesses or adequate evidence. But since when has that stopped any liberal from spouting off his or her mouth?

#### BUILDING A STRAW MAN

Furthermore, Napier creates his own straw man and attacks him. Husbands and wives who believe and practice

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the truth of the New Testament concerning their relationships with and responsibilities to one another do not routinely and steadfastly treat one another as Napier said. If husbands and wives follow **only** what the New Testament authorizes they will comply with Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 29, 31, 32; I Timothy 5:8; I Peter 3:7; Proverbs 31, and like passages having a bearing on marriage and the home. That is what faithful preachers, teachers, and elders have long taught. Yet, Napier distorts and perverts proper respect for and submission to the Lord's will in the home. Moreover, he attacks preaching with authority as one of the chief culprits in destroying wholesome husband and wife relationships. However, he does not mind authoritatively telling us how he thinks things ought to be done when he has the podium. Indeed, Napier authoritatively preaches the word, but it is his own. No, thank you. I'll take the Lord's council found only in his authoritative infallible Bible over the word of a shade-tree psychologist who has as many or more hang-ups as his dysfunctional clients. This is especially true when it comes to his disrespect for Bible authority.

In view of all of this transpiring back in the summer of 1991 the movers and shakers who planned the 1997 *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* has Napier speaking three times on "First Century Faith and the 21st Century Home." Napier would not know first century faith if it bit him on the end of the nose. Was Napier asked to speak on the workshop because he held these beliefs or were those who asked him ignorant of his positions on "emotional incest?" I wonder what we would hear from him if he addressed divorce and remarriage.

Space forbids more detail on the previously mentioned speakers. Regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage what does **Charles Hodge, Juan Monroy, Truitt Adair, Wayne Kilpatrick, Richard Rogers, John Gibson, Cline Paden, Glenn Owen** (or is it Owens? The workshop program spelled it both ways) or, for that matter, all the other speakers believe regarding the following proposition? Moreover, what do elderships of the overseeing congregations believe regarding the same. Furthermore, what do Bill Yasko and Nick Hamilton believe about the aforementioned subject? Let them answer true or false to the following precisely stated propositions and we will know what they believe on marriage, divorce, and remarriage as well as many other vital subjects.

T F 1. The scriptures teach that all men (whether Christian or non-Christian) living today are amenable to (are under) the New Covenant (the law of Christ, the gospel, the faith).

T F 2. The scriptures teach that there is now only one cause for scriptural divorce (a divorce wherein God disjoins the previously married partners) which makes a remarriage on the part of the innocent party scripturally possible.

T F 3. Churches of Christ are sectarian and denominational in their nature and status.

T F 4. Generally the church of Christ has failed or misunderstood the true and full teaching of the Bible on grace.

TF 5. Understanding grace means there has to be a revision (more accurately, abandonment of) the understanding brethren have maintained on the relation of faith and works in the plan of salvation.

TF 6. Baptism for (unto, in order to) the remission of sins is not mandatory to be understood and present in one's becoming a Christian.

TF 7. Salvation is by the grace of God alone—but also by faith, which is not required to do anything to demonstrate it is genuine.

TF 8. Nothing one can do contributes or can contribute “one whit” to his or her salvation.

TF 9. One who is saved by “grace alone” can never be lost—the verdict of “no condemnation” has already been pronounced.

TF 10. Worship services must be revised and renewed to be more appealing to the present generation of younger adults (including hand clapping and teaching by drama).

TF 11. Mechanical instrumental music in Christian worship is not a legitimate barrier to at least some form of fellowship and worship with the Independent Christian Church denomination, and/or—for that matter—the other denominations.

TF 12. The Bible must not be regarded as setting forth “pattern” instruction which must be followed exactly.

TF 13. Women are to have certain new and obvious roles in the public worship of the church, such as leading singing in worship teams, testifying, and the like.

TF 14. Certain “core” elements of the entire New Testa-

ment can be isolated and used as the irreducible minimum and the unexceedable maximum of the test of fellowship with religious groups around us.

TF 15. Restoration is an ongoing process; it never is an accomplished fact.

TF 16. The Holy Spirit, both before and after conversion, provides informational guidance, leading, illumination independent of (separate and apart from) the written word of God.

#### WHO SELECTED THESE SPEAKERS?

Will someone please inform us how “Evangelism,” “Unity,” and “The Home” may be discussed in a profitable manner and one not know the speaker's beliefs covered in the previously listed 16 true or false statements? Or, is it because the planners of the workshop do know their positions on these matters that they were invited to speak?

We know that Bill Yasko has publicly stated approximately two years ago before one of the Sunday evening assemblies of the Westbury Church that he desired a workshop in the Houston area patterned after the *Tulsa Workshop*. Aside from the *Nashville Jubilee* and certain educational institutions operated by the brethren, I know of no other effort that has done more to encourage false doctrine than the so-called *Tulsa Soul Saving Workshop*. Furthermore, Yasko is a part of the *International Christian Counselors School*, A ministry of Lindberg Road Church of Christ, Anderson Indiana, Dr. Garry Hill, Director. I know this because I have seen their advertisement in *Wineskins*, Rubel Shelly, editor (Volume 2, Number 8, page 35). Among religious papers today, no other paper has done more to promote and push false doctrine than this paper. Yet ICCS advertises in it with Bill Yasko listed as one of the two men to call for further information about the school. No faithful child of God is going to have anything to do with *Wineskins*, Rubel Shelly, the *Nashville Jubilee*, or the *Tulsa Workshop*.

#### THE ABSURD AND RIDICULOUS GONE TO SEED

As quoted earlier Yasko declared of the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*: “We missed Pentecost — let's not miss *this* life changing event!” First of all we have not missed out on anything about the Pentecost of Acts 2 that pertains to our salvation. Next of all, the Houston Workshop will not have the results brought about by the teaching of the apostles recorded by Luke in Acts 2. The result of the preaching done by genuine Holy Spirit inspired apostles produced the following unity noted by Luke. **“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles”** (Acts 2:42). The only unity from the *Nashville Jubilee*, the *Tulsa Workshop*, and now the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* is an “agreement to disagree.”

With the beginning of this new apostasy promotion project the large metropolitan areas wherein the church of Christ is most numerous will be covered. Does anyone

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think this is by accident? Harris County which is Houston—Greater Houston has almost 150 congregations of the Lord's people within its boundaries. Like most brethren the majority of these brethren know little about what is going on in the brotherhood. Many who do are working hard to lead the rest down the apostasy trail. This workshop in Houston will serve as a catalyst to attempt to accomplish their aims. If their leaders and promoters deny that such is the case, then let them answer the questions contained herein and the proof, one way or the other will be set out forthrightly and clear. However, do not attempt to hold your breath until they answer them.

#### TESTING THE WATERS IN HOUSTON AND SURROUNDING AREA

This workshop is only the beginning. It is a testing of the waters; a typical "change agent" ploy. They would not have attempted this effort with these Tulsa workshop, Jubilee speakers if they did not know already that gullible, ignorant, lukewarm, brethren are looking for flag presentations over biblical substance. As far as God's people are concerned what does a "flag presentation" have to do with "Evangelism," "Unity," or "The Home?"

This "Flag Presentation" is one of the events slated for 7:30 p.m., Thursday, November 6 as part of the opening ceremonies of the "to-do." I suppose that Luke missed the Jerusalem School of Preaching's flag presentation on Pentecost. Oh, well, the *Sunset Institute of Biblical Studies* which Truitt Adair directs will outdo the Holy Spirit on Pentecost with their flag presentation. This is nothing more or less than the results of brethren running after and mimicking the denominations. By the way if this is the best

thing since Pentecost, then why not have apostle **Don Finto** down from Jerusalem .....I mean Nashville, Tennessee. Maybe he could speak in tongues or work some sort of miracle while the flags are being presented. That might even dazzle the visitors over at Astro World. Whooppee! Maybe they will then with one accord rush into the Sheraton Astrodome and hear the solid, sound, non-vacillating Joe Beam preach like Peter.

May God have mercy on us all when we really believe that such preachers as those mentioned in this article and the events of the workshop in Houston are compared to the apostles preaching on Pentecost as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. The utter audacity of someone to compare such events as the *Nashville Jubilee*, *Tulsa Workshop*, and now this *1997 Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* to Acts 2 and the day of Pentecost. Some brethren are just too ignorant and lukewarm to care what is about to happen in Houston. Others know exactly what they are up to. If God allows time to continue, just watch the direction of this new Houston, Texas, Pentecost of today's "change agents" in the Lord's church.

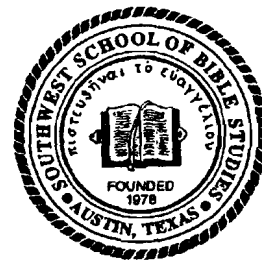
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# THE ADDER'S STING IS DEEP

Roelf Ruffner

At least since the days of Noah, the drinking of ethyl alcohol has been a great curse to humanity. Gospel preachers have emphasized this point in the past and helped to elevate some poor soul from the gutter, or kept some naive teenager from going there. Many today brush aside these warnings. They consider alcohol to be "less dangerous than drugs," even though alcohol is a drug depressant. All too few realize the global ravages of this sin.

In the December 1996 - January 1997 issue of *World Vision Magazine*, **Barbara R. Thompson** reports on the global epidemic of alcoholism. Here are some of the startling facts about this sin:

\*The United States spends \$58 billion a year on alcohol related problems. In the United States someone is killed by a drunk driver every 24 minutes.

\*France has one of the highest rates of cirrhosis of the liver in the world. (This country is also one of the largest consumers of wine; an "acceptable" alcoholic beverage to many.)

\*In Canada, 9 in 10 violent crimes are committed under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. And more than half of all deaths among Native American Canadians are alcohol-related.

\*Russians now are the leading consumers of alcohol in the world. They drink an average of 13 quarts of pure alcohol per year. 4.75 quarts constitute a health risk

\*It is estimated that 80% of all Lithuanians are alcohol dependent.

\*10% of drinkers consume an estimated 60 to 70 percent of all alcohol. Without problem drinkers, the profits of the alcohol industry would plummet. (Without "social drinking" by "Christians" it would probably disappear!)

\*In countries where alcohol is legal but advertising is not, drinking rates stand 30% lower.

\*In Chile, 70% of job absenteeism is alcohol related.

\*In South Africa, 1 in 3 urban males are addicted to alcohol.

\*In Botswana, 30% of rural households and 50% of urban households produce alcohol for income.

\*In East Africa, mothers routinely pay children's school fees from the sale of home brew.

\*In Papua, New Guinea, more than 85% of all fatal road accidents involve drivers or pedestrians who are drunk

Considering the ravages ethyl alcohol inflicts on society and individuals, I personally can see only two viable uses for this chemical: (1) as a disinfectant (but not as good as isopropyl or rubbing alcohol) and (2) as a preservative for biological specimens in laboratories. Everyone should see what the physical effects of cirrhosis of the liver looks like!

Christians should avoid the evil of drinking alcoholic beverages like the plague! As Solomon in his inspired wisdom wrote:

**Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again... Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise (Proverbs 23:29-35; 20:1).**

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# THRICE TOLD TALE

(Continued from page 1)

The information that the Reed Lectures are a part of the celebrations related to the inauguration of Steve Flatt is not mentioned in the news release sent out by Lipscomb.

Having a firsthand knowledge of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, as Sustaining Member, and a frequent user of the resources of the magnificent DCHS Library which has the largest collection of Restoration materials on the planet, I can speak with both knowledge and respect for the DCHS, its library, and services.

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society is an affiliate of the Disciples of Christ, but operates independently under its own Board of Trustees. The library resources are made available to research scholars in the churches of Christ, Christian Church, and Disciples of Christ. **B. C. Goodpasture** was a friend of the late **Claude Spencer**, the highly respected curator of the DCHS Library. My first recommendation for a depository of Restoration history materials to any donor would be the DCHS for both protection and availability.

## THE LIPSCOMB NEWS RELEASE

The news release was mailed out from Lipscomb University Office of Public Information which has its own revelatory insightful message:

**Dr. Richard T. Hughes**, author and distinguished professor of religion at Pepperdine University, will be the speaker as Lipscomb University hosts the Forrest F. Reed Lectures... Hughes' two-night lecture will be one of two lectures on the theme to be produced in book form....

The key focus of the book will be "to examine early Restoration Movement history for issues that ultimately led to divisions, resulting in three distinct fellowships—Disciples of Christ (Christian Church); Independent Christian Church; and the churches of Christ."

**Dr. Richard Goode**, assistant professor of history and political science at Lipscomb, and a former Bethany College faculty comments:

**There is an old saying that asks for 'eyes' that I may learn to look at myself with understanding and love. Opportunities such as the Reed Lecturers help us see and understand who we—as a community—are, appreciate how far we have come thus far... I know that Dr. Hughes will challenge us to look at ourselves with 'understanding and love.'**

That this event will take place on the very site of the Nashville Bible School founded by David Lipscomb is fraught with meaning known in depth only to those who have done years of serious research in the primary sources of Restoration history. In 1892, the churches of Christ were under siege when the "digressive Disciples" mounted their campaign to force organized societies and conventions, and instrumental music into the churches in the Southern region.

That the plans for the Reed Lectureship were made during the **Hazelip** administration is something to be expected. He has moved post haste since the day he arrived on the Lipscomb campus to drive the school away from a century of its time-honored traditions into postmodern theological modes and "church growth" paradigms. Dr. Hazelip is an enemy of the traditional churches of Christ.

That opposition has continued to grow since his 1950s "anti" campaigns against churches of Christ which he abandoned for more promising liberal agendas. After he became DLU president, he threw all pretensions aside, e. g., loading the DLU Bible faculty with postmodern liberals. That Dr. Hazelip knows the major outlines of Restoration history is accepted. However, there are no reasons to think that **Steve Flatt's** knowledge of Restoration history goes beyond cursory readings and briefings.

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It just may be that Steve Flatt is an innocent dupe in Dr. Hazelip's agendas to water down the mission of the school that **David Lipscomb** founded. We will continue to press our case hoping Steve will lend us from time to time a willing ear to hear our case.

## THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN NEWS STORY

The third news release amounts to no more than the announcement of a prominent public event. The *Tennessean* headlined the story: "Pepperdine professor to lecture at Lipscomb." However, the DCHS release explains that the series of lectures "will seek to identify integral factors which eventually led to the separation of the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ."

This DCHS statement is a historical anomaly which twists the facts around. The unadorned truth is that the churches of Christ are not a "breakaway" branch of this disgressive denomination. The churches of Christ were first listed as a distinct fellowship in the U. S. Religious Census 1906. This was 60 years before the Disciples of Christ received a separate listing in the official religious census.

The truth in its historical and chronological setting is something else. The statement that the Reed Lectures will identify the historical factors which eventually led to the separation of the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ is patently false and misleading.

The fact is that the Christian Church and Disciples of Christ now form two splinter groups of the same denomination. This came about after 50 years of bitter struggle and wrangling over local church control. This story is detailed in the classic **Stephen F. Corey** book. The final rupture came with the Restructure of 1968.

The Christian Church and the Disciples of Christ today have no fraternal relations at any level of any kind. And the churches of Christ/Church of Christ had no connections with either until the likes of **Rubel Shelly**, **Bill Humble**, and **Richard Hughes** showed up on the scene.

The distance between the traditional churches of Christ and the Disciples of Christ is infinitely greater than with the Independents. The Disciples have become notorious

for embracing every liberal fad and theology, e.g., embracing gays into fellowship, endorsing a genderless translation of Scripture, a continuous history of accepting the most radical extremes in postmodern theology and such like.

The major spokesmen in the Independent Christian Church have developed a superior attitude in that they have no intention to give up their organ or anything else to join the postmodern Church of Christ. The bottom line of this denomination is an arrogant "take it or leave it."

## POSTSCRIPT

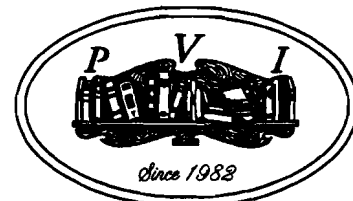
This is an unfolding story. I will attend the Reed Lectures, and promise a factual recounting of the events for the benefit of brethren who believe the pattern for the blood-bought churches of Christ is recorded in the New Testament. What we see in part in a glass darkly now, we shall see with better vision after the September 1997 Reed Lectures.

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# COMMUNITY CHURCH IDEAS INFILTRATE UNDERNOURISHED MINDS

Steve Miller

The *Willow Creek Community Church* of South Barrington, Illinois, is having a major effect on the mindset of some brethren. The *Willow Creek* group is an entourage of individuals who have varying denominational backgrounds that come together and state that they are trying to please and convert unchurched Harry and Mary. There is, in the 1996 membership directory of the *Willow Creek Association*, a "membership listing of all church associates." There are 1,032 churches listed in the current directory, not to mention 18 foreign countries represented. Among the denominational bodies represented are the Baptist, First Church of the Nazarene, United Methodist, Trinity Lutheran, Presbyterian, Seventh-day Adventist, Assembly of God, First Christian Church, Christian Reformed, Mennonite, Salvation Army and many dozens of "community churches" with names such as the "Holy Spirit Church" of Brownsburg, Indiana. Pay attention to the listing of churches of Christ who are on the *Willow Creek* roster. Brethren, this is pure nonsense.

The *Willow Creek Association* boasts:

There are over 1,000 member churches in the Association, and if the present growth rate continues, there will be 4,000 member churches by the year 2000. The Association sponsors church leadership conferences that have been attended by over 30,000 people from around the world. The Association also produces *Willow Creek* resources books, small group curriculum, spiritual gift assessment materials, drama scripts, and music to be used by other ministries and will eventually publish resources developed by other member churches as well. The *WCA* publishes a newsletter, provides a job referral publication, and answers calls from people looking for seeker-oriented ministries in various cities around the world (Rediscovering church, Lynne & Bill Hybels. p.142).

Would a church of Christ join the *Willow Creek Association*? Certainly! Also listed in the current directory are the following:

## THE CARRIAGE HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Montgomery, Alabama  
key contact, Mr. Dale Vernon

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Thousand Oaks, California  
Pastor Allen Pope

## WHEELER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

Midland, MI  
David Kohn

## NORTHEAST CHURCH OF CHRIST

Taylors, South Carolina  
Mr. Jeff Payne

## HARPETH HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Brentwood, Tennessee  
Mr. James Vandiver

## HEBRON PARKWAY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Carrollton, Texas  
Mr. Jack Hicks

## LAKE HIGHLANDS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dallas, Texas  
Charles Cayce

The above mentioned churches are also listed in the National Directory of Churches of Christ. Also note the term "Pastor" does not appear as used by the **Thousand Oaks, California** church.

Why are there churches of Christ listed as being members of the *Association*? One reason may be that the Bible is thought to be outdated and insufficient among the liberals of the church as a pattern for evangelism. Paul said, "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" (II Timothy 4:3).

Lynne and Bill Hybels say: "We're not trying to create *Willow Creek* clones. We just want to help churches fulfill what God intends for them and to assist them in effectively reaching their local communities with the message of Christ" (Ibid, p.142). How can a church founded by men fulfill the above? It is utter ignorance for brethren to go whoring after lollipop community churches altering the message of Christ, administering it to our brethren in the name of church growth.

Many churches of Christ are following Hybels and Willow Creek. There are churches of Christ who are not listed in the *Willow Creek Directory* that are parading the same terminology and using Hybels materials. The **College Street Church of Christ** in Lebanon, Tennessee has printed a series of articles in their bulletin entitled "Be Contagious," and will begin a Wednesday evening class taught by **Mark Holeman** using the book *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, by Bill Hybels.

**Harold Shank**, a Jubilee speaker, and one of the ministers at the **Highland Street Church of Christ** in Memphis, Tennessee announced a class he would be teaching: "Becoming a Contagious Christian. Rethinking Evangelism," by Bill Hybels.

When brethren join with denominational associations to learn how to preach the word, then they have indicted God, Christ and the Holy Spirit of being negligent in their divine work. May God help us.

—9874 Knowlton Road  
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# I TIMOTHY 2:8 AND THE NIV

Mark K. Lewis

It never ceases to amaze me how deceptive and incorrect the *New International Version* is. I am also saddened by this fact because so many people use this rendition, thinking it to be an accurate translation of God's word. It rarely comes close to that.

My latest tussle with the *NIV* came while studying I Timothy 2:8, which reads (in the *NIV*) **"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing."** The *King James* has **"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."** Liberal brethren lately have been doing everything they can to undermine this passage, arguing that it does not mean that women cannot lead men in prayer, one ingenious twist asserting that "men" (in verse 8) and "women" (in verse 9) should actually be translated "husbands" and "wives" and thus does not pertain to general Christian duties at all. It is easy to see, when one looks at the *NIV*, how a novice could easily conclude that there is no prohibition here of women leading men in prayer.

Is the *NIV's* language an accurate translation of the Greek? Not even close. Literally the Greek reads (and I am even going to relate the word order in the original) **"I will therefore to pray the men in every place lifting holy hands without wrath and disputing."** The changes in the *NIV* are not even subtle, and completely alter the meaning and emphasis in the verse. The participle "lifting" is changed to an infinitive "to lift"; the infinitive "to pray" is changed to a prepositional phrase "in prayer"; and the definite article "the" before "men" is omitted. Thus, the emphasis in the *NIV's* rendition is on lifting up holy hands when men pray, completely destroying the contextual sense of the passage. There is nothing in the *NIV's* commentary that would indicate that it is men who are to lead in prayer; only that men should lift up holy hands everywhere when they pray. Such an interpretation opens the door to mingling the roles of the sexes and this sappy, disingenuous translation provides no restriction on women leading men in prayer.

What Paul is actually doing in I Timothy 2:8-15 is contrasting the roles of men and women in prayer and teaching. As the *New King James* accurately renders verse 8, **"Therefore I desire that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands..."** Notice "THE men" pray everywhere, not just "men pray everywhere" (the old *King James* omits "the" in its translation; the *ASV*, *NASV*, and *NKJV* all include it). Paul is indicating who is to direct this worship activity—"THE men." The lifting up of holy hands is incidental, though not unimportant; it indicates that a proper character is necessary for prayer to be heard (cf. James. 1:5; posture is not Paul's point in I Timothy 2:8). In contrast to what men are to do, in verse 9, Paul says **"in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel..."** and in verses 11-12, **"Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man but to**

**be in silence."** The men are to lead in prayer and in teaching while the women are to be in subjection and "adorn" themselves with other kinds of "good works."

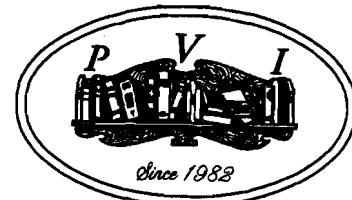
Error can be so subtle, beloved, and can slip in hardly noticed. The *NIV's* **"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer"** sounds harmless until one realizes that Paul is not giving instructions on posture in prayer, he is contrasting the work of men and women—"THE men" are to pray everywhere, and "THE women" are to adorn themselves modestly. Paul's teaching is actually an instruction on who is to do the public praying, just as verse 12 indicates who is to do the public teaching. Does **"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer"** give ANY indication that there is an interdict on women leading men in prayer? If one uses the *NIV*, to what passage would he turn to argue that women cannot lead men in public prayer?

It is quite obvious why liberals, who want to blur the roles of men and women in the church, would favor the *New International Version*. And that is why we suggest, once again, the *NIV* is wrong and should be used with extreme caution by Christians.

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# BAPTISM

Shan Jackson

**WHAT IS BAPTISM?** Baptism is a word that was transliterated from the Greek word *baptizo*. It is translated "to dip, plunge, or immerse" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary*, pages 88, 89). Required is something (in this case water) in which to dip, plunge, or immerse an object. Luke recorded "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Moreover, it takes "much water" (John 3:23). How much water is "much?" "Much water" is water deep enough to bury the one being baptized (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM?** Baptism is not, as some style it, an outward sign of an inward working. According to the inspired word of God it is "the answer of a good conscience toward God" (I Peter 3:21). The inspired apostle Peter teaches us what a good conscience toward God is. To believers he declared, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). When one is baptized for the remission of his sins he obeys from the heart "that form of doctrine" which makes one free from sin (Romans 6:17, 18). Baptism in water is a form of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:4-6). Peter wrote that baptism is the likeness, or figure, of the world wide flood of water which destroyed the old sinful world of Noah's day, transporting him and his family into a world cleansed by the same water (I Peter 3:21). By this process the person who has believed in Christ, repented of his sins, and confessed his faith in Christ is authorized by the New Testament of Christ to be baptized into Christ (Romans 10:17; John 8:24; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Galatians 3:26, 27). As a believing penitent person Saul of

Tarsus was informed regarding what he "must do" (Acts 9:6). Luke recorded the imperative to which Saul must comply in order to be saved. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Obviously, baptism is the final step in God's process of making one a Christian.

Some are attempting to say that Peter and Paul differ on their beliefs regarding baptism. Such is not the case. God through the Holy Spirit guided both apostles to write the truth; and truth never contradicts truth. Peter says that baptism is "for the remission" of sins and Paul teaches that baptism is to put us "into Christ." However, remission of sins is in Christ (Colossians 1:14). Remember, 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). Jesus also taught that the will of the father is that belief plus baptism saves (Mark 16:16). Those who are thus baptized are baptized into "the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Hence, they are baptized into a saved relationship with God. Again, this is the reason that Peter "commanded" Cornelius and his household to be baptized (Acts 10:32, 48).

**WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?** Jesus taught that those who have been taught the gospel and brought to belief in it are the only ones who are authorized to be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15, 16; Romans 1:16). Therefore, one who is not capable of being taught and brought to belief in Christ as savior is not qualified to be baptized. Furthermore, one who hears the gospel, believes in Christ, but will not repent of sins nor confess Christ is not qualified to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 17:30; Roman 10:10). Hence, all babies and imbeciles are ruled out. One must be able to know what one is doing in order to obey God's plan of salvation (John 6:45).

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NOVEMBER 9-13, 1997

## SIXTEENTH ADL SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 9**  
 The Book of Ephesians—An Introduction  
 The One Faith (4:5)

8:00 AM Tim Nichols  
 10:00 AM Dub McClish  
 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK  
 2:00 PM Jesse Whitlock  
 3:00 PM Daniel Denham

4:00 PM Eddie Whitten  
 5:00 PM DINNER BREAK  
 7:00 PM Gospel Music

8:00 PM James Meadows  
 9:00 AM Michael Hecher

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10**  
 Answering False Doctrines: Is there a "Pauline Gospel" (for Gentiles), as distinguished from a "Petrine Gospel" (for Jews) (2:1-10)? Are present-day Christians strengthened inwardly by the Holy Spirit in some direct way (in addition to His Word) (3:16)? Is the "one body" the "church universal" which encompasses all of the denominations (4:4)? Does the "one baptism" refer merely to the statement of Christ (4:13)? Instructions for Parents and Children, Slaves and Masters (6:1-6)

8:00 AM Jackie Stearnsman  
 10:00 AM Mervin Weir  
 11:00 AM

12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK  
 2:00 PM Gary Colley  
 3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM  
 Curtis A. Coates

3:45 PM Curtis A. Coates  
 5:00 PM DINNER BREAK  
 7:00 PM Mervin Weir  
 8:00 PM Lester Kempy

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11**  
 Christ, in Whom is Every Spiritual Blessing (1:1-6)  
 Difficult Passages: To what does "justifying" refer (5:4)? Does "unfruitful works of darkness" apply only to immoral practices or to doctrinal error and false teachers as well (5:11)? What is meant by the phrase, "in the Lord" (6:1)? To what do the "principalities," "powers," "world-rulers of darkness," and "spiritual hosts" (6:12) refer (6:12)? Christ, the Head Over All Things (1:15-23)

9:00 AM Tim Ayers  
 10:00 AM Tom Hicks  
 11:00 AM Bob Gerard  
 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12**  
 Rules of Living for the New Life (4:25-32)  
 Difficult Passages: What are the "lower parts of the earth" (4:9)? To what does the unity of the faith refer (4:12)? Explain how one can be "filled with the Spirit" (5:18) (4:30)? Christ, in Whom All Things Are Summed Up (1:9-14)

9:00 AM Don Walker  
 10:00 AM Carl Garner  
 11:00 AM Gene Burgett  
 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK  
 2:00 PM Don Tarbet

3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM  
 Wayne Coats  
 3:45 PM Wayne Coats  
 5:00 PM LUNCH BREAK  
 7:00 PM Wayne Coats  
 8:00 PM John Moore

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13**  
 Light and Darkness Contrasted (5:1-14)  
 Difficult Passages: In what sense were the Ephesians "by nature children of wrath" (2:3)? Is "baptized out" (6:11) in Christ (subjective) or "the faith" (objective) (2:8)? How can Paul's statement that the church is built upon the apostles and prophets be reconciled with the declaration that Christ is its foundation (2:19-20; Mat. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:11)? In what sense is the wisdom of God made known through the church (3:10)? Paul, God's Minister of the Gospel to the Gentiles (3:1-7)

9:00 AM Robert Dodson  
 10:00 AM Lindell Mizell  
 11:00 AM Richard Nelson  
 12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK  
 2:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM  
 3:00 PM Gary Summers  
 3:45 PM Gary Summers  
 5:00 PM DINNER BREAK  
 7:00 PM David Brown

Answering False Doctrines: Since the New Testament does not explicitly forbid the use of mechanical instruments and various terms of "special music" in our worship, are they, along with congregational singing, acceptable to God (5:19)? Since Christians are to subject themselves to one another, does this mean that elderships have no authority in and over their respective local congregations (i.e., they can "rule" only by example) (5:21)? Since Paul condemned the abuse of slavery, rather than merely manumission, will it be acceptable to Christ in the future (6:5-9)? Every Christian, like Paul, an "ambassador of Christ" (6:20)? The Book of Ephesians—A Summary



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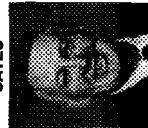
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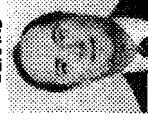
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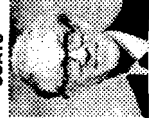
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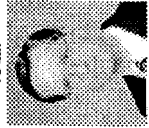
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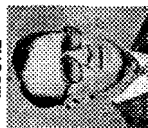
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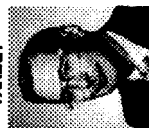
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# "HANDY COMMUNION"

W. Kent Graham

That is right, "*Handy Communion!*" According to a "*Daily Oklahoman*" news article entitled, "*Communion Gets Handy*," individually wrapped "Holy Communion Sets" are being sold and promoted by Compak Corporation, which is based in Chicago. Each single dose "Holy Communion Set" will be made available for the modest sum of 14 cents to "progressive" worshippers who are "on the go," or to worshippers who would like to partake in "Holy Communion away from their house of worship." The *Oklahoman's* news article correctly characterizes this product as a type of "McCommunion," with each dose being "tidy, neat, and hermetically sealed."

For those who may not be aware of the purpose of "Holy Communion" in worship, it is the same as the Lord's Supper. The Bible teaches that faithful Christians must remember the suffering and death of Jesus Christ every first day of the week. This is accomplished by partaking of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, which are emblems representing his body and blood. It is a time of the worship period when Christians commemorate the Savior's tremendous sacrifice for all of mankind. Faithful Christians are very aware of the importance of the Savior's sacrifice, and of the solemnity of the Lord's Supper. The Bible says, "**For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.**" (I Corinthians 11:29).

Is the idea of "*Handy Communion*" irreverent or blasphemous? Does it make this solemn feast any less "Holy?" Before you answer, remember that Jesus said, "**Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.**" (John 7:24). This advice from Christ is especially apropos because our discernment in this matter will likely effect his discernment of our fidelity to God when we stand before his judgment seat. If we were to judge, or discern, "according to appearance," our findings would likely be subjective. To some of us the idea of "hermetically sealed" single dose communion sets might seem both hygienic and convenient. To others the concept of "McCommunion" might seem altogether sacrilegious, and not worthy of our serious consideration. Fortunately, we need not quibble over our personal preferences; because our discernments are to be "**righteous judgments,**" or judgments based upon what God's word says!

What does the Bible say about "Handy Communion" or "McCommunion?" Not a thing! It behooves us to call "Bible things" by "Bible names." (I Peter 4:11). Furthermore, we are admonished not to go beyond that which is written (I Corinthians 4:6 ASV). As far as I have been able to determine from my studies, there is no Bible authority for the Lord's Supper's observance outside of a congregational worship assembly. To participate in a religious practice without divine authorization constitutes the commission of a "great transgression," or presumptuous sin (Psalm 19:13). Without Christ's authority, we cannot acceptably

partake of the Lord's Supper outside of the congregational worship assembly. If the scriptures do authorize this practice please inform me of the scriptural authority so that the truth can be taught, and acceptable worship can be properly practiced! (Galatians 6:1).

"Handy Communion," or "McCommunion," appeals, primarily to the spiritually weak. For those who are too busy or too lazy to worship God every Sunday, all worry is removed. "Handy Communion" requires no refrigeration and has a shelf life of one full year; so all they will need to do is fill their pantry with an adequate supply. One might suspect that the true motivation of Compak Corporation is a fast and easy buck, or possibly a million of them. Especially when we hear that the company's Chief Executive officer, **Jim Johnson**, claims that he "got the idea for the product in a vision." This product is not in itself "unscriptural," it is hygienic and comes conveniently pre-prepared. The problem is that it is marketed in such a way as to comfort the recalcitrant Christian, thereby offering false hope. Christians need to be encouraged to have commitment and conviction in their religious beliefs and practices, not told to "loosen up." Bible study, evangelism, brotherly love, benevolence, faithful attendance, and attention in worship ought to be our first priority in life.

We know that we have members of the church teetering on the edge of apostasy when we observe them habitually leaving the assembly directly after the Lord's Supper. These beloved brethren, with their precious and impressionable children, need to be tenderly coaxed back to faithfully worshipping the God. (Galatians 6:1). Their desire to keep the Lord's Supper is truly commendable, but even more commendable is full and complete worship of the Father. Jesus said, "**But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.**" (John 4:23). One of the greatest blessings that the Christian has is the privilege and honor of worship; therefore, let us not forsake any part of any worship assembly! Let us not be lulled by the slick eloquence of false teachers who seek to "make merchandise" of us, or by their sly sales pitches which seek to make us buy their merchandise. As the apostle Peter exhorted, "**But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light**" (I Peter 2:9). When the idea of a "Handy Communion" is held up to the brilliant light of God's word for review, whether it be the Compak Corporation's new product offering or irreverent "eat and run" observance by our "busy members," the whole concept falls far short of God's holy will and misses the mark.

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# THE DAY OF ATONEMENT AT THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Benny W. Hester

When some among us decided that they should have fellowship with the denominations, we were shocked. Since then, we have been amazed at the lengths some of these apostate brethren have taken their congregations. Their first step was to divide and split the congregations they attended, and form their own. After the floodgates were opened, shocked and amazed would hardly be the words to describe faithful brethren's reactions.

Recently, I received a bulletin of the *Community church of Christ* in Hendersonville, Tennessee. This church was a result of a split with faithful brethren in Hendersonville. The date of the bulletin is September 10, 1996. I would like to quote from an article in this bulletin, titled "*Atonement Service.*"

*The Shepherds have given their blessing for us to celebrate the Day of Atonement again. This year, the special meal and service will be Saturday, September 21, 1996. The meal will begin at 5:15 pm and the service will begin at 6:30 pm. Instead of a bring-a-dish meal, the meal will be prepared here this year. The cost will be \$3.00 per adult; \$1.50 for children under 10; no charge for children under 5. No family will pay more than \$10.00. Tickets for the meal will be on sale until Friday, September 20. NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR. To prepare our hearts and minds for this celebration, we have the Lamb's Book of Life for everyone to sign again. It will be taken into the Holy of Holies by two of our Shepherds on the night of the service.*

The mind simply reels. How did they obtain the "Lamb's Book of Life?" What is within their "Holy of Holies?" The lost ark of the Covenant? Can the "Shepherds" trace their bloodlines back to Levi? If not, are they of the Melchizedek priesthood?

In the same bulletin, **Kyle Gott**, the youth minister invites everyone to attend a service at the First Baptist Church at Hendersonville. He states, "*If you have any friends who will come, this could be the night they make a decision for Christ.*"

Brethren, this is the end result of perverting the Gospel of Christ. What must be done to stem the tide of liberalism? As preachers and elders we must do as Paul told Timothy, "**Preach the world; be instant in season, out of season; reprove; rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine**" (II Timothy 4:2). We must be able to recognize those who would, "**...by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple**" (Romans 16:18). May we ever be willing to "**contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**" (Jude 3). We must not allow these wolves in sheep's clothing to scatter the flock.

—*Bangs Church of Christ bulletin  
Bangs, Texas*

## 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.

### —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423. Publishers of *Matters of The Faith*.

### —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, Tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."

### —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.: 7:00 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.

### —Missouri—

**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.

### —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of **Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures** each third week in June.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, Tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Minister.

### —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.

# NOTES AND QUOTES...

Thomas Jefferson Pelayo, son of Manuel K. Pelayo (now deceased) writes from Manila, Philippines: "The Makati Central Church of Christ is doing fine, with God's help. We are gradually growing in numbers and we have two newly converted souls. On March 2, the male members had an election for the Evangelism, Edification, and the Financial Committees, to which I belong...We have also scheduled able members to take turns in leading the Bible study and the sermon. I am scheduled to lead in the Bible study on the 27th of April, Lord willing. Brother Clay Balgua, a former student of Four Seas College, is conducting training classes on subjects of prayer, Bible study, sermon delivery, Lord's Supper, and the like. I believe God is still stretching his blessings on us at Makati Central. Brother Manny's prayers now are slowly materializing and I hope he has seen these things."

Ian McPherson, of Tasmania, Australia, under date of February 26, 1997, writes: "This month has been another full one...Simon Kingsley was baptized into Christ on January 29th...Wayne Pritchard has been restored after being away from the church for several years. We rejoiced greatly to have him back with us. It was he who started bringing Simon along to worship services..."

"The church had a great evangelistic meeting at Blackmans Bay, which is about 20 kilometers from here. We hired a council hall and advertised extensively. We painted five signs which allowed us to cover all the roads leading into the area. We advertised simply as 'Inspirational Gospel Singing and Preaching.' The topics were 'Have You Been Born Again?'; 'Are You Ready for the Lord's Return?'; 'Are You in the Lord's Church?'

"I preached the first two evenings and my co-worker Gary Young preached the last evening. Our son Greg led songs for two nights and Gary Young for the other night. We also advertised in the paper, and on radio, as well as distributing about 1,800 pamphlets and knocking many doors.

"We had 20 different people through out advertising promotion—19 of these had never had any previous contact with the church. The format consisted of about 25 minutes of singing followed by a 30-minute lesson. We had coffee afterwards. One newly-married couple has taken a great interest.

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Danny Bennett, Madison, Alabama: "One of Satan's most successful tactics to destroy the church is to deceive and lead the youth into error. The Devil has entered and is destroying the church through poisonous youth programs and has 'snared' many innocent participants."

Darrell Broking, Gilbert, Arizona: "I have taken a real beating the last couple of years for being too outspoken concerning other people's error. Just last night [I was called] a glory seeker, a hireling, and a man who wishes to be the high priest of the church..."

"I hate sin so much, and I hate watching so many people being carried off again into its bondage, that I just can't keep quiet...The only way I can find to deal with this pain is to fight the Devil with every ounce of my being..."

Herman Carter, Allen Park, Michigan: "This area is not just satisfied with Jeff Walling, Jimmy Allen and John Clayton, but now is having Joe Beam at Trenton, Michigan...Two flyers inclosed: "Been There? Done That? Now What?" I say "AMEN" to that. "What" or "WHO" could be next?"

"We've enjoyed each issue of *Contending for the Faith* and reading and reviewing...those interesting letters from all over the world is so encouraging...It is heartbreaking to see those that ask to have their names removed...Do not grow weary in well doing, for we SHALL reap, IF we faint not..."

[NOTE: The reason those congregations cannot be warned against the likes of Jeff Walling, Jimmy Allen, John Clayton—and now Joe Beam—is *unbelief*. First, they do not believe what it is reported that they teach; second, even if so, they don't believe the truth any more, so they don't care. IYR Jr.]

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Goebel Music, Colleyville, Texas: "I have been in the house all winter in some of the deepest of research and have gone through, not hundreds, but literally thousands of pages...In weeks, or months, to come, I hope to finish it as a resource, reference volume to fill a void where there is not such a book. Please pray for this effort..."

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J. E. Choate, Nashville, Tennessee: "I am convinced that the Holloway-Weed DCHS Kilpatrick seminar paper, and their proposals of Willow Creek and the Vineyard Fellowship as a suitable model for adoption by churches of Christ will have the most damaging implications for all the "change agents" who form a fraternity all their own.

"I am now evaluating my research on these matters as among the most crucial and revealing of the strategies of our liberal brethren to date.

"My next priority article will set up the Vineyard Fellowship, the Kansas City Prophets, and C. Peter Wagner's "Third Wave" paradigm. I mean for our unsuspecting liberal brethren to have some second thoughts when they read the findings of the research.

"I am confident that the liberals and

the agendas they are pursuing will run their course like any deadly contagious disease. It is becoming more apparent daily what they have in mind. In 20 years, or whatever the time cycle, church historians will look back on the '90s as the second time when churches of Christ were internally wrenched and driven to a major division.

"The Murch-Witty Unity meetings in the late 1930s were mounted to heal the divisions and bring unity to the Christian Church and churches of Christ. The present Restoration Forums (Joplin Summit) are similar, but different. This time around it is our 'quisling' brethren, the likes of Calvin Warpula and Bill Humble, who are playing this game with the Independent Christian Church, with whom they are willing to fellowship with or without the instrument.

"If history repeats itself and as our liberal brethren are on the verge of driving many churches of Christ into oblivion, will they then mount another unity movement in another generation, and get together and lament with great piety and pathos, how tragic it is for brethren to be divided? Unlike the Kansas City prophets, I am not a modern day prophet with gifts like unto Isaiah and Jeremiah, and I just would not go so far as to venture a guess."

[NOTE: In replying to brother Choate's letter, I wrote, in part, saying, "Thanks in large measure to you and your excellent writing, 1996 has been one of the finest years for *Contending for the Faith* since we started publishing in 1970. We are anticipating another great year in 1997. As you said earlier we cannot change the minds of the liberals, but we can warn the brethren who their foes are and prepare them to resist their calculated schemes... I am certain that you are on the right course as your articles continue to unfold." IYR Jr.]

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"When people stop believing in God, they will believe anything!" —Charles Collete, June 17, 1996, Houston College of the Bible Lectures, Spring, Texas.

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West Dyersburg Church of Christ, Dyersburg, Tennessee, had a night of preaching and singing, with Mike Tanaca doing the preaching and Todd Walker leading the singing. Beginning at 8:00 p.m., Friday, April 11, 1997, they continued until midnight.

Tim Ayers, at the Southwest School of Bible Studies Lectureship, April 17, 1996, referring to the interdenominational "Promise Keepers" organization, said: "It doesn't matter how much good this men's movement does, if they teach false doctrines, it's wrong."

[NOTE: They do, and it is. IYR Jr.]

Jerry C. Brewer, Clinton, Oklahoma: "I am profoundly saddened when I consider the liberalism that is now carrying the church into apostasy. Many brethren may believe the liberal heresies are only a threat in the larger metropolitan areas.

That is a foolish attitude. It is everywhere. I'm including some items from churches in western Oklahoma that will let you see the tenor of things out here and the corn-meal mush that's being palmed off for the gospel on Biblically illiterate brethren who love to have it so. Rare is the congregation around here that hasn't embraced at least some of the tenets of the 'change agents.'

"God bless your work through *Contending for the Faith*. I gave it a plug in our bulletin last week (Arapaho, Oklahoma is where I preach) and I'm encouraging brethren to subscribe."

[NOTE: Thanking brother Brewer for his letter and enclosures, I replied, in part, "I, too, am saddened at the inroads that liberalism continues to make. I noted in one of the Tulsa newspapers that Marvin Phillips finally is retiring at Garnett Road, but not until he had so infected great numbers of brethren and churches that most will never recover.

"You are entirely right that the threat is not just to the metropolitan churches, however; brethren are vulnerable in medium and small size churches as well. Thank you for encouraging the families at Arapaho to subscribe to *Contending for the Faith*. If they will read it carefully, it will help them to throw off these heresies as fast as they arise." IYRJR.]

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#### FOUR SEAS COLLEGE IN SINGAPORE

Some of our readers inquire about our work with Four Seas College in Singapore. When Vada and I went as missionaries to Singapore, in 1955, we had not just one but two objectives in mind: 1) to establish the church of our Lord in Singapore and Malaya, and 2) to establish a preacher/teacher/missionary-training school to train workers to spread the cause of Christ into all the countries, particularly in Southeast Asia.

In the early stages, though we trained numerous ones individually for this work, it was not possible to get the school, as such, started formally until 1965. Building on the foundation that Vada and I had laid the previous ten years, brother Pence Dacus announced that Malaysia Christian College would begin that January. He was president the first two years. I was president the next two years (changing its name to Four Seas College of Bible and Missions)—then becoming chairman of the Board of Directors, which position I have held ever since.

It never was our intention for Four Seas College to be a BIG school. It was started for the training of *faithful* men that they might be able to *teach others also*, according to II Timothy 2:2. The emphasis on BIG, rather than on FAITHFUL, is what got the cause in trouble to begin with—even here in the U.S.!

We always sought to train *faithful* men, as the scriptures teach. Also, if any of our teachers proved to be in error, we either corrected them or let them go. The result is that Four Seas College is a source of faithful training to this day.

While at any given time the school was always small, across the years the

aggregate number of those trained by Four Seas College is sizable. [Jesus himself trained only twelve—but look what happened!] We have alumni working now in various countries, particularly in Asia—countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Hong Kong, Taiwan and possibly others. Many traveling among the churches in that part of the world have remarked how well trained many local workers are. Much of the reason for this is the steady, faithful work we have tried to do at Four Seas College, in Singapore.

#### Some of the History

When Vada and I first went to Singapore, in 1955, she and I were the first missionaries sent by the churches of Christ to the *southeast* Asian area. Others had been sent to Japan (1892 and years following), to China (1925 and years following) and to the Philippines (1928 and years following). However, when we reached Singapore in 1955, only sister Elizabeth Bernard was in Hong Kong, and even she had not been sent there, but *refugeed* there from China after the Communist take-over in 1949. In 1955, if you drew a line across Asia from Hong Kong all the way to Europe, we were the *only* preacher-family on the mainland of Asia south of that line.

In the beginning, Vada's and my work concentrated in and around Singapore. Our first time out we stayed 4 and 1/2 years in Singapore. Our second time out, we worked almost two years planting the church in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital city, before moving back to Singapore. We were in the Kuala Lumpur/Singapore area that time for an additional 3 and 1/2 years.

As our work, especially in Singapore and Malaysia, took hold and grew, more and more countries looked to us to supply them with preachers, teachers and personal workers. Our involvement with the work not just in Singapore, but throughout much of Asia and the Far East, was such that I had to do much backing-and-forthing to keep it going. This accounts for the seemingly endless travel many have observed. Having heavy responsibilities on both sides of the ocean, I never was able to figure out any other way.

In any case, the Lord has blessed our work over the years, for which we are grateful. Whereas only *two* churches of Christ existed in the *southern half* of Asia when we initiated the gospel there, today there are *thousands*.

I still have to make missionary journeys to the Far East each year (and sometimes to Russia, also, where we have work going above the Arctic Circle). During my most recent journey to Asia, I did missionary work in nine different countries, including Singapore, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Hong Kong, China, India and Bangladesh. Three were baptized in China, and 160 in India.

Owing to defending the truth of the gospel through *Contending for the Faith* nowadays I cannot be gone long at a time; however, from the foregoing, I do believe our missionary work

—particularly in and through our preacher/teacher/missionary-training program at Four Seas College—has made a difference.—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

[NOTE: I am responsible for raising the operating funds for Four Seas College—in fact, have been since its inception. At this point in time it costs approximately \$5,000.00 each month to pay for scholarships, teachers' support, travel expenses recruiting new students from other countries, and all the rest. Those who would like to have a part with us in this effective training program, please make your contributions payable to my sponsoring church BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST, clearly earmarked FOR FOUR SEAS COLLEGE, and address them to 4850 SAUFLEY FIELD ROAD, PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32526.—IYRJR.]

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#### SUFFERING FOOLS GLADLY

John R. Owens

Paul admonished the Corinthians because false apostles were bringing them into bondage (II Corinthians 11:13,18-20). They were enjoying the fruits of Paul and other true preachers. The church was suffering fools gladly (II Corinthians 11:19).

Our Wednesday night Bible Class at Wentworth Church of Christ near Canton, Texas discussed this. Brother Sam J. Mormino, a long time gospel preacher, turned to Acts 1:15-26; and distinctly read the qualifications of an Apostle.

He must have been with them since the baptism of John and a witness of the Resurrection. Two were put forth and Matthias was chosen by lot (Acts 1:26).

This is a far cry from claims of Don Finto and others, who fashion themselves, in New Mexico prayer stops, into Apostles of light.

Reports from middle Tennessee state formerly sound congregations are suffering fools gladly. The lesson Paul teaches is for us not to marvel that they are taking over sound congregations (II Corinthians 11:14).

Brother Sam's solution was to ask them (modern apostles) the qualifications found in (Acts 1:22). Paul surely put forth his qualifications (II Corinthians 11:22-ff).

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# NARRATIVE OF THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN WHO WANTED TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN RIVER

Joe W. Nichols

In 1970 brother David Brown and I traveled to the Bible Lands with the Jack Lewis Tour group. The group consisted of about 50 people. All except two were Christians and were mostly from the Southern states. Eight countries were visited in fourteen days— while “living out-of-the-suitcase!”

David was single at that time and preached for the Hampton, Arkansas church. Since my home community, Locust Bayou, was near by and I had been involved in a number of gospel meetings there, David and I had become well acquainted. In our earlier years we both had attended the old Madison Street church in Camden, Arkansas. Due to this previous association, we were made room-mates for the duration of the tour.

While in Israel our schedule included a stop at the Jordan River where the Sea of Galilee empties its waters into the Jordan system. Here one experiences a beautiful and serene atmosphere coupled with the awe of the significance of the historical background. At this particular time, many tour groups were present, and everyone was allowed to wade or bathe in the Jordan River. David and I had dressed in some less formal clothing in order to wade out waist-deep into the water. It was during the cool of the morning in mid-July—a very pleasant and cherished experience, indeed.

Many of the travelers were capturing Jordan River water in jars, bottles, and locally purchased containers, in order to carry some Jordan River water home with them. One could also purchase crafted items containing the river water. Some, in speaking about the matter, alleged that a few drops of the water, when arriving back in the States, would be diluted in water there and distributed as a healing agent.

Ironically, many of the denominational groups, contrary to their belief about baptism, were very much involved in baptizing their people in the Jordan River water. It may have been, however, that there was more a mysticism about the Jordan water than the placing of emphasis on baptism.

One older Christian lady of our group approached David and me about baptizing her in the Jordan water. In trying to be true to the Book, we naturally questioned her about her initial baptism. She stated that she was confident in her previous baptism, that it was for the remission of sins, and that she was saved. With that understanding, we assured her that there was no reason for her to be baptized again. However, she was still insistent that one of us baptize her regardless of the validity of her first baptism. We attempted to reason with her (to no avail) that such would be meaningless and would attach some special significance to the Jordan River water that the Lord never intended for it to have. By that time she was very irritated with the both of us and left us to approach other gospel preachers in our group. None, of course, would accommodate her in her request. Finally, being most frustrated with all of us, she approached a Baptist preacher who was baptizing those of his group and coerced him into baptizing her.

I remember that David and I marveled at her determination to be baptized in the Jordan. To us, wading in the Jordan and capturing its historical significance was as far as one already a Christian should go in crediting any importance to the Jordan water. If a Christian wanted to “dunk himself,” that would be all right, too; but anything beyond that would carry one into the realm of sacrilege.

Two basic lessons were therefore learned from the experience at the Jordan River: (1) people can get carried away in attaching spiritual worth to tangible things that are connected with Bible history; (2) faith has to do with things not seen and one can live, die, and go to heaven having never visited the Bible lands and having never been “dunked” in the Jordan river—“**Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed**” John 20:29.

—9 Myrtle Drive  
Natchez, Mississippi 39120

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# Contending FOR THE Faith

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## RICHARD HUGHES PROCLAIMS CHURCHES OF CHRIST TO BE A DENOMINATION

J. E. Choate

At some appointed time after 2000 A. D.— a time known only to God— the *traditional* churches of Christ, and the Church of Christ *denomination* will be listed as two separate religious bodies in the United States Religious Census as was the case in 1906.

A sign [semiotic] of this imminent probability was the Forrest F. Reed Lectureship held on September 26-27, 1997. The Reed Lectures were hosted this year by Lipscomb University as a part of a series of special events and celebrations related to the inauguration of **Stephen F. Flatt**.

To create a figure of speech, the bones of **David Lipscomb** were rattling in his coffin out in Mt. Olivet Cemetery on the evenings of September 26 and 27 when Steve Flatt extended the right hand of fellowship to the liberal Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This took place on the very land walked by the feet of David Lipscomb 100 years ago. Lipscomb for more than 50 years opposed Digressions.

The subject of the Reed Lectures is titled "Founding Vocation and Future Vision: The Self-Understanding of the Churches of Christ." However, **Richard Hughes** made it crystal clear that he regards the churches of Christ, Christian Church, and the Disciples to be three denominations who share common roots in the Stone-Campbell Restoration tradition.

Like as was said by a New York reporter about the speech delivered before the national Democratic Convention by the young **Frank Clement**, Tennessee governor,

that the young governor last evening "slew the Republican party with the jawbone of an ass." Hughes strived mightily, but the *traditional* churches of Christ continue to be alive and well.

Dr. Hughes reflects only contempt for the belief that churches of Christ follow the worship and practices of the church bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. Dr. Hughes and the Lipscomb participants expressed neither interest nor concern, much less respect for the traditions of the school that Lipscomb founded.

I consider the Reed Lectures meeting on the Lipscomb Campus to be an affront and calculated insult to all that David Lipscomb believed and practiced for a lifetime. This was symbolized by the presence of Stephen F. Flatt who was the central focus of the event.

And this is the brother now who will be presented as the embodiment of the traditions of the Nashville Bible School/David Lipscomb College/Lipscomb University. And Steve says that he is **Harold Hazelip's** greatest admirer. And does he endorse the statement that Lipscomb had never been in a better condition than in the Hazelip administration?

We will use the printed page as an effective means to reach Steve through the independent and thoughtful readers who will give free and impartial thoughtful judgment to what we write. Steve should not expect to be excused because of his personal charm, sincerity, and ignorance of indisputable facts.

(Continued on page 17)

# Contending FOR THE Faith

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November/1997

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

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*Editorial...*

## MOSCOW MEETING RE: RUSSIA'S NEW RELIGIOUS LAW

Having just returned from Russia on the Lord's Day evening of October 12, 1997, while it still is fresh in mind, I must record what I found out about Russia's new religious law and its present and possible future effects regarding our Lord's cause in that faraway land.

Firstly, I learned that some kind of special meeting had been held in Moscow, September 23-24, among missionaries and local Russian preachers for churches of Christ throughout Russia. Whoever arranged this meeting, it evidently was not initiated by faithful brethren, although such brethren were invited.

For such a meeting to be held legally, if my information is accurate, it had to be sponsored by some organization. The organization listed on the advertisement, a copy of which I have in hand, was something called **Demos Co. Ltd., Moscow**—whatever *that* is.

Entitled, **PLANNING MEETING OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN RUSSIA**, the invitation reads, in part, as follows:

23-24 September  
Moscow

Brethren,

The meeting in Moscow of churches of Christ in Russia is fast approaching. We trust you are making preparations to attend if at all possible. We still ask of you to let Moscow know how many of your congregation are coming and how many will be staying in the hotel...

## PROGRAM

This is a brief description of the two-day meeting. A detailed program will be given to everyone at the beginning of the meeting.

Tuesday, 23 September:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 8:00-8:30   | Registration  |
| 8:30-8:45   | Welcome, devotional   |
| 8:45-9:25   | "Autonomous But United" Gennady Sherbakov, Evangelist, Syktyvkar  |
| 9:25-10:05  | "Great Beginning; Great Growth; Great Obstacles" Ernest Underwood, Evangelist, Klin   |
| 10:15-11:55 | Panel Discussion: "The Law and Its Implications." Here will be 3 experts on the new law who will be able to tell us exactly what the law means and how it will affect us. |

**1:00-4:15 Group Discussion:** We will divide into groups of all Russian and all American Christians to discuss various aspects of the law and its implications re: the Lord's work. We will draw conclusions and offer recommendations.

**4:15-4:30** Closing, prayer.

In the evening we will assemble again for a program designed to address matters of mutual interest other than the law. Such things as reports from the church in different areas, sharing literature that is available, humanitarian aid, programs that work, and unique opportunities will be during this time. **NOTE:** If you desire to participate in or have something included, please contact Clay Whidden immediately...

**Wednesday, 24 September:**

**8:00-8:30** Arrival, visiting

**8:30-8:45** Welcome, devotional

**8:45-9:25** "Treasure in Earthen Vessels"

Andrey Sklyarov Evangelist, Barnaul

**9:25-11:55** Presentation of Conclusions/Recommendations of Tuesday's Discussion Groups and Open Discussion

**1:00-1:30** Devotional led by Alexander Nesterkin, Evangelist, Murmansk

**1:30-2:30** Fellowship: Getting to know one another better

**2:30-2:50** Announcements and information of mutual interest

**2:50-3:30** "Finally, My Brethren" Gary Jackson, Evangelist, Moscow

**3:30-4:00** Season of Prayer and Closing.

**Meeting Place of the meeting:** Moscow Church of the Nazarene Ministry Center...

When you come, please be prepared to give a brief report of the church in your city or region. Also, please bring samples of any teaching materials, tracts or other materials that you have put together that you could share with the others. More will be said about this at the meeting...

May the Lord grant unto you safe passage to Moscow and may our meeting together serve to strengthen our brotherhood ties and enhance the work of the gospel in this great nation of Russia! See you in Moscow.

In Christian Love,  
[Signed]  
Planning Committee

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From brother Cliff Lyons' diary notes for September 22, I learned that he, Bob Hawkins and Alexander Nesterkin taxied to the Murmansk International Airport early that morning. Since they would be gone only three days, they took only carry-on luggage, including some 90 to 100 copies of books that had been translated and printed in the Russian language.

Inasmuch as the Moscow Meeting had been initiated and arranged by others, these brethren did not really know what to expect. All they knew beforehand was that it was occasioned by the new religious law

for Russia. Brother Hawkins' notes provided the following information:

Murmansk, Russia  
September 27, 1997

...The meeting in Moscow was conducted primarily by liberal American missionaries (Richland Hills, Abilene Christian College, Sunset School of Preaching, and Pepperdine). We met at the Nazarene Ministry Center.

Brother Clay Whitten, who speaks Russian fluently, told brother Cliff Lyons and me everything you do in worship. He translated Russian to English, when brother Alexander Nesterkin spoke. Alexander said "other religious groups;" Whitten translated "other Christian groups." Alexander corrected him in English! pointing out we need to trust God and not seek help from the denominations. Alexander spoke the truth in an excellent manner. He used the early church as an example to follow by pointing out examples in the book of Acts.

After the meeting was over, Cliff and I met with brother Charles Whittle who was the director of this 2-day meeting. Brother Larry Little, from Syktivkar, came in the room, also.

We told Whittle that Alexander had attended their worship service in St. Petersburg while getting his visa. Whittle was present at the service in which a lady was leading the singing. Whittle said yes, that is correct, but we had no men to lead the singing. Whittle said that they had given the lady the authority to lead the singing.

We tried to tactfully explain that one does not give authority to violate God's commands.

Alexander later told us that some of the American brethren, who were present at the meeting in Moscow, one of which during our meeting led singing, was there at St. Petersburg when the lady was leading the singing.

Since the World Bible Translation Center was being promoted during the meeting, I showed Whittle brother Goebel Music's book which exposes the Easy-to-Read Version. He said he had not seen it. I offered to give it to him, but he said he would get a copy upon his return to the States.

I asked him if he would want his translators to give a word-for-word translation as best possible or give their thoughts of what he said. He said he wanted them to give the idea of what he said. I asked him, what if their idea was different from his?

I then said, the Word of God is not to be tampered with, but is to be translated word for word as best possible. He said he did not think a word-for-word translation was possible. This says to me that he does not believe we have the inspired Word of God, but the idea of God's Word conveyed by man.

I explained, we understand that some words will require more than one word to be translated properly. This is not paraphrasing, as he admitted the Easy-to-Read Version was a paraphrase, but is translating word for word (or words), if necessary, to convey the proper meaning. He thought the Easy-to-Read [Version] was still better than the Synodical text.

Because of what happened at this meeting, I believe we have a bigger problem than the new religious law. Persecution can cause the Word of God to spread (Acts 8:1-4), but American missionaries who compromise the truth are hurting the Cause of Christ here in Russia, as they are in the States wherever they go...

In brother Lyons' report of October 7, 1977, his response to this same Moscow Meeting was as follows:

### MOSCOW MEETING

September was a busy month as Alexander Nesterkin, Bob Hawkins and I preached in a gospel meeting and arranged matters so we could attend a preachers' meeting in Moscow, September 23-24, concerning the new religious law (which at the time of our meeting had now been passed). Of course, it has now been passed by the Duma and signed by President Yeltsin.

I think there were 40 to 50 brethren present for the meeting. During the early part of the meeting we had lectures on "Autonomous But United," "The Law And Its Implications," and some panel discussions.

One speaker said that he did "not think the new religious law...would be enforced as strictly as the text of the law reads." Yet, he went on to point out that he could not be certain about this matter.

It is also expected that the degree of enforcement of the law may vary in different sections of the country. Also, it is expected that the new law will be challenged in the courts.

[In Murmansk we are carrying on our work as usual. We are conducting worship services as scheduled, teaching in some of the schools, teaching at the Seamen's Hospital, teaching at one of the orphanages, conducting classes at the Bible college, worshipping in Kola, etc. It does look like we will not be teaching in School 17 for a while. However, the Bible college class continues to meet there on Saturdays.

We have advertised two gospel meetings in the newspapers during the past month and distributed about 10,000 invitations, placing them in mail boxes. We have also advertised our Bible Correspondence Course and the Bible college classes. Thus, you can see that we are continuing to preach and teach the gospel of Christ in this great city. Of course, we are not certain that we shall be able to continue doing so at our present pace, but we pray and hope that such will be the case. Please pray for the cause of Christ in Murmansk.]

During the meeting in Moscow, we discussed various matters whereby we and local congregations would face problems or difficulties, such as: 1) registering congregations with the government, and doing so each year for the 15-year period. 2) What about alternate places to worship? 3) Can we find evidence that the church of Christ existed in Russia more than 15 years ago? 4) What about congregations which have purchased property? What can we expect? 5) Supporting our Russian brethren morally and financially, if we cannot get visas to stay. 6) We recognized that we must place our trust in God, even if persecution comes.

Jesus said that his followers would face persecution and we see that such happened in the first century and know that such has happened numerous times throughout history. Indeed, the devil is our enemy and does not like for us to preach the pure gospel of Christ in Russia or anywhere else.

Alexander Nesterkin, from Murmansk, pointed out in his lecture that we should respect the laws of the land and God's law, but when man's law conflicts with God's law, we must obey God (Acts 5:29).

If the new religious law is strictly enforced, it will not be an easy matter for the church to carry on its evangelistic work. But we plan to do the best we can as long as we can.

It is indeed sad to think about the new religious law being strictly enforced. However, Alexander Nesterkin, Bob Hawkins and I and others heard and saw other things at the

Moscow meeting which concern us perhaps more than the new religious law. Liberalism is active and doing damage to the cause of Christ in Russia.

I had a discussion with Clay Whidden [Whitten? Not sure of spelling—IYR Jr.] who thinks that "everything is worship." I pointed out that such teaching is unscriptural and dangerous. Also, when I asked about mechanical instruments of music, he did not take a stand for "singing" as authorized by the New Testament. In fact, he did not seem to appreciate the words pattern and authority.

Brother Charles Whittle thinks that a woman can lead singing in a mixed assembly if there is not a brother present able to lead singing. He admitted that they follow this practice in St. Petersburg. He said the men of the congregation gave the woman authority to lead singing.

Of course, man does not have a right to authorize something that God's word does not authorize. And God's word teaches that a woman is not to teach, nor usurp authority over man (I Timothy 2:11-12). However, she does what God tells her not to do when she leads singing with men present in the assembly.

Thus you can see our concern about some of the missionaries and congregations in Russia. A preacher should never be ashamed of what he believes and teaches. Also, brethren in the U.S. supporting works in Russia need to know what "their missionaries" believe and teach on the mission field.

We preachers should not try to see how close we can get to denominationalism, but "prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and help precious lost souls see the striking contrast between New Testament Christianity and man-made religions. We must not pervert the gospel of Christ, but preach the truth with love...

Upon returning to Murmansk at the close of the Moscow Meeting, brother Lyons continued to be disturbed by some of the things he had discussed with brother Whittle, while there. So, on September 30th, he wrote to him, as follows:

Dear brother Whittle,

Bob Hawkins passed your E-mail letters to me. We are thankful that Alexander Nesterkin, Bob and I were able to attend the meeting in Moscow, meet other missionaries and some of our Russian brethren. We appreciate the work that you and others did to make the meeting possible. You are a talented leader and I respect that. However, I am fearful that you and some others at the meeting are not fully following the New Testament pattern for our Lord's church. I'm afraid that some are not making it clear in their teaching that there is a sharp contrast between the church of Christ (as described in the New Testament), and denominationalism. My heart is heavy as I type this letter. I don't want to hurt anyone, but I know that the truth must be proclaimed and practiced, if heaven is to be our eternal home. It hurts me when Russians (and others) reject the gospel and follow after the traditions of men and denominational doctrines, but the New Testament teaches us to "preach the word." This, we must do whatever the cost. Of course, we are to follow Paul as he followed Christ and speak the truth in love. What eternal good will we do in Russia or anywhere, if we do not sow the pure seed, the gospel of Christ? Our great brotherhood in the U.S. is torn asunder because of liberalism. I cannot be a part of planting the seeds of liberalism in Russia.

Brother Whittle, I was deeply disappointed to learn of your position that women may lead singing in worship to God when men are present. Yes, you qualified your statement by saying that women only led the singing when there were no men in the assembly capable of doing so. Yet, on the occasion when Alexander Nesterkin was present for worship in St. Petersburg, there were some American missionaries and other men present, including yourself. One of the missionaries, which was present that Lord's Day in St. Petersburg, led singing during the Moscow meeting. Thus, apparently he could have led the singing that Lord's Day in St. Petersburg. I am not a song leader, but I try, as best I can, to lead the singing, if there are no other men present to do so. Anyway, whatever the circumstances for a worship assembly may be, we must not use women in a role that would violate I Timothy 2:11-12 or any other passage. You also said that "the men of the congregation gave the woman the authority to lead singing." Of course, man does not have a right to "give authority" which violates or goes against God's authoritative word. Do the men of a congregation have the right or authority to pervert or change what Paul by inspiration wrote to Timothy? (I Tim. 2:11-12). If Paul or an angel had no right to pervert or change the gospel, why or how can brethren do so today? God's word teaches that a woman is not to teach, nor usurp authority over the man. Yet, she does exactly what God tells her not to do when she leads singing with men present in the assembly. Consider: If there is not a man present in the assembly capable of "preaching the word," could the men in St. Petersburg give a sister the authority to preach in a mixed assembly of men and women? No, they do not have such authority. No man has the right to authorize something that God's word does not authorize. God has given us a pattern to follow regarding worship and we should respect and honor it. Noah followed God's pattern in building the ark; we must follow God's pattern in building our Lord's church. Let us respect the authority of Christ and His word by speaking the truth in love.

Another matter that concerns Bob and me is the promotion of the "Easy to Read Russian Version," and the World Bible Translation Center during the Moscow meeting. I was glad to hear you view the "ERRV" (Easy to Read Russian Version) as a paraphrase. However, that was not always brother Randolph's position when he was raising funds for translating in the States as you can learn by documented evidence in brother Music's book, "Easy to Read Version, Easy to Read or Easy to Mislead." I encourage you to get a copy of his book and study some of the problems with the ERV and the "ERRV." You also said that the "ERRV" is "better than the Russian Synodical Translation." I am aware that there are some problems in the "RST." However, that does not give us the right to substitute a paraphrase of God's word instead of a translation. Brother Randolph and others had an excellent opportunity to give the Russian people a reliable translation of God's word. Instead, if I understand correctly, they produced what we might call a paraphrase of a paraphrase from the ERV to the "ERRV." Brother Whittle, if we have a reliable translation, we have God's inspired word. If we have a paraphrase, we don't have God's inspired word. If I recall correctly, Bob asked you if you wanted your translator to translate word for word or just give a paraphrase or his idea. You replied, as I recall, "just give the idea." Bob then said, "what if his idea of what you just said is not your idea?" Of course, we should be even more careful in translating God's word than we are in translating man's words, books, etc. In fact, I noticed during the lectures in Moscow,

when a speaker knew both Russian and English, that he would sometimes correct his translator when he gave a wrong translation. Indeed, we must not take lightly translating God's word, but give a word for word translation as best possible. I believe the King James and the American Standard Versions give us this kind of translation. A paraphrase does not do that.

Thank you for your letters. I'm glad I got to meet you in Moscow, but I am saddened because of the doctrinal problems which hinder our fellowship. I pray and hope that you will restudy the above matters. We have decided not to list the books we have published in your directory. I wish we could conscientiously list them with you, but at this point in time, we cannot. If you would like to have a copy or copies of each book, please let me know. There is no charge. The books are as follows: *Why I Am A Member of the Church of Christ*, by Leroy Brownlow; *Ready Reference For Growing Christians*, by Paul Sain; *The Noahic Flood: Science and "The World That Was,"* by Curtis Cates; *The Book God "Breathed,"* by Keith A. Mosher, Sr. (The above books are in bound book form.) We also have on floppy: *Survey of the Old Testament*, by Rod Rutherford and *Survey of the New Testament*, by Rod Rutherford. We have printed only a few copies of these on our copier, mainly for use in the Bible College class.

Concerning your question about Alexander Nesterkin having data on the "church of Christ, our Saviour," unfortunately it was not the case. Someone told him that such information was in the book, "In the Cauldron of Russia," by Ivan S. Prokhanoff, but when he read it, it was not there.

Brother Whittle, if I have misrepresented you in any way in the above remarks, please let me know. Or, should you desire to discuss any of the above matters further, feel free to contact me. Please understand that I am sincere in what I have written.

For the cause of Christ,  
[Signed]  
Cliff Lyons

To which, under date of October 4, 1997, brother Whittle replied, saying,

Dear brother Cliff,

Thank you for your message of September 30, 1997. I appreciate your telling me your understanding about our assemblies, beliefs and practices. I have no interest in, nor time for, nor feel cause for debate. I simply ask that you be careful and gracious when presenting what my position is on any subject.

Grace to you,  
[Signed]  
Chuck

When I read brother Whittle's response, it reminded me of Senator Ford's exclamation (in *Teahouse of the August Moon*, as I recall), "DO YOU THINK I'M THE KIND OF FELLOW WHO WILL ACCEPT NO ANSWER FOR AN ANSWER!?" At least brother Lyons felt that Whittle's reply did not answer in any way what he so thoughtfully, carefully and prayerfully had written.

What use is it to try to find a way to live with Russia's new religious law, if thereby we are going to preach, practice and promote ERROR! Were it not for

the fact that TRUTH would be kept out as well, we could wish that the new law could keep out the LIBERALISM evinced by some of those brethren responsible for the Moscow Meeting.

Without doubt, this will not be the end of the matter. However, it seemed important to bring our readers up to date on the religious situation now being faced by faithful brethren in Russia—hence this editorial. Watch these columns for further developments. At least our work in Murmansk and the Kola Peninsula continues almost as before the new law went into effect in October. Pray that it may continue to do so.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

## Associate Editorial...

### MAKING A WEAK ATTEMPT TO PROTECT YOUR SHEEP, BUT NOBODY ELSE'S

Would you think a shepherd neighborly, if he knew of a pestilence that killed sheep, yet he only sought to protect his flock and did virtually nothing to warn his fellow shepherds of the danger of the disease to their flocks? On such a shepherd's part, would his actions constitute an act of love for other shepherds and their flocks? Would his failing to inform his fellow shepherds of such a danger constitute an omission of the practice of **"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even also unto them, for this is the law and the prophets"** (Matthew 7:12)? Would such a shepherd be all that the word "shepherd" implies, if he allowed his sheep to feed in a pasture that had poison plants existing side by side with wholesome ones (Psalm 23)? Would parents be loving, concerned, and caring if they followed the example of the previously mentioned shepherd in dealing with their children as well as other families (Ephesians 6:1-4)? In fact, in what area of society would such conduct be acceptable to decent people? Yet, in protecting the flock of God such is practiced by many who wear the name elder.

#### THERE IS "DEATH IN THE POT"


Second Kings 4:38-41 is an account of poison gourds being accidentally put into a pot of pottage: **"for they knew them not"** (verse 39). While eating, the people realized that the pottage was poison. Seeing the situation, **"they cried out, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof."** (verse 40). Mind you, not every food item originally put into the pot was poison. However, when the lap full of wild poison gourds was shredded into the pot all of the pottage was contaminated.

Regarding things spiritual, **"there is death in the pot"** for God's family when "wild gourd" preachers who teach fatal errors (doctrines that automatically separate those who believe them from God) are put into a "great pot" and everyone is encouraged to eat (II Kings 4:38,39). Surely we would not be so foolish as to think that one could pick out the safe food and leave the poison items alone. The introduction of wild gourd preachers into the pot can mean only one thing — **"there is death in the pot."**

#### TODAY'S POTS OF POISONED POTTAGE OR A WITCH'S BREW

SOME of the more infamous and long-time poison pots are certain universities operated by the brethren (*Pepperdine, A.C.U., D.L.U.* and any other colleges

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or universities who believe as they do), the *Tulsa Workshop*, and the *Nashville Jubilee*. However, as of November 6-8, 1997 a new pot of poison under the heading of the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* began to boil in the Sheraton Astrodome Hotel in Houston, Texas. *The Houston Chronicle* carried the following advertisement of the *Gulf Coast Workshop* in the religious section, of its Saturday, November 1, 1997 issue:

## Church of Christ workshop slated

More than 5,000 Church of Christ members will attend a Spiritual Growth Workshop to be held Thursday-Nov. 8 at the Sheraton Astrodome Hotel, 8686 Kirby.

There are 225 Churches of Christ in the Houston area. The workshop will feature several speakers, including Joe Beam, Charles Hodge and Juan Munroy.

There will be worship assemblies and several classes focusing on evangelism and the family. Olympic gold medalist track stars Leroy Burrell and Mike Marsh will be featured in a special youth program.

The difference in the one who shredded the poison wild gourds into the pot in II Kings 4 and those who create such

pots of poison today is tremendous. By accident the pot of II Kings 4 was poisoned. When "the sons of the prophets" learned what had happened, they ceased to eat the poisoned pottage, and cried out to all that the pot had poison in it. It was then that the prophet Elisha made the pot of pottage whole. Today, gatherings such as the *Gulf Coast Workshop* are planned with poison in the menu. The full intent and purpose of the "change agent" chefs is to substitute their false doctrines for the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the only way to change the Lord's church into a human entity. Some who may be beginning to taste something strange in the Jubilee and Workshop pots do not have enough New Testament sense to quit eating, get completely away from them, and cry out to all involved that "there is death in the pot."

The recipe that Shakespeare had the witches of *Macbeth* follow in preparing their brew well describes the contagion of such workshops as *Tulsa/Gulf Coast/Jubilee* varieties. The following is a variation of the boiling cauldron scene in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. I did not have access to the *New International Version* of the "change agents" Shakespeare, so something of the Elizabethan English will just have to do, opponents to the *King James Version* notwithstanding.

### THE "CHANGE AGENTS" CHANT

First Witch (Warlock President, Steve Flatt):

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

(For many years the universities and colleges have laid the groundwork for those who seek to loose men from what God has bound on them in his word.)

Second Witch (PhD Warlock, Rubel Shelly):

Thrice, and once the hedgepig whin'd.

(A majority of the brotherhood is ready to accept false doctrine.)

Third Witch (The Right Reverend Warlock, Max Lucado):

Harpier cries; 'tis time, 'tis time.

(I am the man to lead the church into denominationalism. I am here for such a time as this.)

First Witch (Warlock President Flatt):

Round about the cauldron go;

(The colleges, workshops, and the Jubilee have one common goal, to change the church into sectarian denominationalism)

In the poison'd entrails throw.

(No one can absolutely know anything.)

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Swelter'd venom sleeping got,

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

(The love of God does not demand obedience to his commandments.)

All Witches: Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

(Our aim is to cause trouble for all those who will not submit to our will.)

Second Witch (PhD Warlock, Shelly):

Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,

Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,

For a charm of powerful trouble,

Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

(If you are saved by God's grace there is not one thing you must do in order to be saved.)

All Witches: Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

(We will destroy the church of Christ by any means at our disposal.)

Third Witch (The Right Reverend, Lucado):

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,

Witches' mummy, maw and gulf

of the ravin'd salt-sea shark

Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,

Liver of blaspheming Jew,

Gall of goat, and slips of yew

Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,

Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,

Finger of birth-strangled babe

Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,

Make the gruel thick and slab:

Add thereto a tiger's chaudron

For the' ingredients of our cauldron.

(You go to your church and I will go to mine and we will all get to heaven together.)

All Witches: Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.



*(We love everybody except those who do not fully support us. We have the right to judge you, but do not think about making a judgment about us.)*

Second Witch (**PhD Warlock, Shelly**):

Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
Then the charm is firm and good.

*(How we worship is based on tradition. The use of mechanical instruments of music is not sin.)*

Enter Hecate (**Anything Goes Warlock, Joe Beam**). She speaks to her sister witches.

O well done! I commend your pains;  
And every one shall share i' th gains;  
And now around the cauldron sing,  
Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
Enchanting all that you put in.

*(“What is happening to us?” Stay married to anyone you want. You can make it work. We can have unity. Let us all agree to disagree.)*

Second Witch (**PhD Warlock, Shelly**):

By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes:  
Open, locks, Whoever Knocks!

*(Enter Apostasy and declares: “I'm back.”)*

#### “IF THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND”

The *Lake Houston Church of Christ* elders, Humble Texas, had to have their heads pushed into the bubbling cauldron and under the poisoned pottage of the seething *Gulf Coast Spiritual Workshop*, before they would even begin to halfway see what was going on. The following “*News from your Pastors*” (appearing at the end of this article) was put out by said elders for the Lake Houston members to see.

Much of what is said in the “News” to the Lake Houston members is good, but if these elders (as well as many others) had been willing to listen and investigate before the fact they would not have found themselves neck deep in poison pottage. We doubt they operate their businesses, oversee their families, or other necessary activities of this life in such a haphazard manner. Be that as it may, what is so sad about the “*News from your Pastors*” is what it did not say. Just one example (the one they noted) will suffice to make my point.

After acknowledging **Joe Beam's** erroneous teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, these shepherds did not “cry out” that “death is in the pot.” They did not warn their sheep to leave this Gulf Coast poison pot alone. These “shepherds of souls” did not mark the workshop as “a charm of powerful trouble, Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.” What did they say to their sheep?

Since Joe Beam will be speaking in the opening session at the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*....we caution any of you who go to hear him. Listen very carefully, and search God's Word to see if what he says is true (I Thessalonians 5:21, Acts 27:11).

This same caution applies to everything that you are taught, including what you hear from any speaker at the Workshop and even from Kirk, Eddie, the elders, or any of your Bible class teachers.

If the apostle Paul were alive today and had conducted himself as did these elders, he would have, as they did, make no distinction between normal Bible study among faithful brethren and a boiling cauldron of false teachers. Paul could have said to Timothy:

Since Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Philetus will be speaking in the opening session at the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* and I know that their 'word will eat as a canker,' I caution you when you go to hear them. Listen very carefully, and search God's word to see if what they say is true. Of course you know that I have 'delivered' Hymenaeus and Alexander 'unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme' (I Timothy 1:20). Moreover, I trust that it is clear in your mind what the false doctrine of Hymenaeus and Philetus is, namely, 'that the resurrection is past already.' Furthermore, you understand that I also know that by their teaching they have 'overthrow(n) the faith of some' (I Timothy 1:19; II Timothy 2:17, 18). But, Timothy you go on down to the Workshop and take a carload with you.

#### IF WE OPPOSE IT, WE WILL SPEAK AGAINST IT

In view of what Paul actually said in the previous scriptures and elsewhere in the New Testament regarding false teachers, how can shepherds give the previously cited direction to their flock and think themselves acceptable to God? If elder **Bob Deister** could stand before the Lake Houston congregation for the purpose of informing the flock to contact me and stop *Contending for the Faith* from coming into their homes, why could he and the rest of the Lake Houston elders not cease and desist from promoting, supporting, and attending the “death in the pot” *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*?

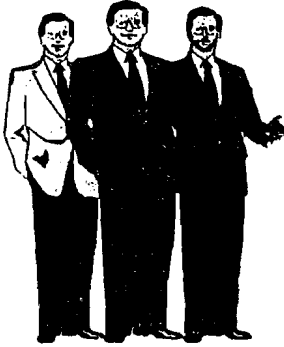
**Kirk Castleman** is the preacher for the *Lake Houston Church*. He spoke three times on the *Gulf Coast* “death in the pot” *Workshop*. Imagine the apostle Paul writing what the Lake Houston shepherds wrote to their flock, and yet the preacher under their oversight participating in the poison pottage party. What has hindered Castleman and his shepherds from publicly marking the wild gourd affair? Why not warn the overseeing *Westbury Church of Christ* and her assistant, the *Memorial Church*? Why not, at the very least, send the material in the aforementioned “News” letter to all the churches participating in the *Gulf Coast Workshop*? If it is good for the *Lake Houston Church* to know the things found in “*News from your Pastors*,” pray tell why is it not needful news for all who are connected with the workshop? Do the Lake Houston elders and Castleman really believe that the Workshop is sinful? Where is the New Testament authority for any Christian to fellowship pots of poisoned pottage (Colossians 3:17)?

## GOD COMMANDS "MARK" AND "AVOID"

The inspired apostle Paul commanded: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their

own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17, 18). Why do this? Because, to again quote Shakespeare, "...something wicked this way comes..."

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*



## News from your Pastors

### Issues Facing the Church Today

In this newsletter we present some of the issues facing the church. The elders feel that if you know the issues and what God's word has to say about them, then you are prepared to prove all things as he has commanded (1 Thess 5:21).

Many issues are open to your opinion or the discretion of the elders. However, the plan of salvation, worship, divorce and remarriage, and other issues are controlled by commands or biblical examples. We are told that we shall know the truth, and the truth will make us free (John 8:32). How will we know the truth? God's Word is truth. Also, Acts 17:11 says, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

So what are some of the major issues facing the church today and what does the Bible say about them?

#### Marriage, Divorce, & Remarriage

Fornication is the only reason for divorce, and those who divorce for any other reason and remarry are committing adultery. (Matt 19:8-9, 1 Cor 7:10-11)

#### Baptism for the Remission of Sins

The Bible clearly demonstrates that baptism's is for salvation, not because of salvation. Through baptism we are cleansed of our sins and we enter into Christ.

- Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins. (Acts 2:38)
- Don't wait. Be baptized and wash away your sins. (Acts 22:16)
- Those who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. (Rom 6:3-4)
- We are baptized into one body. (1 Cor 12:13)
- Those who have been baptized have put on Christ and receive the promise of salvation. (Gal 3:27-29)

#### The Use of Instrumental Music in Worship

There is no Scriptural authority to use instrumental music in worship. Also, history shows that the early century church did not use instruments. When God tells us what he wants, that eliminates what we want.

- I will sing unto your name. (Rom 15:9)
- Sing with the spirit and understanding. (1 Cor 14:15)
- Sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord. (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16)
- In the midst of the church sing praise to God. (Heb 2:12)

#### Unity or Fellowship with Denominational Churches

Denominational churches teach doctrines that conflict with each other and with the Scripture. Therefore they cannot be right in God's eyes. God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor 14:33). We cannot be unified or in fellowship with denominations.

- There is only one body (church), one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. (Eph 4:2-5, Col 1:18,24)
- Unity is possible only in the faith and knowledge of Christ. (Eph 4:13)
- Jesus prayed for unity. (John 17:20-23)
- Two people cannot walk together, unless they are agreed. (Amos 3:3)

#### The Role of Women in the Public Worship Service

There is no Scriptural authority or example of women taking leading roles in worship. Paul bases this on what happened in the Garden of Eden; therefore the rule is not cultural.

Women are to learn in silence in the public worship, and they are not to teach or have authority over the man. (1 Tim 2:11-15)

There are other issues, but these seem to be causing the most problems today. God's Word speaks about these problems and tells us where we are to stand.

#### Regarding Known False Teaching

We have recently seen sufficient evidence from audio and videotapes for us to conclude that Rubel Shelley and Max Lucado are teaching falsely about the necessity of baptism for forgiveness of sins. They are teaching that believers should be baptized as a response to being saved by belief and repentance. This does not agree with what is taught in the Bible. Refer to our article on Issues Facing the Church.

Also, we have viewed a videotape from Jubilee 97, which contains incorrect teaching by Joe Beam on the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Among other things, he teaches that adultery is not a sexual sin, as is clearly taught in scripture. Rather he teaches that adultery is the breaking of covenants. This mistaken teaching leads to some false conclusions about the sin involved in divorce and remarriage. (We are planning to have a class on marriage and divorce early next year.)

Since Joe Beam will be speaking in the opening session at the Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop on November 5-7, 1997, we caution any of you who go to hear him. Listen very carefully, and search God's Word to see if what he says is true (1 Thess 5:21, Acts 17:11).

This same caution applies to everything that you are taught, including what you hear from any speaker at the Workshop and even from Kirk, Eddie, the elders, or any of your Bible class teachers.

*The Lake Houston Elders,  
November 2, 1997*

# UNSCRIPTURAL MARRIAGES

W. Kent Graham

Do you have a "marriage made in heaven?" You need to know! If your marriage is not sanctioned by the Bible, it brings you dishonor, and is an unscriptural marriage! The Bible informs us, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Hebrews 13:4). It is impossible to live in sin and be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ! His word leads us in the "way of righteousness," and to right marriage relationships.

The Bible clearly identifies who is eligible to be wedded in "holy matrimony;" all other marriages are sinful. A man and a woman who have never been married have God's blessings for them to marry (Matthew 19:5,6). A person whose spouse has died is also allowed to marry (Romans

7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:39). A person who has been married, but who has divorced his or her spouse because of that spouse's fornication is also allowed to marry (Matthew 19:9).

Conversely, the Bible also informs us who is not permitted to marry. If God precludes you from the right to marry, and you get married anyway, you are in an unscriptural marriage! Jesus said that one who has been put away by one's spouse for fornication may never remarry, and that anyone who marries the one put away will be guilty of adultery (Matthew 19:9). Of those who divorce for some reason other than fornication, regardless of what the reason might be, God has said that neither mate is ever allowed to remarry. Their only choice is to be reconciled to one another, or remain single and celibate for the remainder of their lives (I Corinthians 7:10, 11).

Sometimes it is taught that when we are baptized we start all over with a clean slate with regards to our marriage relationships. This is a comforting teaching for many people who have made terrible mistakes in a previous marriage, but it is not true! Baptism washes away our sins, but it cannot wash away a marriage any more that it can wash away our children. If our marriage is unscriptural before we are baptized, it is still unscriptural after we are baptized. Baptism will only cleanse us of the sins for which we have repented! For us to repent of an unscriptural marriage we must end the relationship that is contrary to what God's word says!

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# FELLOWSHIP CEASES BETWEEN FAITHFUL CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE PERMIAN BASIN IN WEST TEXAS AND THE GOLF COURSE ROAD "CHURCH OF CHRIST," IN MIDLAND

[EDITORIAL NOTE: In the long ago the prophet Amos inspired of the Holy Spirit asked the following rhetorical question, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Denominationalism and a host of unfaithful brethren who are "running" for denominational acceptance do not believe the good prophet's words. They intend (and to a great extent have accomplished it with many churches) to turn the Lord's church into just another human church. However, there have always been a faithful remnant of God's people to stand up for God, Christ, the Bible, the gospel, and the Lord's church.

Over 50 years ago in his wonderful book entitled *Why I Am a Member of the Church of Christ*, Leroy Brownlow pointed out the wisdom of God in making each church of Christ autonomous. In doing so he quoted on page 40 from an article in the February 15, 1940 *Gospel Advocate* by H. Leo Boles.

*If one became corrupted in doctrine or affected by evil practices, other churches would not be so affected. If dissension arose in one, it would not spread to the others; if one perished, the others would not be dragged down. If a window is made of one large pane, a break injures the entire pane; but if it be made of several panes, it is not so bad to break one. The Independence of the churches is a protection for each one.*

*In order for the protection that God intended the autonomy of the church to provide for his people, faithful elders and churches under their oversight must cease all relationships of a fraternal nature with apostate sister churches. Furthermore, these apostate churches must be marked by credible witnesses and adequate evidence that all may know of their departure from the strait and narrow way (Romans 16:17, 18). Indeed, in order to be faithful in this matter as well as in all others we must "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21, Colossians 3:17).*

*What is reported on the following pages is an example that needs to be followed by all faithful churches everywhere. It is the documented account of autonomous churches of Christ operating as God intended to keep the church free from damnable heresies which will destroy men's souls in perdition.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]*

## GOLF COURSE ROAD SPONSORS AND COORDINATES COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION WITH DENOMINATIONS

*The Christian Caller*, Vol. XIX No. 46, November 17, 1993

## RANDY FENTER OF GOLF COURSE ROAD ADVOCATES FELLOWSHIPING DENOMINATIONS

*The Christian Caller*, Vol. XIX No. 47, November 24, 1993

COMMUNITY  
THANKSGIVING  
CELEBRATION  
Sunday, November 21 7:30 P.M.

Midland High School Auditorium

Join with your friends  
and neighbors in a season  
of Thanksgiving and joy!



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Keynote Speaker

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RANDY FENTER

Member, Golf Course Road Church of Christ

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DR. LARRY ASHLOCK

Pastor, Crossview Baptist Church

Special Singing by

COMMUNITY GRAND CHORUS

Director: EDY YOUNG  
Midland, Midland  
Open Rehearsal 5:00 - 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday, November 21, 1993 Auditorium

This program is a joint effort of the churches of Christ in the Permian Basin and the Golf Course Road Church of Christ, Midland, Texas.



Our Community Thanksgiving Celebration was incredibly uplifting. None of us were prepared for such a heart-swelling experience. God's presence was visible in each joyful face. His voice was heard in Scripture. His hands drew people together in mutual gratitude. His heart joined ours in powerful music. Oh, what a night!

There are many things which divide people into separate churches; we have plenty of stones with which to build walls. But if we care anything about Jesus' prayer for unity (John 17:20-26), then we will scramble through the rubble pile to find those stones shaped by common experience with which we can build bridges. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Charismatics differ with each other in many important doctrines, just as they differ with us. (Otherwise we would all be in the same fellowship.) Is isolationism our only viable option? Is there any hope of moving in the direction of Jesus' heart for unity? Is there anyone who will overcome his fear and even try?

There are stones with which we can build bridges. We share a common belief in God. We agree that He deserves our thanks. We mutually love Jesus. We jointly acknowledge our dependence upon His sacrifice. That's what the Community Thanksgiving Celebration is about. Acknowledging what we share. Building bridges. Jointly thanking God for His blessings. Bridge building was the genesis of our movement. May it be the finale.

**FAITHFUL WESTSIDE CHURCH OF  
MIDLAND, TEXAS WITHDRAWS FELLOWSHIP FROM GOLF COURSE ROAD CHURCH**



Thursday, February 12, 1997  
ATTENTION: ELDERS

**ALL AREA CONGREGATIONS  
CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE  
PERMIAN BASIN**

Dear Brothers In Christ,

We bring you greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and His divine power which grants us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is our prayer that the unity of the spirit is secure in the bond of peace in your spiritual family, and that you are able to be joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

This letter is explanatory in nature and related to the enclosed letter delivered to the Elders of the Golf Course Road Church of Christ in Midland. For some time, we as a sister congregation have been gravely concerned with certain diversions in worship and practice now being accepted and embraced by this great church. In addition, their open and public fellowship and inclusion as purported brothers in Christ with those who teach false doctrines and deny many principles of New Testament Christianity cause us great alarm, and calls for a closer look at our ability in Christ Jesus to continue our brotherhood fellowship with the Golf Course Road Church without some study and changes in such actions and teaching.

We feel that you as sister congregations need to be informed about our concerns and actions. You will find more specific reference in the body of the enclosed letter. If you have questions, please contact any of the Elders or me. As noted in the enclosed letter, we do await the reply of the Golf Course Road Elders.

In The Love of Christ,

*[signed]*

Gary Montgomery, Evangelist  
For the Elders at Westside



To The Elders  
Golf Course Road Church of Christ  
3500 W. Golf Course Road  
Midland, TX 79703

Dear Brothers In Christ,

We greet you in the name of our God and His plan for saving a lost and dying world by those spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus! It is our desire that we can work as Sister congregations in this community to lift up the gospel as told in the great message of New Testament Christianity.

Brethren, we are deeply concerned with clear indications that you as leaders for that great Church are leading and/or permitting teachings and practices that are in direct conflict with God's plans for His Church and Salvation.

(1) Support of *Promisekeeper's* movement has been embraced by your readers and a model of such teachings and ideas for unity is being led and upheld by you. "Pray Midland" is an organization initiated by you as an ecumenical fellowship, and your public demeanor clearly bestows fellowship in Christ with them. Is it your perception that believers in Christ, regardless of their teaching about baptism and worship and other New Testament practices, are found in church families of our religious neighbors, and thus we are all "one in Christ Jesus?" Your actions in a recent Thanksgiving program in which you joined hands of fellowship with divergent groups indicates such a decision. Further, weekly meetings conducted by leaders of GCR in joint fellowship with proclaimers of Biblical error give credence to the compromise that you have accepted.

(2) A most recent occasion occurred this past month at a GCR Workshop where some were present when the Lord's Supper a most sacred New Testament practice set forth by our Lord and modeled by the Troas church in Acts 20:7, was served by you as elders to the assembly on Saturday. We believe this action to be in direct Biblical conflict with the divine notation given to the first day of the week as the time of our Lord's resurrection joined with the specific reference in Acts 20:7 to the reason and occasion for that assembly. God's sacred New Testament celebration and remembrance was only served by the Church on the first day of the week, which is Sunday for us.

(3) In that same Workshop, reports received from those present as well as notes in your weekly news bulletin indicate some claims to healings and direct operation from the Holy Spirit. Were there occasions at this meeting when you as Elders laid hands on and prayed for certain individuals and claims were made of instant healings in these meetings? Do you believe that some received some direct revelations as special gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Your help and study in clarifying these matters is most important to us. We hold the unity of our spirits in the bond of peace as precious in the sight of the Lord. Yet continued diversions from God's Word may well leave us no choice but to remove our fellowship from the GCR Family, just as it is taught in 2 Thessalonians 3:14 and Romans 16:17,18. Several area congregations have shared their concern with us about your purported teachings and practices that divert from God's Word with questions about whether public fellowship can continue. It seems most imperative that we as sister congregations in Christ who publicly represent New Testament Christianity in an autonomous manner and in ministries like "*In Search Of The Lord's Way*" should be united in the same mind and judgment.

Your kind reply in personal study and written concern is coveted in this matter.

In Christian love,

*[signed]*

Ben Dobbs      Hershel Floyd      Wilbur Harkness  
Irving Jarratt      Bob Parish      Eldon Reams

Elders and Shepherds for the Westside congregation of Churches of Christ meeting at 4410 West Illinois, Midland, Texas.

**REMINDER**

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**WESTSIDE ELDERS NOTIFY EISENHOWER CHURCH OF WESTSIDE'S CESSATION OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOLF COURSE ROAD**



**WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

4410 West Illinois  
Midland, Texas 79703  
Phone (915) 694-3614  
(915) 694-1732  
Fax (915) 694-7712

Ministers  
Gary Montgomery  
Don Mitchell

Wednesday, March 5, 1997

Elders  
Eisenhower church of Christ  
807 E 21st St.  
Odessa, TX 79761

Dear brother Elders,

A meeting of the Elders of Westside and Golf Course Road was held Monday night, March 3, 1997.

Their letter of response to our letter of concern was delivered and read at the meeting. Scriptures were quoted which they believe gives them Biblical authority to evangelize the religious world using their present methods.

They do not believe that their participation with other religious groups displays an approval of or overlooking of the Biblical error that the groups, practice.

The GCR Elders were given scriptures to address the areas of our concern for their consideration as well as some observations of the consequences. The meeting did not discuss these scriptures, per se. Copies were given to each of the GCR Elders for their consideration. Copies are enclosed for your information since they were not included in our letter of concern to those Elders.

Golf Course Road Elders intend to continue their autonomy and justly so. They answer to God for their own actions just as you and we will.

Golf Course Road Elders will be sending a copy of their letter of response to the Elders of congregations in the area. We still have concern for the ultimate consequences of their method of evangelizing the religious world; although the goal is a Biblical one.

We have not taken our actions lightly and fully understand that there may be some hurt. It is our honest belief that such relationships and methods of Golf Course Road will divide and dishonor the Church of our Lord and Savior.

Golf Course Road will cease their financial support and be removed from the credits on "In Search of the Lord's Way" TV program televised on KPEJ-TV in the Permian Basin.

We solicit your continued prayers for the unity and bond of peace of the Church in Christ Jesus.

Your brothers in Christ,  
[signed]

Ben Dobbs      Hershel Floyd      Bob Parrish  
Wilbur Harkness      Irving Jarratt      Eldon Reams

**EISENHOWER CHURCH NOTIFIES PERMIAN BASIN CHURCHES OF HER DECISION TO CEASE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOLF COURSE ROAD CHURCH**

*Eisenhower Church of Christ*

807 EAST 21ST STREET      ODESSA, TEXAS 79761      PHONE (915) 337-5318

June 13, 1997

To: Members of the Eisenhower church of Christ

Dear Brethren:

The attached letter was sent to all congregations of the churches of Christ in the Permian Basin. This copy of the letter is submitted to you so that you also might be aware of the false doctrine being presented at the Golf Course Road congregation. We request that you consider the evidence presented and that you have no fellowship with Golf Course Road until they repent of these false teachings.

We plead with each of you to search the scriptures daily to be able to recognize when false teachings are being presented and contest them so that the church can remain pure.

In Christ,

The elders of the Eisenhower church of Christ

*Eisenhower Church of Christ*

807 EAST 21ST STREET      ODESSA, TEXAS 79761      PHONE (915) 337-5318

June 12, 1997

To: Elders and ministers of churches of Christ in the Permian Basin

Dear Brethren,

In a letter we received dated February 12, 1997, Gary Montgomery wrote of the concerns held by the elders and other members of the Westside Church of Christ in Midland, relative to the false doctrines and erroneous practices of the Golf Course Road church of Christ in Midland. With that letter was a copy of another letter, signed by the Westside elders, that was sent to Golf Course Road outlining Westside's concerns. Those concerns centered around (1) Golf Course Road's support of Promise Keepers and Pray Midland, as well as other ecumenical joint worship services with denominations, (2) an occasion earlier this year that saw the Golf Course Road elders serving the Lord's supper on a Saturday to an assembly gathered for a workshop, and (3) claims of instant healing and direct operations of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of some of those gathered for the aforementioned workshop.

A few weeks later, we received a letter dated March 4, 1997, from the Golf Course Road elders which told of a meeting they had with the Westside elders on March 3rd, at which the concerns expressed by Westside were discussed. Also in that letter was the Golf Course Road elders' defense of the teachings and practices that Westside called into question.

Soon after receiving the Golf Course Road letter, a final letter from Westside, dated March 5th, was received. In it, the Westside elders gave a brief summary of the March 3rd meeting, as well as a copy of a letter read to the Golf Course Road elders at that meeting. We have received no further correspondence from either Golf Course Road or Westside regarding these issues. (continued on next page)

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Since copies of the aforementioned letters were sent to all of the congregations in the Permian Basin, and since Golf Course Road has a wide influence in this part of Texas, and since the brethren at Westside have taken the initiative to address these issues in a public way, we feel that it is necessary to respond.

First of all, we express our sincere appreciation to the Westside congregation for their willingness to stand foursquare for the truth of the gospel and oppose any who deviate from the divine pattern. We want all to know that we stand with them in this effort. We are also thankful that the elders at Golf Course Road were willing to meet and discuss Westside's concerns. Whenever disagreements of this sort arise among brethren, all those involved should be as willing to talk together as these two groups evidently were.

We would also like to state that we, too, are gravely concerned over the path that Golf Course Road is traveling. Indeed, their support of such ecumenical associations as Promise Keepers and Pray Midland shows that their leadership either: (1) doesn't know that members of the Lord's church are not to extend fellowship to purveyors of error (Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Thess. 3:14-15; 1 John 1:7; 2 John 9-11), (2) they know these things, but choose to disobey them, or (3) they don't believe that denominational churches teach and practice fatal error. None of these is acceptable for elders in the church.

Their serving of the Lord's supper on Saturday is totally without Bible authority. The only time we see the church of the New Testament eating the supper is during their weekly assembly on Sunday (Acts 20:7). The authority for eating the supper is confined to that day of the week. There is no other passage that gives authority for a different day.

Concerning the issues regarding the Holy Spirit, the Golf Course Road elders stated in their March 4th letter that they have never claimed instant healings being made through the laying on of their hands. For that declaration, we are thankful. It is curious, however, to see statements in their bulletin like the one in a review of a Golf Course Road seminar entitled, "Stream in the Desert." Ken Young wrote in the January 29, 1997 issue of *The Christian Caller*, "Story after story began to unfold of the mighty works of God's Spirit: a spouse was healed after years of clinical depression." That remark indicates that a woman suffered for years with a clinically diagnosed disease, attended the seminar, and left without the disease that plagued her for so long. If that wasn't intended to convey an instant healing, what was it intended to convey?

Regarding that same article in the bulletin, under the heading "... the mighty works of God's Spirit," brother Young spoke of a man "having a sudden overwhelming concern for a brother from another city. He looked up and saw that very brother sitting on a back row near him." The next point in the article mentions the speaker having "a strong impression that someone was urgently needing to accept Jesus. When he asked anyone to stand with that need, a woman shot to her feet." Remember that these are feelings and impressions supposedly given to people by the Holy Spirit. There is not a single Bible passage that indicates the possibility that such is the work of God's Spirit. To intimate otherwise is to espouse a doctrine that is not in harmony with God's word.

Concerning the defense given by the Golf Course Road elders in their letter of March 4, 1997, time does not allow an exhaustive treatment in this letter of each point they made or each passage they quoted. That is not this letter's purpose. Rest assured, however, that we have read and studied their letter in light of Bible teaching. We, along with our preachers, met for three consecutive Sunday afternoons to dissect that letter and compare their arguments with the Bi-

ble. Their attempt at defending the aforementioned practices fell miserably short of its intended mark. We would be glad to address the specifics of the March 4th letter on a personal basis if need be.

For this reason it should be clear to faithful brethren in the Permian Basin that we can no longer continue to fellowship Golf Course Road. We commend the Westside elders for their love, their courage and their conviction in confronting the Golf Course Road elders. We want it to be known to our sister congregations in the Permian Basin that we stand with the Westside church in decrying the unscriptural practices of our brethren at Golf Course Road. We want to urge all congregations in the Permian Basin to do the same and to have no fellowship with them. Golf Course Road is causing division and bringing shame upon the precious body of Christ. The evidence of this is overwhelming. The documentation of it is abundant and available. The word of God requires us to "mark and turn away" from them (Rom. 16:17; cf Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11).

Our motive in this, as in all things, is love (1 Cor. 16:14). Love for the Lord, love for the truth, love for our souls and the souls of others—including our brethren at Golf Course Road—demands that we take heed to the word of God and have no fellowship with the Golf Course Road congregation. Because of the notoriety and wide influence of Golf Course Road, we think it is especially important that we do this. Many precious souls are at stake.

We hope that faithful brethren throughout the Permian Basin will consider these things carefully and join hands in admonishing the leadership of the golf course Road to repent of their error and return to the Lord.

In Christ,

[signed]

Bill Brown Don Carroll Barney Ruffner  
Donald Ray Cecil Robertson Charles Wood

## PARKVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST ANNOUNCES THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM GOLF COURSE ROAD CHURCH

### Parkview CHURCH OF CHRIST

1700 Park Blvd  
Odessa, TX 79762-3209  
915-337-0111

June 25, 1997

To: Elders, ministers, and concerned members of churches of Christ in the Permian Basin

Dear Brethren,

A line has been drawn and we want you to know where we stand.

As you already know, the elders of the Westside church of Christ in Midland approached the elders of the Golf Course Road church of Christ in Midland with some critical doctrinal concerns earlier this year. Like you, we received correspondence from both the Westside and Golf Course Road elders relative to the issues studied and discussed. The debated issues focused paramountly on (1) Golf Course Road's support of Promise Keeper's and Pray Midland, plus joint ecumenical fellowships with promulgators of denominationalism and proclaimers of Biblical error; (2) Golf Course Road's practice and defense of serving the Lord's Supper on days other than Sunday; (3) and witnesses alleged that there were claims to instant healings and direct operations of the Holy Spirit during a workshop (the same Saturday workshop in which the Lord's Supper was served to the assembly by the Golf Course Road elders, see #2). Surely, you are well aware of the controversy at large.

(continued on next page)

Since religious division is condemned by the law of Christ (1 Co. 1: 10) and those who cause division and offenses contrary to Christ's doctrine are to be watched and avoided (Ro. 16:17), we can no longer continue to fellowship Golf Course Road. It is our observation that when Golf Course Road decided to fellowship denominations, they alienated themselves from the unity that is naturally produced and sustained by a genuine unity with God (1 John 1:7). The New Testament condemns not only those who practice sin but also those who give their approval thereof (Ro. 1:32). We believe that it would behoove Golf Course Road to study again the Lord's rebukes against congregations who support the advancement of false doctrine (Rev. 2,3). Furthermore, serving the Lord's Supper on a Saturday is clear evidence that the Golf Course Road eldership is leading people away from Christ and into the rudiments of subjectivism, which teaches that truth is not absolute and cannot be finitely ascertained. We agree with the Westside eldership and the correspondence we received from the Eisenhower church of Christ in Odessa, that Golf Course Road's serving of the Lord's supper on Saturday is totally without Bible authority and is, therefore, sinful. We now seek to obey I Timothy 5:20 and Romans 16:17. It is our loving desire to see Golf Course Road repent and this is our truest plea.

May God bless the courageous elders of the Westside church of Christ in Midland who stand for truth and lovingly warn the wayward.

In Him,  
[signed]

Gene Chandler      Lloyd Mitchell

## RICHARD HUGHES PROCLAIMS

(Continued from page 1)

### THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE REED LECTURES

The Reed Lectures were established in 1964 through an endowment of a permanent trust by **Forrest F. Reed**, a prominent Nashville publisher. The Lectureship provides a series designed to maintain and further interest in the religious heritage, backgrounds, origins, and general history of the Churches of Christ, the Christian Church, and the Disciples of Christ.

However, the Reed Lectures will not merit the dignity of its purpose until scholars who truly represent the traditional churches of Christ are invited to replace such bogus representatives of the churches of Christ as Hughes and Foster.

Friday evening session: **Dr. Richard C. Goode**, Assistant Professor of History at Lipscomb, tells us that it was suggested [by whom, perhaps Dr. Hazelip?] that since Hughes is a member of the churches of Christ that the Reed Lectures be hosted this year by Lipscomb. [Dr. Hughes is not a member of the churches of Christ by his own self admission. He is a member of the sectarian/denominational Church of Christ.] The liberals know how to use the mechanics of grammar to identify literary intention.

Dr. Flatt extended the customary words of welcome to the DCHS representatives. **Dr. Peter Morgan**, President of the DCHS, conferred on Steve Flatt Life Membership in the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. Some unidentified patron supplied the fee.

I am privileged to be a Sustaining Member of the DCHS for some time. **B. C. Goodpasture** expressed the highest interest in the DCHS when the society built the magnificent library in Nashville. Brother Goodpasture and **Claude Spencer**, the curator and the spiritual genius of the DCHS Library, became the best of friends. Today the library houses the greatest collection of Restoration material in the world. Would that Steve Flatt possessed a thimbleful of knowledge of this mountain of information so that he could make better judgment calls.

**Anthony L. Dunnivant**, Professor of Church History in Lexington Theological Seminary (which was known from 1865 until recent years as the College of the Bible), introduced the speaker. The liberal element in the College of the Bible seized control of that institution in 1917. Today it is one of the most liberal postmodern seminaries in the world. Dr. Hughes' two addresses as a unit will be addressed in another place.

**Douglas A. Foster**, Associate Professor of Church History and Director of the Center for Restoration Studies in Abilene Christian University, presented the response to the Hughes Lecture. Dr. Foster's loyalties are clearly with the Disciples of Christ. He is a DCHS Editorial Consultant. Dr. Hughes is a member of the DCHS Editorial Committee.

But alas! Dr. Foster broke all ties with the traditional churches with his aborted effort to shoot down the influ-

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ence of David Lipscomb in his 1992 *Wineskins* article for which he has made no public confession. The import of the *Wineskins* article shows the low esteem both Hughes and Foster have for the worth and influence of David Lipscomb for 62 years of his wonderful life, and holding at bay the organized assaults of the Digressives against churches of Christ.

Hughes and Foster have attained a measure of notoriety in two published books in which they labored to prove the thesis that the postmodern Church of Christ is a postmodern denomination whose roots are traced to an exclusive Restoration sect in the early 19th century.

## SATURDAY EVENING SESSION

**Gary N. Holloway**, Associate Professor of Bible and Director of Graduate Bible at Lipscomb, extended the welcome for the second session. He was appointed to this position after **Michael Moss** left the position to chair the Lipscomb Bible department vacated by **Mac Lynn**. Dr. Moss had previously replaced **William Woodson**. Dr. Woodson was brought to Lipscomb by **Willard Collins** to organize the graduate division of Bible. He served with distinction in the office in the finest traditions of the Nashville Bible School/David Lipscomb College. William Woodson retired from Lipscomb after a distinguished life of dedicated service.

The opening prayer was led by **Dr. Robert E. Hooper**, author of two biographies of David Lipscomb and Willard Collins, and the Restoration history, *A Distinct People*. Dr. Hooper's skills as a church historian are flawed because he blindsides facts of the Restoration whatever his reasons. He painted **Foy E. Wallace** as a racist, which is true, and described **Marshall Keeble** as an "Uncle Tom" which he was not. Dr. Hooper is an elder in the Woodmont Hills Family of God, and a supporter of Jubilee.

**Terry Smith**, minister of the Woodmont Hills Family of God, introduced Dr. Hughes. Why was not **Rubel Shelly** selected to do the honor? Dr. Shelly has the closest of fraternal ties with the Disciples which run from Nashville to Calgary, Canada. He has been made much at home on the Lipscomb campus by **Harold Hazelip**. (Brother Hazelip told me personally that he did not read my articles. That is not surprising, but thousands do and believe what I am writing.)

The assumption could be made in listening to Dr. Hughes that Restoration history begins and ends with **Barton W. Stone** and **Alexander Campbell**. One would never learn from Dr. Hughes that such Restoration giants as **Robert Milligan**, **Moses E. Lard**, **John W. McGarvey**, **Isaac Errett**, **J. H. Garrison**, **N. B. Hardeman**, and **A. G. Freed** ever lived. Were I awarding a letter grade to Dr. Hughes as a competent Restoration historian, he would not even come up on my list.

Dr. Hughes told us over and over again that God is God, and man is man. God is perfect, but man is not. All are saved by the love and grace of God. Members of churches of Christ/ Church of Christ are Christians, but not the only Christians.

Hughes repeatedly drove the point home that he regards the churches of Christ to be nothing more or less, than just another narrowly defined denomination. He stops just short of ridicule in his portrayal of the traditional churches of Christ.

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

Harold Hazelip was present along with his alter ego, Mac Lynn, for the first session of the Reed Lectures. The arrangements for the Reed Lectures were set up near the end of his administration. The primary blame for dismantling the traditions of the Nashville Bible School began during the watch of Harold Hazelip.

Dr. Hazelip no doubt believes that this last move of his will help drive the supporters of the traditional churches of Christ and the traditional heritage bequeathed by David Lipscomb to his school into oblivion. That he had similar thoughts during his "antiism" days back in the 1950s is a matter of record. That Dr. Hazelip can no longer speak *ex cathedra* for Lipscomb from the president's office is a great boon.

## POSTSCRIPT

Dr. Peter Morgan is not to be faulted for accepting the invitation of Lipscomb to host the Forrest F. Reed Lectures. He is rendering a great service to Restoration research scholars as President of the DCHS. He is superbly supported by **David McWherter**, the DCHS Librarian. His role is to promote the DCHS. I respect my friends, Dr. Morgan and Dave McWherter, for their intellectual honesty to the same degree that I detest the intellectual dishonesty and the shabby ethics of the "change agents."

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

## A Critical Review of *The Peaceable Kingdom*

by  
Wayne Coats

There is no keener or more knowledgeable man in the kingdom of Christ to answer the writing of Carroll Osburn and lay bare his false views than Wayne Coats of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. He is saturated with Bible understanding and penetrating in his analyses. We are indebted to him for the masterful way in which he has responded to the Osburn harangue.

—H.A. (Buster) Dobbs

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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., 6:30 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423. Publishers of *Matters of THE Faith*.

## —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.: 7:00 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.

## —Missouri—

**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.

## —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.: 7:00 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., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, Tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Minister.

## —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.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, Tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."

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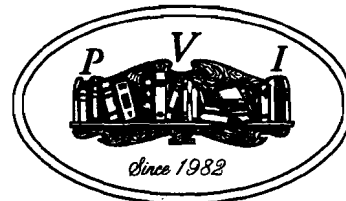
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# AN OPEN LETTER TO A "MAX" DEVOTEE

GARY W. SUMMERS

A few weeks ago I wrote (in the *Pearl Street Church bulletin*, Denton, Texas) about how loyal Max Lucado's followers are; in fact, about 75% of the comments we receive about the articles (covering a wide range of topics) that have been made available on the Internet involve this famous author. Below is a letter from a woman who takes issue with the most recent article we published concerning this erring brother. Her name has been omitted because it would serve no useful purpose to include it:

Dear Sir: I have received a copy of your article from "Spiritual Perspectives" sent to me by a 2nd cousin. Your sanctimonious effort to slur my beloved brother, Max Lucado, makes me ill. I have been hearing Max since 1988. I have been a lifelong attender (since birth 1929) and 1939 (baptism) member of the church of Christ. I testify that all of Max's sermons I have heard are totally based in and backed by scripture, beginning to end. I also know that I John 20 [she means 4:20, GWS] says, quoting, "for anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen...whosoever loves God must also love his brother... (Just read the whole 5th chapter of 1 John). In Mark 9:38...Jesus says, "for whoever is not against us is for us"—(continue thru vs 41). Matthew 7:1-5 says "do not judge or you too will be judged." Max just finished a tenth sermon on learning to listen to God. Max lives in the word, and passes lessons on God's love to us at every opportunity. By the way, do you have a scripture that proves Max should debate when that is not his choice? I praise God night and day for living to see Jesus' story in *love* (as God's love) as *we* do at Oak Hills. I also pray that bitter words from judgmental others don't cause anyone to turn away from God.

By the way, if you are ever in San Antonio, come visit Oak Hills family, we have 500-600 visitors each Sunday. I can't imagine you would be "denied access" (per your article) to him there.

May I point out that the Baptists are not the only believers who have access to grace? Read Romans. It's in there.

I pray that God touches your heart, and you no longer judge over who is not going to heaven, but spend your life spreading his love to those who don't know him.

A sister in Christ

My response will be in the form of an open letter (since so many of the comments from Max's devotees are identical).

Dear sister in Christ,

Thank you for taking the time to write about matters that greatly concern you. At the risk of making you ill again, however, I would like to reply to some of the points you made.

Before we notice what you did write, however, it is instinctive to observe what you did not say. You did *not* deny what Max taught in his radio broadcast that baptism has nothing to do with salvation. This is a rather huge fact to pass over, since it compromises the substance of the article. How can you have neglected to comment on how a person is saved from his sins and becomes a child of God?

You advise me to read about love as though I had never heard of it before. As a matter of fact, I presented two lessons on I John 4 last year and frequently quote the passage. You also apparently assume that if one person criticizes another, or identifies a brother as a false teacher, he does not love as defined in the Scriptures.

Jesus called some "hypocrites" (Matthew 23:29) and "serpents" (Matthew 23:33). Did he not love them? Paul identified Hymenaeus and Philetus as "**straying from the truth**" (II Timothy 2:17-18); did he need to read I John? John himself warned brethren about the "**many false prophets**" who had gone out into the world (I John 4)—and he warned them just prior to his statements concerning loving one's brethren! May I suggest that you, like Max, are only seeing what you want to see in the scriptures, while neglecting other important truths?

The reason for your reference to Mark 9:38 is unclear, but it does not justify a false teacher. Those who teach doctrines not authorized in the New Testament are against Jesus. If they were *for* him, they would teach the truth.

Matthew 7:1-5 is an excellent passage for all of us to remember, especially so that we might refrain from calling others "sanctimonious" or deciding that they do not know what love is just because they attacked the doctrine of our favorite person. In the very next verse (Matthew 7:6) Jesus himself says, "**Do not give what is holy to the dogs,**" which requires making a judgment about a person's character.

Clearly, our Lord was cautioning us against judging someone in the absence of sufficient evidence. He taught elsewhere, "**Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment**" (John 7:24).

When the Bible teaches that mankind must repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), but Max says, "*No, you're already saved,*" we are not judging even his character but his doctrine. Jesus expects us to make such a judgment (Matthew 7:15). Max is preaching a false gospel which cannot save anyone. Tell me, sister, do you not see a difference between truth and error?

You say you have been listening to Max since 1988 and that his sermons are backed by scripture. What about his radio message? What was its scriptural basis? There was none! But let us suppose that you are correct about his sermons at Oak Hills. What would that prove? A Methodist, a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Jehovah's Witness (for that matter) can deliver messages week after week and back them up with scriptures.

But does he preach the whole counsel of God, as Paul did? If not, he will be guilty of the blood of those who listen to him (Acts 20:26-27). Has he preached that Jesus established just one church (Matthew 16:18) but that denominations were founded by men? Has he preached Acts 2:38? Has he demonstrated that Paul was not saved on the road to Damascus (as so many think) because he still retained his sins until Ananias asked him, "**And now, why tarriest**

**thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16)?**

Has Max preached against unscriptural divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:3-9)? Has he discussed the sin of fellowshiping spiritually those outside the doctrine of Christ (Matthew 15:12-14)? Has he used as a text, **“Faith without works is dead”** (James 2:14-26)? Has he preached a sermon on the fact that the majority of people will be lost (Matthew 7:13-14) and therefore on the need for evangelism? You should know the answers to these questions due to the length of time you have attended Oak Hills.

You say you were baptized in 1939. Why were you baptized? Was the reason to obtain the forgiveness of your sins? Or was it not to get forgiveness, as Max teaches? Who did you hear preaching the gospel back then? Who baptized you? Was it one of the great evangelists of the past, who perhaps had to hold a debate when he came into town because of all the opposition? Please think back and consider what message you heard preached and why you were baptized. What were you taught about the church back in those days: that we were all on board a great big fellowship, or were you taught the truth?

You ask for a scripture to demonstrate that Max should debate. Please consider the difference between his silence and the methods of Jesus our Lord and his apostles. To be a Christian so many years, you must have read how Jesus was challenged (Matthew 22, for example) and how constantly Paul was plagued by the Jews as he attempted to preach in every city. How can a man not defend what he believes in and teaches publicly? The Christian is to be **“ready to give an answer”** (I Peter 3:15); Max just ignores his critics. He refuses to even discuss matters, let alone debate.

No, Max would not need to debate as great defenders of the faith did in time past. He would not need to have an oral discussion (although with all of his devotees, he should be able to pack the audience). But the very least he could do is provide a written defense of his departures from the word of God. Since he has affirmed that baptism *follows* salvation, he ought to be able to defend this heresy. Is he above reproach? Should he be without accountability when he explicitly denies what churches of Christ have historically taught (not to mention that it is what the Bible teaches)? Max stands guilty of the worst form of cowardice.

Many people have told me how accessible Max is, but when brethren from the Shenandoah church in San Antonio tried to set up a meeting with him, he was not interested. He did not return phone calls. (And with 500 visitors each Sunday, how accessible can he be?)

Actually, I have been in San Antonio a number of times—attending the annual Shenandoah lectureships, which are always a spiritual high point. Have you attended any of these? I also drove to your fair city to hear **Darrell Conley** debate some men from the Catholic response group. It was exceedingly enlightening. Did you get to attend any of the evenings?

I must confess I am somewhat shocked by your penultimate paragraph, in which you affirm that Baptists and others have access to grace. So do murderers and rapists. Grace is available to everyone, but one can only be saved

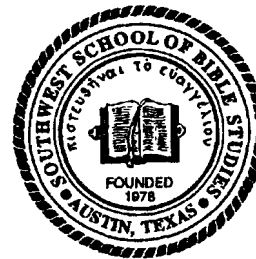
by obeying the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:8). What exactly do you mean by your statement? Concerning Romans, that great book was the subject of our *Annual Denton Lectureship* last year: so we are just a little familiar with it. We do not recall any place in the book where it talks about being saved without obeying the gospel, but rather being saved because one has obeyed **“that form of doctrine”** (Romans 6:17-18,3-5).

God touches my heart every time I study his word. No one knows more than I do how much I need to grow. May I recommend that you spend more time in the Bible? It will help you discern between truth and error. It also defines who is and who is not a Christian. If it did not, how would I be able to know who needed to have God's love spread to them? Look at your last words: *“spreading his love to those who don't know him.”* You and I would have to make a judgment, wouldn't we, to determine who does and does not know him.

Sister, you may continue to defend Max, but most of us are more concerned about defending the truth, which has suffered greatly in his hands. If anything I have written is contrary to the scriptures, you would be a friend to call it to my attention. You would also be a friend to Max to point out to him wherein he has erred.

For love of Christ and his church, Gary W. Summers

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"Also we ask for your help in raising the money (\$6,000.00) necessary to make this move. We also need \$1,500.00 for air fares.

"Brethren, please send your confirmation of continued support to Crieve Hall (Attention: Frank Ryan) along with any help for our moving expenses. We look forward to hearing from you. Yours in Christ, [Signed] Dennis Gresham"

[NOTE: Crieve Hall's mailing address is Crieve Hall church of Christ, 4806 Trousdale Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37220. Your contributions to them, for Dennis Gresham's move, are tax-deductible. IYR Jr.]

Jeff Wesson, of Milton, Delaware, sends "greetings from the Eastern Shore," saying, "I have been following with much sadness and interest the reports concerning Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado and Jubilee. It is indeed a tragedy that which they are seeking to accomplish among the churches of Christ. I have a very direct interest in these matters in that I have a sister who is enamored with these men and is a regular attendee of the Jubilee. Also, the congregation in which I was a former member has come under these influences. I love all of these people dearly and have been seeking to acquire as much documentation to present to them to enlighten them away from this back to the truth. I even decided to write 'bro.' Lucado to see what kind of response I might receive from him (copy of letter enclosed). I thought you would be interested in these things.

"Do you know where I can acquire copies of the tapes where Don Finto sets forth that he has been appointed as an 'apostle' and that Max Lucado supports and adores him? I believe that these will be beneficial in my desire to enlighten those whom I am trying to reach..."

[NOTE: Thanking brother Wesson for writing and for enclosing what he had written to Max Lucado, I expressed interest in knowing what he says, "when (if) you hear from him."

It is too bad that folks swallow without checking things that are being advocated by Shelly, Lucado, et. al. Once they head that way they almost never come back to the truth of the gospel.

As for where to acquire copies of the tapes mentioned, I suggested he try Jim Olive, 4111 Gallatin Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37216 (telephone (615) 228-3445) or J. E. Choate, 3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard, Nashville, Tennessee 37215 (telephone (615) 297-4985). IYR Jr.]

As for the letter that brother Wesson addressed to Max Lucado, under date of

September 10, 1997, he wrote, as follows:

TO: MAX LUCADO  
% UPWARDS  
Box 5860  
San Antonio, TX 78201  
Dear bro. Lucado,

I feel compelled to write to you to express these thoughts because of my great concerns over these matters. I recently sent the five dollars for the tape "When Your Heart Needs a Father" to determine for myself the things for which you were being accused. But upon receiving the tape, it was very apparent that I had not been given the entirety of the broadcast. It was not until I received a copy of the part missing that I realized that the things of which you were being accused of saying were true.

First, I will have to wonder within myself if the missing excerpt was deliberately left off. If your purpose and intentions for giving these radio broadcasts and making these tapes available is to lead people to the Father, and these words express how you believe one finds himself in a right relationship with Him, why would it be left off the tape?

Second, where in all of God's inspired word do you find such a notion that the way to find one's self in a right relationship with the Father is by praying a prayer (that is, an alien sinner; one who is not yet a Christian)? I am presenting in my Sunday morning sermons the different examples from the book of Acts how those in the first century became Christians. Not once were any of them told to pray to get into a right relationship with the Father. Peter and the rest of the Apostles did not rebuke or correct the inquiry from the Jews who asked the question, "Men and brethren, What shall we do?" His response was giving them specific commands as to what they had "to do" in order to obtain remission of sins and thus a right relationship with the Father (Acts 2:38). The ideas that you set forth in this radio broadcast did not originate from the inspired word of God, which sets forth to us the mind and will of Almighty God, but from the thoughts and ideas of uninspired men!

Third, what do you hope to accomplish by these words and your actions? Is it to lead members of the churches of Christ upon a road different than they have been travelling from its beginning? We have been a people, who from the beginning have believed that God deserves honour and glory; that the way to show this honour and glory is through His Only Begotten Son; we do this by realizing our unworthiness, our sinfulness, the fact that we cannot think of our own means or methods to approach the Holy God; thus we look to His inspired word, listen to the Master, follow only the path that He has set forth, by obedience to His will (see Eph. 2:8,9; Isa. 55:8-11; Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; Mt. 7:21-23). Why would you encourage people to follow things which did not originate from Heaven, but from the foolish thinking of uninspired men? Why would you en-

courage people to follow a path different than that set forth by the Son to the Father (Jn. 14:6; Mk. 16:16; Jn. 12:48)?

I was encouraged by no one to write to you, but was motivated from a pure and sincere heart which is very concerned about what you are doing and teaching. I have recently been preparing notes on the chapters from the book of Exodus setting forth detailed instructions concerning the tabernacle as given by God. God was very specific in making known the only acceptable means of approach by man to Him. I know that in and through Jesus Christ the limitations of the tabernacle have been eliminated (Eph. 2:12-19; Heb. 10:18-23). But does this mean that we are then free to do as we please in our service to Almighty God? Are there no longer any specifics, any guidelines, any commands which we must follow faithfully today, or is it a free-for-all, as long as such is done in the name of the Lord Jesus? (Mt. 7:21-23; Rom. 6:17; 16:17,18; Gal. 1:8,9; 2 Jn. 9-11; 1 Jn. 2:1-6, etc.) Are the words that are printed in the NT simply nice to read but in no need for following or obeying? Are we not to continue "steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers"? Are we no longer to "stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (Acts 2:42; 2 Thess. 2:15)? I know that I cannot within myself make my own way; that there is nothing that I, nor any man, can think up that would bring me into a right relationship with the Father. That is why I listen to the inspired words of those whom I KNOW have the key (Mt. 16:19; 18:18; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:13-17). Do you believe, as has been reported, but I have not honestly confirmed, that Don Finto is an Apostle and thus also has the special authority as the Apostles of old did? Maybe this is why you believe the way that you do? I just do not know or understand.

Again, I want to emphasize that I am not seeking to fulfill anyone's agenda by this letter, but am trying to find out from you why, why, why! I live in the small state of Delaware and the things that you are teaching are penetrating within its borders and into many congregations in which there are only a handful on the entire Eastern Shore. Yes, I am very concerned. You could have such a great and powerful influence for truth and right, but instead I read where you support the religions of man and uphold their philosophies! Why?

I send this letter to you with prayer and love and can only hope that you see that it was prepared from such a heart. I will be prayerfully and patiently awaiting a response from you.

Sincerely, in Christ,

[Signed]

Jeff Wesson  
32 Bay Court  
Shipbuilders Village  
Milton, Delaware 19968

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# NOTES AND QUOTES....

Walter Robinson, preacher-sociologist, Pegram, Tennessee: "A few look with dismay on the spectacle at work in NASHVILLE. Obviously this must have been afoot for some time or the conditions would never have gone this far. JUBILEE is extremely dangerous, and frightfully powerful at the same time. Noticeably missing was the booth from FHU, but most of the others were there. Daniel Sommers warned us of this 100 years ago, and he was as much out on a limb then as he is prophetic today.

"I have a Ph.D. in sociology and therefore pick up vibes that other persons would not. (Many sociologists can see this for what it is.) This is what I see: A modernist church which thinks it is so smart it doesn't need any lineage or guidance system. If it thinks it knows more than Campbell, then of course it will throw out the scriptures as well. This it has done in emphasizing emotion, excitement, TODAY and ungodly change. A large percentage of the preachers do not believe in baptism in the biblical sense. Additionally the conservative ones in the pulpit aren't preaching very well, and keep down any criticism of this blatant digression. (They aren't conservative enough!)

"God bless you for giving us some life. We could turn the tide even in Nashville if this town would quit whitewashing the obvious. You can freely quote me. I live in the Pegram 'suburb' of Nashville. If I can be of any help, I would be glad...(I sent a subscription order to Spring, Texas.)"

(NOTE: "Your thoughtful letter... came to hand on the weekend," I replied in part. "I have read it carefully and discussed it with my associate editor David Brown. You had written to him similarly. We both appreciated what you had to say.

"You are so right that what now exists in Nashville has been afoot for a long time. We have been calling it to the attention of our readers on a regular basis for several years. It is only now that some who should have seen it sooner are beginning to recognize what is going on.

"When Rubel announced that Jubilee was going to open up to what he styled the 'greater Christian community,' several faithful brethren from various parts felt it important to be there in person to observe just how far they would carry it. They did not go as far as we feared—but far enough that we see no reason even to pretend that they are any longer a part of 'us.' We left after the second day in complete disgust.

"The only reason that FHU did not have a booth right along with the rest was that the Board of Directors absolutely forbade it. Milton Sewell would have had one there, but the Board put its foot down and said, NO.

"It was obvious that Max Lucado was not offering baptism in the Biblical sense. He said it was not for something Christ will do for you, but for what he has done

already—Baptist doctrine pure and simple.

"When you mention 'conservative' preachers in the Greater Nashville Area, I find it hard to identify just which ones could correctly be so described. Not quite all—but almost all—of the Nashville preachers and elders have practiced the 'get-along-go-along' philosophy for so long, they hardly know how to take a stand for truth any longer.

"You probably are correct that if Nashville brethren would quit whitewashing the obvious, the tide for truth still could be turned there. Three or four public statements and the meeting that was held at Concord Road re: this most recent "Jubilee" may give some hope for redeeming the truth in Nashville. However, if they slide right back into get-along-go-along, it will be like a finger in the wind—nothing more.

"Thanks for sending a subscription to Spring, Texas. They will take care of it in good order. Any others you know who might like to do the same, encourage them to do so. We now are in our 28th year of trying to hold the line for truth...God bless you for caring. [Signed] Ira Y. Rice, Jr.]

Gideon C. Rodriguez, C.P.O. Box 1834, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines 1158: "In the past four months we (Capitol City church and I) have conducted three series of three-night gospel meetings on the last Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays of each month, except May. In May we had a Youth Lectureship and Fellowship in lieu of a gospel meeting.

"A week before each of these gospel meetings, we knocked on doors inviting people to the meeting or study the Bible with us in their homes, whichever they prefer. We knocked on doors of at least 1,200 houses within a half-kilometer radius from our church meeting place.

"With these campaigns, we confirmed that we are located right in the heart of a Roman Catholic stronghold...But we are determined to continue these campaigns until we break the ice, so to speak...

"One thing positive is that the community has learned (most of them for the first time) that there is such a thing as a church of Christ, not to mention our own brethren having been edified by those occasions of studying God's word...

"I am still involved in the Bible translation work of the Philippine Bible Society. I am doing the final review of translation projects before they go to the printer. I do these on Tuesdays and Thursdays, five hours each day.

"I finished in May the translation into Tagalog of the 15-lesson Bible correspondence course of the Truth for the World ministry. I hope to get this course into print as soon as possible. We need a Tagalog Bible course very badly for our evangelism efforts. I intend to write or translate other Bible courses as soon as

we have one already in use.

"In July, I started something new as far as my ministry is concerned. I visited a prisoner in the National Penitentiary in Muntinlupa, just outside Manila. It was not an ordinary visit for me, not because it was in a prison (I had some experience in jail visitation sometime in 1980), but because it was in the maximum security detention cell.

"The one I visited was and still is in the death row. He is a very close friend of one of the members of the church. He insists (and so does his close friend) that he is innocent of the crime of which he was accused and convicted by the court. His case is being reviewed by the Supreme Court which will either nullify or confirm the lower court's decision. If confirmed, he will be executed 18 months later unless the President of the Philippines gives him pardon.

"We had about three hours visiting. I realize that I am not in the position to declare his innocence or guilt, but I believe I have something to make his condition better—the gospel of Christ. He agreed to have Bible studies with me at least on a monthly basis.

"I also had opportunity visiting with other prisoners in the death row. I must admit that I had strange feelings while I was inside the cell face to face with a dying man, but I also realize that all men are in the death row (Romans 6:23) and unless they obtain God's pardon in Christ, eternal death is final and certain. Indeed, woe unto us if we preach not the gospel!

Dennis Gresham, Wainuiomata, New Zealand: "Over the past years we have had to send men to America who wanted to become gospel preachers. This has been a very costly exercise but there has been no alternative since both of the schools in the South Pacific (one in New Zealand and one in Australia) are not sound. Of course the unsoundness of these schools has caused much harm in the body by sending out unsound men into the South Pacific.

"At last there is an alternative. The Tasmania School of Preaching will begin in February 1998 under the direction of the Eastern Shore congregation (very sound) where Ian McPherson labors. Ian is also sponsored by the Crieve Hall church of Christ.

"Several months ago the congregation at the Eastern Shore asked me to come and teach at the school and also work with them. I have spent much time in prayer and have discussed this with my overseeing elders at Crieve Hall. With their blessing Shirley and I have accepted the offer. We are excited about the possibilities of being able to train sound men to help fulfill the great commission, and stop the tide of liberalism in Australia, New Zealand and throughout the South Pacific.

"This has been a very difficult decision to make. It is not easy leaving those whom we have come to love so much, those whom we were privileged to teach the gospel to.

"The congregation here is now able to carry on without us. Mac deThierry will

# WHAT SHALL WE EMPHASIZE?

Noah A. Hackworth

As this article is read it should be kept in mind that the thoughts contained herein are not intended to dictate but to impart information. Because we are involved in the Lord's work, the greatest work on the face of the earth, we must determine as accurately as possible the things that must be emphasized. There are some things done which may place those who do them in danger of the hell of fire (Matthew 5:22). There are other things done which may not indicate certain condemnation but will show where our hearts are (Matthew 6:21) and what is most important to us. The cross of Christ was so important to Paul that he refused to glory in anything else (Galatians 6:14). Nothing has been divinely changed. The cross on which the prince of glory died and the church which he purchased with his own blood are still the objects of our labor (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 3:9). There is no other reason for our being in this world (Galatians 2:20). The work of the church in the first century consisted of preaching the gospel, edifying the saints, and exercising benevolent opportunities (Ephesians 4:11). These things are absolutely right and cannot be wrong. There is no room for negotiation here. In our attempts to discharge the responsibilities divinely imposed upon us, we sometimes make the mistake of thinking that the end justifies the means; but since this does not necessarily follow, there are decisions to be made and they need to be the right ones. Which way do we want to go? What are the most important things to emphasize in the Lord's work? What will keep us morally and spiritually separate from the world (James 1:27)?

I love to play ping pong, and I do not think I would go to hell if I stretched a net over a table in the building and invited my fellow members to come play with me, but is this what I want to emphasize? I also love to play miniature golf, and I do not think I would be condemned if I took a putter and practiced on the lawn around the building, but is

this the most appropriate way to attract people? Is this what I really want to emphasize? I really enjoy volleyball, and I would feel no great guilt if I stretched a net on the parking lot and invited some of my fellow Christians to come and play with me, because the exercise would be great and what could possibly be wrong with such a thing? It is good, it is clean, and it is wholesome. Could this ever be done without sin? I think so; but would we want to invite the community to participate? Do we want people to attend the services of the church of Christ because its members play volleyball on the parking lot? But on the other hand, consider this: we have a parking lot, one of considerable size, and people of the community come and park on it through the week, because it is adjacent to a school, to watch their children exercise their athletic ability, and we do not object nor do we believe it is sinful to allow this, but we did not build the parking lot for the convenience of community residents, although they are getting some benefit from something that was designed to expedite the activities of the church. They are parking on our lot because it is handy, and because we have not told them they cannot, and I know of no intention to do so. My whole point has to do with emphasis, and where it should be. We will not put up a sign telling the community residents that we built the lot for them. The parking lot was built to accommodate our people. If you drive a car to the place of worship, you will need a place to park, and too, city ordinance requires it. Hence justification for the parking lot. The fact that someone drives into the lot, parks, naps, and/or eats (I have seen both) does not mean we have sinned because we have the lot and someone used it for purposes other than religious.

The thing we want to emphasize is the gospel of Christ, the evangelistic arm of the church. Did not Jesus say, "**And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself**" (John 12:32)? And did not Paul say the gospel was "**God's power unto salvation**" (Romans 1:16)? Indeed they did. Wouldn't this be the way to go? Wouldn't this be not only the scriptural thing to do but also the infallibly safe thing to emphasize? To think on these things is the responsibility of good and honest hearts.

—4400 Tulare Avenue  
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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## An Analysis Of THE MADISON SEMINAR October 18, 1997

J.E. Choate

Great events in the history of mankind are marked with names and dates. There have been notable events in the history of the churches identified with the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, *e.g.*, the U. S. Religious Census 1906, and the 1922 Hardeman Tabernacle meetings. The *Power for Today* Seminar hosted by the Madison Church of Christ and the 21st Century Christian will not be so remembered.

The Seminar came close on the heels of *Jubilee '97*. A radio devotional which **Max Lucado** delivered in December 1996 on the "Sinner's Prayer" from Lubbock, Texas triggered a furor in Nashville churches on the eve of Jubilee. Max Lucado said what **Rubel Shelly** has been saying for some time.

Why the sudden panic? Three possible reasons—the first is that Max Lucado is threatening the vested publishing interests of others while shoring up his own; the second is that Jubilee is throwing a compromising shadow over the reputation of Lipscomb University; and the third is that the former colleagues of Rubel Shelly have slept too long with Rubel Shelly to divorce him now. They now will just ignore him.

More than 60 church leaders and preachers met July 3, 1997 in a called meeting at the Concord Road church of Christ to take action against Jubilee, Max Lucado, and Rubel Shelly. The burning question was: What can we do to counter damage being suffered by churches of Christ?

Plans to that end were made and executed by a small group of brethren identified with the *21st Century Christian* and the Madison Church of Christ. Unfortunately, elders from neighboring churches were not included.

### SIX PROBLEMS IMMEDIATELY APPARENT

There were six problems immediately apparent to informed and concerned observers. First, there were the vested interests of the *21st Century Christian*. The *21st CC* will promote and market **F. LaGard Smith's** new book, *Who Is My Brother?* My personal opinion is that the moment that F. LaGard Smith solicited the endorsement of **Jeff Walling** and **Jim Woodroof** for his book any hope for its acceptance by traditional churches of Christ was sucked down the drain in one big gulp.

Jeff Walling's hallmark speeches at *Jubilees* are marked by his usual amusing ridicule of the traditional churches of Christ calculated to provoke laughter and hand clapping. Jim Woodroof, Rubel Shelly's associate preacher, may find more notoriety than fame in the Woodmont Hills Family of God.

The second problem is that the book will stir up considerable controversy over the double-loaded message which is couched in it. It is made abundantly clear that LaGard Smith defines the church as made up of believing, repenting, confessing sinners baptized into the kingdom. But is it a sectarian denomination as his Pepperdine colleague, **Dr. Hughes**, says it is?

Dr. Smith provides much amusement for readers of his book as he describes the expanding parameters of the fraternizing that we enjoy with our "brothers in Adam," *e.g.*, sipping coke and munching on popcorn while talking to the fellow on the next seat with his beer and pretzels; agonizing with the *Promise Keepers*; and marching defiantly with a Million Men. Dr. Smith reminds us that brethren

(Continued on page 16)



# Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXVIII, No. 12

December/1997

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## Ira Y. Rice, Jr. Travels to Far East

*Because the editor was getting ready for and in the process of leaving to help do the Lord's work in the Philippines, Singapore, and India he was not in a position to write an editorial for this month's paper. We wish him, his wife Vada and their traveling companions God's speed as they work to spread the gospel and edify the saints in other parts of the world. We look forward to their safe return, the Lord willing, in late December. Please keep them in your prayers.*

## 1998 January Issue Dedicated to Joe Gilmore

*By now most brethren know of the death on Sunday, October 5, 1997 of Joe Gilmore. We continue to express to his wife, Joy, their daughter, Melinda, and their granddaughter, Lisa, our heartfelt condolences. In his memory we are dedicating the January 1998 issue of *Contending for the Faith* to Joe. Brethren who knew Joe well will be writing about their memories and associations with him. If you desire extra copies of the 1998 January issue, please notify us as soon as possible so that extra copies may be printed. [David P. Brown, Associate Editor]*

## ASSOCIATE EDITORIAL...

### JOE BEAM'S "OFF THE BEAM" VIEWS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

(As Presented at the 1996 Nashville Jubilee)

Joe Beam was the keynote speaker for the recent *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* held in the Sheraton Astrodome Hotel, of Houston, Texas, November 6-8, 1997. In a project of this magnitude it is only reasonable to conclude that much discussion and deliberation was involved in deciding who the speakers for the event would be. Hence, we may reasonably conclude that Joe Beam was selected because of his ability as a speaker (he has tremendous ability) and his doctrinal stance. In other words, the brethren who desired Beam's services knew exactly what they were doing in selecting him to be the lead-off man for this "change agent" convention. Of course if my assessment of why Beam was chosen is wrong, then those who were responsible for his participation in the Workshop may declare their ignorance of his beliefs and announce their mistake in asking him to come. At the same time they may renounce and repudiate him as a false teacher.

Last month in my column I pointed out Beam's false view on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. It is difficult to believe that at least Bill Yasko, the preacher for the *Westbury Church of Christ*, the over-

seeing church for the Workshop, did not know Beam's beliefs. Furthermore, was there no one at Westbury's assistant congregation, *Memorial Church of Christ*, who knew his views regarding these matters? Will Memorial's preacher, **Nick Hamilton**, plead ignorance regarding Beam's teaching on M.D.R.? Of course, there is nothing stopping Yasko from declaring himself one way or the other. Does Yasko teach that Beam's teaching on M.D.R. is biblically true or false? Where were the *Westbury* and *Memorial* elders in choosing who would and who would not speak? For that matter, did the elders and preachers of all the churches of Christ who helped support the *Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* do any kind of serious investigation before they decided to support the *Workshop* and urge their members to be involved in it? Do any of these brethren really care about what is believed and taught by the teachers they select to influence others? Again, it just may be that they knew exactly what they were doing.

#### MORE FALSE TEACHING FROM JOE BEAM

The following material was available for anyone who had the interest and ability to order these lectures by Joe Beam at the *1996 Nashville Jubilee*. Will the brethren who planned the *Gulf Coast Workshop* tell us they did not know about the following tapes? Beam's lectures that I have in mind are "*Discerning the Holy Spirit*," "*Releasing the Spirit's Power*," and "*Bring the Spirit into the Current Crises*."

In these lectures Beam declares that he rejects some of the theological flaws of charismatic theology. In view of the tales he told at the *'96 Jubilee* I wonder what part of "Holy Rollerism" he rejects. However, he also told his audiences that "*I'm a Spirit-filled Christian, and I'd love for you to be one.*" While that sounds good, just listen to what he told his audiences concerning the work of the Holy Spirit at the *1996 Nashville Jubilee*. There are no differences in the "Holy Roller" testimonials given by **Oral Roberts**, **Jimmy Swaggart**, **Jessie Duplantis**, **Benny Hinn** and Beam's wild "witnessing."

1. Beam told the story of an unborn baby that had no internal organs. After 24 hours of intense praying and asking God for a miracle, the miracle happened inside the woman. Beam declared: "*The lady went back the next day for an ultrasound and God had given the miracle. The organs were there.*"

2. A woman in Texas had lupus. She prayed and was healed. Beam said, "*God can make you well.*" The audience applauded.

3. Sometime around midnight Beam visited a home. Everyone should have been asleep. He knew there was a woman in the house who had no legitimate business being with the man who resided therein. Ac-

ording to Beam, God sent him to the house to stop the man from sinning. However, the marriage was not saved. Could not God have used Beam to save the marriage? If God could send him to stop adultery in that house, why not send Beam to stop other adulteries?

3. Beam was driving his car and had to stop. He desired that God speak to him. Beam turned on his radio. He requested that God put someone on the radio. He heard a lady sing a song about the sin he had committed and Beam cried. Applause from the audience.

4. Beam told of a doctor who informed him about a woman who had been healed of cancer. It was a miracle. Beam said, "*There are some frauds out there.*" (Yes, and Beam is one of them.—DPB)

5. Beam told of hearing about a man who had throat trouble. He could barely speak. His vocal chords were healed.

6. Beam comments about the work of the Holy Spirit. "*The Holy Spirit of God speaks to us, not just through the Bible.*" Then he asked, "*Does the Holy Spirit speak to you outside the word of God? Yes... .*" "*It's the guiding and prompting of God that tells you to do that.*" "*The Spirit of God actually enters my body.*" "*It's not biblical to say everything happens just through the word.*" "*The Holy Spirit is on earth and he is in you and among you.*" "*He is active today.*"

Initially Beam stated that he would be sharing some things that, "*...a few years ago I did not believe.*" The real question is: what convictions does Beam have about much of anything? Believing that the Holy Spirit speaks to him outside of the instruction that is found on the pages of the Bible, should we wonder that he believes things today that he did not a few years ago? Are the brethren who decided to invite Joe Beam to be the keynote speaker for the *'97 Gulf Coast Workshop* expecting us to believe that they had no idea at all that Beam believed such nonsense as noted above? However, if they were that ignorant, such is not the case now. They can, therefore, declare their ignorant mistake and mark Beam for the false teacher that he is. How about it, brethren? You either knew of and agreed with what Beam believed or you did not. Either way, what will you now do? It is time to "belly-up to the lick log" and take your medicine like Godly, penitent men.

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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*"Society is not wise enough to see the power of sin or religious enough to see the guilt of sin, but it cannot fail to see the stain of it."*

# "The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop"

Don Galaway

[EDITORIAL NOTE: We commend the Cedar Bayou Church of Christ, Baytown, Texas, her elders, Don Galaway, and Onnie Pucket, along with her faithful preacher Tom Wacaster for believing and practicing the truth of Exodus 23:2. Therein Moses wrote: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." Too many churches run with the crowd to their own spiritual destruction. The Cedar Bayou elders made it clear where they stand regarding their opposition to The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop. Their article originally appeared in the Cedar Bayou Church bulletin.

It is past time for faithful brethren everywhere to separate themselves from the sectarian apostate brethren who are running at full speed into the ranks of human churches (denominations). They deserve to be rebuked, marked, and the fellowship of the faithful withdrawn from them if they refuse to repent. Elders, in which direction are you leading the flock of God (Acts 20:28)? —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

An event was recently held in Houston called the **Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop**. It was an event of grandiose proportions, and included on the slate of speakers some well-known, well-documented false teachers. One of the most notable was **Joe Beam**. Beam espouses among other things the doctrinal error of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

For these reasons the eldership at Cedar Bayou could not, and would not support, endorse, or bid Godspeed to this endeavor. However, we are saddened to say that other congregations of the church in Baytown did endorse, and even helped in the planning and organization of this event.

In promoting this event in their bulletin, the name of Joe Beam was listed as one of the "can't miss" speakers. Then at the conclusion of the event they called it a rich buffet of godly speakers.

One of the elders, in a separate article, complained that as soon as the list of speakers was published, there were those who started throwing stones early. He admits that they received letters warning of the unsoundness of some of the speakers. One objection this elder listed had to do with one of the speakers sponsoring healing sessions where elders come together, anoint with oil, and pray for their ill brothers and sisters. Did this elder deny that such took place? **NO!** Instead, he defended the practice by making reference to James 5:14-15,

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

This passage most assuredly speaks of elders who had experienced the laying on of the apostle's hands, otherwise they could not have effected such a miraculous cure.

This elder further suggests that the warnings of sound brethren constitute self-destruction of the Lord's church. Some of our brethren today totally dismiss Romans 16:17,18. Paul wrote therein,

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and

by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

Instead, our brethren cry unity, unity! I most certainly believe the Lord desires unity of the brethren, but never at the expense of the truth. I submit to you that the ones intent upon the self-destruction of the Lord's church are those who would support and participate in such an event.

The eldership at Cedar Bayou holds no ill will towards those of whom we speak. Rather, we sincerely hope and pray that they will realize their error, and repent before more harm is done to the Lord's precious kingdom. We are intent upon taking a stand for the truth regardless of the consequences. Paul wrote to young Timothy, saying:

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 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 4:2-4).

—For the Elders  
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# “MOSTLY OPINIONS” YOU SAY?

David P. Brown

Most of this article is an exposé of a brief note by **Dale Foster** from the bulletin of the *Church of Christ in Jersey Village*, Houston, Texas. Let it be understood that the position revealed therein regarding *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* is basically the same as the one held by the elders and preacher of the *Lake Houston Church of Christ*, Humble, Texas (See the 1997 October and November issues of *Contending for the Faith*). Furthermore, what is happening in these two churches is indicative and representative of many other churches of Christ. Therefore, it is important to understand the sly slippery approach of these “change agents.” Their “modus operandi” is deceit and subterfuge. In order to accomplish their task they must gradually ease their false teaching into the churches. They are indeed masters of deceit (II Corinthians 11:3).

For those who have not traveled as far down the apostasy trail as **Rubel Shelly**, **Max Lucado**, and their like, the process employed by them is designed to deaden the spiritual senses of church members who are already lukewarm and worldly. Hence, they are able gradually to ease their errors into the church. In time these churches will be brought to the same degraded spiritual state of Shelly and Lucado and their “pastorates” (Romans 16:18; I Timothy 4:1, 2; II Timothy 3:1-9). As the apostle Paul wrote:

**For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works** (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Many elders of these churches as well as members are ignorant of how to ascertain Bible authority and, therefore, they do not know the identifying marks of the New Testament church. Moreover, they have little respect for authority (except their own), especially Bible authority. Thus, because of these things it is impossible for them to exercise their senses “**to discern both good and evil**” (Hebrews 5:14). Therefore, they see little or no difference between sectarian denominational churches and the Lord’s church. To complicate matters further, many of these fellows are puffed up with their self-importance. The result is what developed among the elders of the church at Ephesus. Paul said to the Ephesians elders, “**Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them**” (Acts 20:30). Will we ever learn that the way of apostasy is the same in every generation?

**“IN CUNNING CRAFTINESS, WHEREBY THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE”** (EPHESIANS 4:14)

“**By the sleight of men**” unscrupulous preachers who are cunning in their efforts to carry out their subversive plans (the changing of the Lord’s church into a human enterprise) manipulate such elders as previously discussed to accomplish their desired ends. When all is said and done,

these elders are prime candidates for spiritual self-destruction (Matthew 7:13, 14). What compounds the seriousness of this sad course of events is that such elders will pull the churches they superintend down with them when they fall into Satan’s pit (Matthew 15:14).

It should be noted that with some elders no subterfuge on the part of anyone is necessary in order to hoodwink them. They know full well what they are doing. They are “change agents” themselves. Hence, they employ preachers who are like minded. Together they set policies designed to take the church into apostasy. They adamantly refuse to “**...ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.**” Walking in the footsteps of their apostate ancient sister, Judah, they declare, “**We will not walk therein**” (Jeremiah 6:16). The following case is another example of certain brethren’s refusal to “**...ask for the old paths... .**”

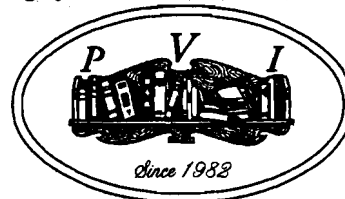
## A LOOK AT DALE FOSTER’S STATEMENT

Preceding *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* Dale Foster, the preacher for the *Church of Christ in Jersey Village*, Houston, Texas wrote the following note of interest in the church’s bulletin (Volume 24, November 5, 1997,

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Number 44). Foster was one of the speaker's on the recent Workshop.

**THE GULF COAST SPIRITUAL GROWTH WORKSHOP** is this weekend, November 6-8. This is one last reminder to encourage you to attend and take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to be edified. There have been questions about some of the speakers for the workshop. Most of them have to do with differences of opinion on various teachings. The fact that we are supporting and participating in the workshop does not mean that we agree with every opinion that is held (whether it is expressed during the workshop or not). I have confidence in your spiritual maturity to decide things for yourself. Just compare everything you hear with what you read in your Bible and draw your own conclusions. Truth has nothing to fear from open investigation. See you at the workshop!

Please note that Foster states that the Workshop is an "outstanding opportunity to be edified." Edification demands that the truth of the gospel on any and all subjects be taught; for there can be no spiritual edification (building up) without the gospel (John 8:31, 32; 17:17; Acts 20:32; II Peter 1:1-12). However, in the next sentence he indicates that "questions about some of the speakers for the workshop" have been raised. Immediately, he attempts to relegate "most" of the questions to "differences of opinion on various teachings." Having declared "most" of the questions raised to be in the realm of opinion, Foster then proceeds to declare that "supporting and participating in the workshop does not mean that we agree with every opinion that is held (whether it is expressed during the workshop or not)."

#### A STRAW MAN NAMED OPINION

An "opinion" is nothing more than a human guess. Hence, it is without conclusive evidence. Faith is built on adequate evidence and credible witnesses. Faith that pertains to man's salvation comes **only** by the word of God (Romans 10:17; II Corinthians 5:7). Only therein is found "the truth" that sets men free from sin (John 8:31, 32; 17:17). To walk by faith is to conduct one's life according to the word of God. "Walking by faith" is simply doing **only** what Christ in his word authorizes us to do (Colossians 3:17; Acts 4:9-10).

Why bring speakers to a "*Spiritual Growth Workshop*" to hear their guesses about anything. If one is a true gospel preacher he will preach the gospel without fear or favor. Furthermore, at any time and on all subjects relating thereto he will preach the absolute objective static standard of humanly attainable gospel truth (Luke 8:11; Mark 16:15, 16; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 6:17; II Timothy 2:15; 3:16, 17; 4:2; Hebrews 4:12). Notwithstanding, Foster seeks to focus the thinking of the reader on things that to him are of little consequence to God's people, specifically certain speakers' "differences of opinion on various teachings." In so doing, he thinks that he can help diffuse any criticism of certain Workshop speakers. In reality he reveals much about his own thinking regarding preachers who preach opinions, namely, that they should be able to preach their opinions and no one get upset by it. Of Foster I ask, where is New Testament authority for one to preach

his opinions about anything regarding man's salvation? How can human opinions cause spiritual growth? Hence, in his attempt to smooth over the questions raised about some of the speakers on the Workshop, he only compounds the problem. Why is this the case? Because the declaration to his readers that most of the questions regarding "some of the speakers" has "to do with differences of opinion on various teachings" is without evidence. Where God has legislated no man has a right to teach his or anyone else's opinion (Galatians 1:6-12; Jude 3; II Timothy 3:16, 17; John 12:48).

Thus far what have we learned from Foster's bulletin article?

1. From Foster's writings we know that certain questions about some of the speakers were raised.
2. Foster does not tell us **what** the specific questions are or to **whom** they pertain.
3. We only have Foster's words (viewpoint) that most "questions raised about some of the speakers for the workshop" are in the realm of opinion.
4. I have defined "opinion" as I use it, but we do not know what Foster's definition of an "opinion" is. In the way he employs "opinion" we may only conclude that it is not a bad thing.
5. Since Foster says "most" (not all) of the questions "have to do with differences of opinion on various teachings," what questions did **not** fall under the category of opinion?

Moreover, if some are as spiritually mature as they are said to be, why not cite the questions and the speakers they concern? Thereby biblically wise brethren may decide for themselves whether "most" of the questions raised fall into the realm of opinion (human guess).

Indeed, "Truth has nothing to fear from open investigation." However, with the severely limited information provided by Foster in his church bulletin, just how can an "open investigation" begin? Hence, because of a lack of material in Foster's church bulletin no biblically reasoned out conclusion may be drawn. As an evangelist of Christ, is Foster (as well as every other gospel preacher) not compelled by the New Testament to offer adequate information to the brethren to aid them in their efforts to comply with I Thessalonians 5:21; I John 4:1? **Prior to the Workshop in Houston, was it not the responsibility of the Westbury and Memorial Churches, along with all who were "in the know" to supply the necessary information regarding not only who the speakers were, but also what they believed? If not, why not?**

#### TO JUDGE OR NOT TO JUDGE, THAT IS THE QUESTION.

I want to emphasize that Foster called upon the Jersey Village Church to make a judgment about the Workshop, its speakers, and their messages. He said, "I have confidence in your spiritual maturity to decide things for yourself. Just compare everything you hear with what you read in your Bible and draw your own conclusions." Foster's admonition is quite interesting, because when I urge brethren to do the same thing Foster urged the Jersey Village

Church to do, I am accused of judging. Of course, it is always consistent thinking to judge that others have judged so that one may judge that judging is wrong. Just remember Foster urged the Jersey Village brethren to “draw” their “own conclusions” regarding the teaching at the Workshop after having compared “everything you hear with what you read in your Bible.”

How is Foster's admonition different from what Jesus instructed the faithful to do in John 7:24? Because of his advice to the Jersey Village brethren, will anyone accuse him of violating Matthew 7:1, 2? Moreover, will the elders and preacher of the *Lake Houston Church of Christ* along with a host of others see the difference in what Jesus demanded that we do in John 7:24 and what he prohibited in Matthew 7:1, 2? Will the Lake Houston elders and others of like mentality become upset with Foster's exhortation to the Jersey Village brethren to come to a conclusion (make a judgment) regarding the Workshop speakers about whom questions were raised? Remember that Jesus also said:

**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**

I would like to see someone attempt to apply the words of our Lord in the previous passage without judging (making a decision, drawing a conclusion). As the late **Marshall Keeble** used to say, “I am just a fruit inspector.”

#### “LAY HANDS SUDDENLY ON NO MAN”

In I Timothy 5:22 Paul wrote to Timothy directing him to “**Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.**” In the first century the “laying on of hands” traditionally indicated commendation on whomsoever hands were laid (Acts 13:3). Then, as it should be today, no one should be commended until and unless one is able to know as best one can about the character and beliefs of the one(s) who seek commendation (Acts 9:26, 27).

The speakers for the Workshop were brought into this area to influence all who attended and thousands more through electronic means. May we not correctly conclude that those who selected such speakers as **Joe Beam, Gayle Napier, Nick Boone, Truitt Adair, Wayne Kilpatrick, Cline Paden, Charles Hodge**, and “**The Sunset Institute of Biblical Studies**” knew exactly what they were doing and where all these men stood in life and doctrine? Do the movers and shakers of *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop* expect us to believe that they did not know what these men believed and taught before they selected them to participate in the Workshop?

#### QUESTIONS FOR THE PLANNERS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE WORKSHOP

Remember, Foster declared that “most” of the questions raised about “some of the speakers for the Workshop ... have to do with differences of opinion on various teachings.” What about those areas not covered by “most” of the questions? Does Foster address himself to the minority (according to him) of questions that are not in the realm of human guesses? He does not. If a minority of the questions are not matters of opinion, are they in the realm of faith? These minority questions do not seem to be of much consequence to Foster. Hence, please note the following questions for Foster and others who believe as he does.

1. Do the subjects of marriage, divorce, and remarriage fall into the realm of human opinion (human guess), or has God revealed his will in all three areas?
2. Did these brethren know of Beam's false teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage before the Workshop?
3. Did these brethren know Beam's teaching on the Holy Spirit? Is such teaching a matter of opinion, or has God revealed his will concerning the work of the Holy Spirit?
4. Did these brethren know of Sunset's position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage? Did they consider Sunset's position to be a matter of opinion?
5. Do these brethren consider the *Tulsa Soul Saving Workshop* to be in the same category as *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*?
6. Do these brethren consider the *Nashville Jubilee* to be in the same category as *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*?
7. Is applauding in worship a matter of opinion?
8. Is it sin to worship God with mechanical instruments of music?
9. Is the church of Christ a denomination?
10. Are members of the Baptist Church (those who believe and practice Baptist doctrine) saved from their sins and thereby children of God?
11. Is the New Testament a divine blueprint or infallible pattern?
12. Is it scriptural to partake of the Lord's Supper on any day other than the first day of the week?
13. Must one understand that baptism is “in order to be saved” before his baptism is scriptural?
14. Is one saved by grace if he does anything in order to be saved?
15. Does our love for God demand that we express that love **only** through obedience to his commandments?
16. Is sincerity **alone** regarding what we believe about salvation and the church sufficient to save us?
17. Is the church about which we read in the New Testament fully restored today?
18. Is it possible to restore the church that Jesus built (the one revealed on the pages of the New Testament)?
19. To be acceptable to God, must we do all things by the authority of Christ?

20. Were any of the questions that were raised about the speakers prior to the Workshop in the area of faith?

21. If the answer to the preceding question is yes, please tell us to what they pertained.

#### BEAM'S AFTER DINNER TALK

Because of other commitments I was only able to attend the first session of *The Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop*. Joe Beam was the speaker. It was one of the best after dinner speeches I have ever heard. He is, indeed a tremendous speaker. What did he want us to take home? What did he actually say to us? No more or less than the old warned over Christian Church denominational soup, "The man, not the plan" doctrine.

Beam declared that unity is possible only if we love and have faith in Christ. Well, who among believers would reject that idea? Never did Beam tell the audience that love of and faith in Christ are formed by the word of God and they always manifest themselves in the life of the devout disciple by his obedience to the commandments of God (Romans 10:17; John 14:15; Hebrew 5:9; James 2:24; I John 1:3-5; 5:3, 4).

I doubt that the audience had enough knowledge of church history to know that the sum and substance of Beam's speech had been peddled by liberals a long time ago. In general they certainly did not have enough Bible knowledge to evaluate what they were hearing. One reason for such a lack of rightly divided Bible knowledge is that they have been exposed to Beam's kind of preaching for years. Many of them simply do not know what gospel preaching is. Of such "good words and fair speeches" some declare that nothing wrong was taught (Romans 16:18). However, since when is it the case that blind people can see anything (Matthew 15:14)?

#### A HOSTILE IDEOLOGY

In his farewell address, President **Dwight D. Eisenhower** made the following comments regarding communism. He said, "*We face a hostile ideology—global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method.*" "Liberalism" (doctrines that loose men from what God in his word has bound upon them) is "a hostile ideology—global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method." Of course, such men as are exposed in this article do not verbally deny the existence of God. Practically, however, they had just as well be atheists. Why, you may ask, is this the case? Because in their works they deny God. Paul wrote, "**They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate**" (Titus 1:16). They are in effect practical atheists. As it was in the days of the prophets so it is today. "**Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house**" (Ezekiel 12:2).

—25403 Lancewood  
Spring, Texas 77373

# 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.

## —Colorado—

**Aurora (Denver)**—East Alameda Church of Christ, 13605 E. Alameda Ave., Aurora 80012. Sunday: 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m., Lester Kamp, preacher. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423.

## —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.

## —Missouri—

**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.

## —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.: 7:00 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. (281) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. **Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures** each third week in June.

.....

**Portland**—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, Tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Minister.

## —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.

## —England—

**England**—South Cambridge Church of Christ, 253 Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., Tuesday: 7:30 p.m., Graham Moulton, Tel. 01223-210101. Publishers of "Oracles of God."

# OBSERVATIONS FROM AN ALUMNUS OF SUNSET SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Tommy J. Hicks

A native of Lubbock, Texas, I am an alumnus of the *Sunset School of Preaching*. Back when I was a student there (from January 1967 to January 1969) a person could receive excellent Bible training. However, during those two years, though hardly perceptible to most, I witnessed the “winds of change” beginning to influence some of the instructors in the school.

## THAT “MOSER MESS”

Prior to attending the *Sunset School of Preaching*, I had attended *Lubbock Christian College*. One of my teachers at L.C.C. was **K.C. Moser**. Moser taught that “law” and “grace” were mutually exclusive. Moser insisted that since Christians lived under “grace” then they were under NO LAW at all. I swallowed – “hook, line, and sinker” – Moser’s false doctrine (with its implication of “salvation by faith only”). Fortunately, I had a sound, knowledgeable, gospel preacher for a grandfather. His name was **J.R. Hicks**. My grandfather knew K.C. Moser and he knew Moser’s heretical doctrine from his days as a local preacher in Oklahoma. Upon learning that I had become a “Moserite,” my grandfather devoted many hours to study with me. He was more than able to show me the error Moser taught – error I had accepted. Later, my grandfather would tell folks, “I had to study that boy out of that ‘Moser mess.’” He did!

Fresh out of that “Moser mess” at L.C.C., I began my studies at the *Sunset School of Preaching*. Naturally, whenever K.C. Moser’s name was mentioned or whenever something was taught that reminded me of Moser’s doctrine, my ears would perk up. At first, when the instructors mentioned Moser or his doctrine, it was done so in respectful disagreement. Yet, it was extremely noticeable to me that, during my two years at *Sunset*, Moser’s doctrine became more and more acceptable. **Richard Rogers** seemed to have been the most influenced by Moser (whether by being personally taught by Moser or by reading Moser’s writings, I do not know). From his writings (**Freedom for Freedom** in particular) and from lessons I have heard him present, it appears to me that **Ed Wharton** may have also been greatly influenced by Moser. (I hasten to add that Wharton does not appear to take the extreme view that Moser did on “law” and “grace,” though at times he comes very close to it.)

## MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE AT SUNSET

Twenty-eight years have passed since I graduated from the *Sunset School of Preaching*. The incremental, almost imperceptible changes that were taking place in the late 60’s snowballed. While so many changes (not for the better, but for the worse) have come to pass, none stand out any clearer than Sunset’s teaching on “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.” From 1967 to 1969, I do not recall that

any of the instructors taught that the “guilty party” may scripturally remarry. I have asked some of the men who were in my class at SSOP and they have told me that they do not recall that any of the instructors taught us that the “guilty party” may remarry. Instructors (such as **Richard Rogers**, **Ted Stewart**, and **Truman Scott**) are now teaching that the “guilty party” may remarry after a divorce. Sunset’s apostate teaching on “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage” is known around the world, brotherhood wide.

The first I heard that SSOP “might” be teaching something it should not on the “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage” question was in 1978. Living in California at the time, I had returned to San Angelo, Texas, to perform a marriage for a lovely young Christian couple. While in San Angelo, my wife, Sue, and I visited with many of our old friends. An older couple we visited asked, “Before you go back to California, are you going to Lubbock to visit with your parents?” I responded that I was. Then, this couple asked, “Will you do a favor for us? Will you go to the *Sunset Church of Christ* and ask them where they stand on ‘Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage?’” This couple had a reason for wanting to know the answer to their question.

They had a niece whom they dearly loved and whom they had been financially helping through her schooling at *Texas Tech*. Only a few hours away from graduation and receiving her degree, she had abruptly dropped out of *Texas Tech* to enroll in the A.I.M. (Adventures In Missions) program at Sunset. Her aunt and uncle, the couple in San Angelo, learned that she had done so because she had fallen in love with a young man who was a student in the A.I.M. program. The young man in question had been married, but was divorced (and he did not have scriptural authority to remarry). Sunset knew of the young man’s marriage and divorce. Thus, the couple in San Angelo was unable to understand why Sunset did nothing to discourage what people (from Lubbock to San Angelo) knew seemed likely to happen – an adulterous relationship as the result of an unscriptural marriage. Thus, the aunt and uncle in San Angelo asked me to look into the matter for them.

## CLINE PADEN’S 1973 LETTER

After arriving in Lubbock, at my earliest convenience I went to Sunset and visited with Cline Paden in his office. During that visit, I conveyed to Paden the San Angelo couple’s concerns and asked him to respond to their questions relative to Sunset’s stand regarding what the scriptures teach on “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.” With a prelude of mild bluster to express his “righteous indignation” about people blaming Sunset for this and that, Paden asked **Marge Smith** (then secretary of the *Sunset School of Preaching*) to retrieve two copies of a letter (one for the couple in San Angelo and one for me) that he had prepared to answer just such questions. The letter Paden provided



me was dated, March 6, 1973, and was addressed: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN. This meant, evidently, that as far back as early 1973, enough people were beginning to question Sunset's stand on "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" that, to save time, Paden produced a form letter and kept a supply of them on hand. Besides this, Paden's 1973 form letter revealed a number of other things.

In paragraph two of his March 6, 1973 letter, Paden implied that the students were to be blamed, not the school, for the school being called into question on the issue of "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage." Explaining the school's obligation, Paden stated, "Our task is to leave the student with a position which can be substantiated by a 'thus saith the Lord'." In 1973, Paden said there was "a position" (singular) that could be scripturally substantiated. Now, in 1997, I appeal to my brother, Cline Paden, to answer: "When it comes to the subject of 'Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,' which 'position' (singular) does the Sunset elders, the School of Preaching administrators and the faculty say can be substantiated by a thus saith the Lord?" The moon will turn to green cheese before Paden will answer that very simple question. Why? Because Paden knows that the teachers, in what is now called the "*Sunset International Bible Institute*" (S.I.B.I.), advocate "practically every viewpoint that anyone has ever entertained" on the subject of "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage," and that they "present these positions in class in the form of questions and comments." In other words, today (1997), the teachers at Sunset are guilty of doing the very thing that Paden condemned the students for doing in 1973. Indeed, Sunset has changed — not for the better, but for the worse.

Again, in paragraph two of his March 6, 1973 letter, Paden emphatically stressed, "We cannot control what a student may believe, for he may have believed it long before coming to *Sunset*. **We can only control what he is taught** (emphasis mine, TJH)." Certainly, what is taught in the School of Preaching **can be controlled** by the elders at Sunset. That is not the question. The question is: Are Sunset's elders controlling what is taught on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the School of Preaching? Is it because of their control that Richard Rogers, Ted Stewart, and Truman Scott teach what they do on the subject in question? Paden has been heard to say, "Yes, but we also have **Norman Gipson** and Ed Wharton who hold the 'traditional view' on 'Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage'." Question: Is it because the elders are in control of what is taught in the School of Preaching that there are conflicting doctrines taught on the subject of "Marriage, Divorce, and

Remarriage" at Sunset? Are the Sunset elders themselves divided on this issue? If there is only one position, a position (singular), which can be substantiated by a thus saith the Lord, as implied in Paden's 1973 letter; and, if Sunset's elders "control what is . . . taught" in the School of Preaching; then, why are there contradictory, diametrically opposed doctrines being taught by the instructors relative to "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" at Sunset? Why can we not get straight answers (in my case, "any answers") to these questions?

#### LET YOUR "YEA" BE YEA AND YOUR "NAY" BE NAY

The Bible is "all sufficient" (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3; and II Corinthians 9:8). It is amazing beyond belief that a Sunset elder, not to mention the former Director of the School of Preaching, would deny the "all sufficiency" of the scriptures. Yet, in his March 6, 1973 letter, that is exactly what Paden did under point five. When it comes to the remarriage of the "now-put-away-guilty-party," Paden wrote,

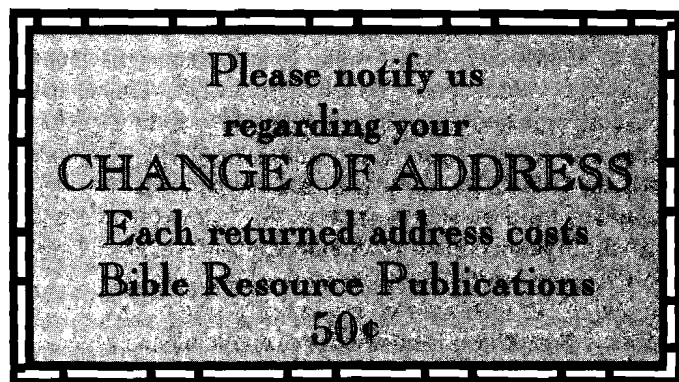
It may be inferred that since he is not now married to anyone he may for that reason be justified in joining himself to another, yet the position is devoid of outright Biblical consideration, and is clothed in an atmosphere of doubts and uncertainties. To speak either way is to speak from indefiniteness and from indefiniteness on any Biblical subject one should not presume to speak authoritatively (emphasis mine, TJH).

I take this to be an attempt by Paden to "hedge" on the issue. How ludicrous it is to say that the remarriage of the "now-put-away-guilty-party" is "devoid of outright Biblical consideration" What about Matthew 5:32; 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12; and, Luke 16:18? There is no "atmosphere of doubts and uncertainties" in what the Bible teaches on the subject of "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage!" It would seem that it is Paden who is "devoid of outright Biblical consideration" and who is trying to create an "atmosphere of doubts and uncertainties." On "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage," there is no "indefiniteness" to be found in the Bible's teaching. Therefore, if one preaches the "all authoritative" word of God, he speaks "authoritatively" when he teaches that any divorced person (except the one who has put away his mate for the cause of fornication) commits adultery if he remarries. Paden needs to answer, "Is the Bible 'all sufficient,' or not?"

#### SUNSET ON A MERRY-GO-ROUND

If, "To speak either way is to speak from indefiniteness —and from indefiniteness on any biblical subject one should not presume to speak authoritatively," then why did Paden conclude: "Therefore, *Sunset School of Preaching* does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry?" How could he draw that conclusion? Would he not be guilty of speaking authoritatively where he had just said "one should not presume to speak authoritatively?"

Since March 6, 1973, has Sunset "changed" what it teaches concerning "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage?" Remember, then Paden wrote, "Therefore, *Sunset School of Preaching* does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry." Remember, he also said, "We



can . . . control what . . . is taught." If they are controlling what is taught on "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage," and if Rogers, Scott, Stewart and others are teaching "that the guilty party may remarry," then Sunset has changed. If Sunset still wants the teachers to "not teach that the guilty party may remarry," and if Rogers, Scott, Stewart and others are teaching "that the guilty party may remarry," then Cline Paden and the other Sunset elders do not (or cannot) "control what . . . is taught." I, for one, am convinced that the Sunset elders are in control of what is taught. Thus, Sunset has changed (not for the better, but for the worse) when it comes to what is taught relative to "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage." Again, this is but an example of one of Sunset's changes when it comes to doctrinal matters.

#### **NO STUDENTS OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SUNSET**

Since Sunset comes to individual Christians and to untold numbers of congregations seeking students and financial support, she ought to be more than willing to answer questions about "who" is teaching there—and "what" is being taught there. Therefore, I ask the Sunset elders to answer: "Since you brethren are in control of what is taught in the School of Preaching on the subject of 'Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,' please inform me and other interested brethren, specifically and plainly, what do you expect your instructors to teach on this subject?" Further, I ask the Sunset elders, "If an instructor teaches something other than what you have authorized him to teach on 'Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage,' what actions do you take in regard to that teacher?"

If any school is teaching doctrines contrary to the word of God, we must not send students and/or financial support to that school. To do so is to support and help in the spread of false doctrines. Any school that will not answer questions about what it teaches on any subject must be rejected when it comes seeking financial support and/or students. More than that, any graduate of that school must be carefully scrutinized when it comes to what he preaches and teaches. Although I am an alumnus of the Sunset School of Preaching, and although it breaks my heart to say these things, I **ADVISE BRETHREN – DO NOT SEND STUDENTS OR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SUNSET!** Why? Because false doctrines are being taught at Sunset. Because when Sunset is questioned about what is taught there, one either receives "double-talk" for an answer or receives no answers at all.

—5208 89th Street  
Lubbock, Texas 79424

To All the Elders  
%Mr. Cline R. Paden  
Sunset Church of Christ

Cline and other Sunset Elders:

Back on June 27, 1997, I wrote a letter to Cline Paden. In it I specifically requested information relative to Sunset's participation in the so-called, "Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop," scheduled for November 6-8, with such men as Joe Beam and Gayle Napier (Beam is just a little "Max Lucado" and

Napier has publicly alleged that a great percentage of Christian families who hold "conservative" values are incestuous). I begged for a reply. To this date, I have received none.

Why not? Are you ashamed of what you are doing and those with whom you are associating? Do you feel that doctrinal stances being taken by those affiliated with Sunset and the School there are indefensible? Do you feel that it is "Christian" to refuse to respond to legitimate inquiries from a brother in Christ, an alumnus of the Sunset School of Preaching?

Because my previous and latest correspondence (to Cline Paden, a man for whom I once had the highest respect) goes unanswered, I feel that I have no choice but to begin communicating by means of "OPEN LETTERS" (open for "all brethren" to read), but addressed to Sunset (her elders, various ministers, and faculty members in the School). I feel that these matters should be conducted "in writing" because "oral" discussions can be forgotten, denied, and/or otherwise flawed. Furthermore, if it is in print, one cannot deny that he said something that he did say, or say that he said something he did not say. Truth, integrity, and moral conviction have nothing to fear when exposed to the light. The same cannot be said for false doctrines, unethical dealings, and immoral behavior. Rather than to retreat into darkness, Sunset needs to "shed some light" in answer to questions that fall into all three of these categories.

Over the past 28 years, Sunset has changed, not for the better, but for the worse. I once was very proud of the Certificate of Graduation you granted me upon completion of my work as a student of the Sunset School of Preaching. That Certificate of Graduation no longer hangs on my wall.

I have considered sending it back to you as a means of letting you know how sad that I am that Sunset has forsaken the truth of God's word. Sunset's motto used to be, "Preach The Word." Today, you brethren may give lip service to that motto, but it does not truly express what Sunset stands for now. Brethren, it is an understatement to say that "THE LIGHT GROWS DIM AT SUNSET!" Brethren, because of Sunset's reputation for soundness in the past, many who now send students and financial support to the School are unaware of the false doctrines, unethical actions, and immoral deeds where Sunset, in the light of truth, needs to answer some questions. Through a series of "OPEN LETTERS" to you, I am going to ask questions that need answers. It will be up to you to provide the answers—answers not to me only, but to all brethren.

Here is an example of the change Sunset has undergone in the realm of doctrine and morality. I have in my hand a letter dealing with the Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage issue, dated March 6, 1973, addressed "TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, and signed by Cline Paden. In that letter, Cline said, "Therefore, Sunset School of Preaching does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry." If that statement was ever true, it is not true today. Informed brethren know the radical position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage that is advocated by Ted Stewart, Truman Scott, Richard Rogers, et al. It is my understanding that the only two people affiliated with the School in a teaching capacity who hold the Scriptural view (the view expressed above in Cline Paden's concluding paragraph in his 1973 letter) on MDR are Gipson and Wharton. The debate on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage that your faculty member, Truman Scott, had with Wayne Jackson is in print. That debate not only revealed what Scott teaches regarding the MDR issue, it shows brother Scott's lack of intellectual integrity. (PLEASE ASK ME TO PROVE THIS!) To prove me wrong about what is actually being taught at Sunset on MDR, how about providing me with copies of the audio tapes made in classes taught by Stewart, Scott, and Rogers when they have taught lessons on Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mk. 10:2-10; Lk. 16:18; 1 Cor. 7. I will pay for the tapes. By the way, I already have one audio tape of Richard Rogers teaching (in a private home in Clovis, N.M.) on 1 Cor. 7 — and have an exchange of two letters (one from me to him and his reply to my letter). I seriously doubt that you will provide me with the requested tapes. Brethren, it is

(Continued on next page)

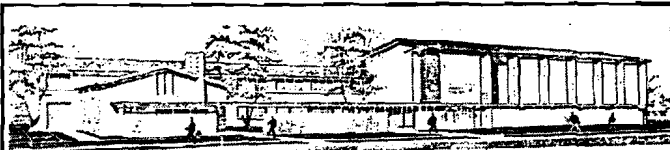
ludicrous to say, "Sunset School of Preaching does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry." Will you brethren put in print Sunset's position on the "Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" issue? Will you brethren instruct Sunset teachers not to teach anything that conflicts with that view?

Recently, one of Sunset's elders (Dr. Sneed) announced to the congregation that "hand clapping" (applause) is all right and that those who object to it must keep quiet about it. Brethren, I have in my possession an audio tape recording of Cline Paden, and another of Sunset's elders, meeting with a Sunset member who objected to this decision by Sunset's elders (to allow "hand clapping"). It reveals Sunset's elders' position on "hand clapping" and it also demonstrates how Sunset's elders deal with those who disagree with them. Now, would you be so kind as to give me the Scriptures which authorize "hand clapping" in worship? When it comes to dealing with the members at Sunset, are Sunset's elders always as dictatorial—do they always attempt to intimidate—as they did in the case in question? If you can adamantly insist, in intimidating ways (implying a withdrawal of fellowship) that members of the Sunset congregation not speak out in opposition to "hand clapping," why can you not insist that teachers in the Bible classes and in the preacher training school refrain from teaching those things contrary to the Scriptures relative to marriage, divorce, and remarriage?

I have no desire to hurt Sunset. It is my honest conviction that you brethren are hurting Sunset. I pray that you will return to the "old paths." My desire is for you to turn away from the ways of error, for you to uphold that which is right, and for you to defeat that which is wrong.

Awaiting your reply,  
[Signed]  
Tommy J. Hicks

## PADEN'S 1973 LETTER



SUNSET CHURCH OF CHRIST  
School of Preaching  
Phone: 792-6191  
34th Street & Memphis  
Lubbock, Texas 79410

March 6, 1973

Under the Direction  
of the Elders  
Sunset  
Church of Christ

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Probably no Bible topic has so much diversity of thought surrounding it as does marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Each time we come to those sections or scripture which relate to marriage we have to deal with practically every viewpoint that anyone has ever entertained. Our students came from every section of the country, and they came with every conceivable shade of brotherhood thought on these matters. They present these positions in class in the form of questions and comments. Our task is to leave the student with a position which can be substantiated by a "thus saith the Lord". This is no easy task, and we do not always succeed. But we do try. We can not control what a student may believe, for he may have believed it long before coming to Sunset. We can only control what he is taught.

Director  
Cline R. Paden  
795-4128

#### Instructors

Richard Buggitt  
792-7828

Louise Cortis  
797-2870

Parker Henderson  
792-8370

Dayton Kamm  
795-8842

Tim Kell  
795-9888

C.W. Jabeel Lincoln  
798-0421

Gerard Paden  
792-4517

Moses Parr  
795-0848

Richard Rogers  
799-4282

Ed Wharton  
792-3226

Tex Williams  
798-7185

#### Briefly stated:

1. We believe that God joins a man and woman in marriage. We believe that God is a witness to the covenant, but is himself no partner in it.
2. We do not believe that unfaithfulness in sexual matters necessarily dissolves the marriage. The guilty may repent, the innocent may forgive, and the marriage may continue. However, if the innocent party elects to do so, he may "put away" his mate — but only in case of adultery.
3. We believe that this putting away, as the Greek words teach, "looses and sets free" each participant. After one has been put away for adultery neither of the contracting partners is left bound to the other.
4. We believe that the truly innocent party may remarry. This is strongly implied in Matthew 19:9, and may be, as some contend, actually taught.
5. And while it is crystal clear that the now-put-away-guilty-party is no longer bound to anyone in marriage, we knew of no positive Biblical warrant which would unquestionably sanction a remarriage for him. It may be inferred that since he is not now married to anyone he may for that reason be justified in joining himself to another, yet the position is devoid of outright Biblical consideration, and is left clothed in an atmosphere of doubts and uncertainties. To speak either way is to speak from indefiniteness — and from indefiniteness on any Biblical subject one should not presume to speak authoritatively.

Therefore, Sunset School of Preaching does not, and will not teach that the guilty may remarry.

Fraternally,  
[Signed]  
Cline R. Paden

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# What Did You Say Matthew 18:15-17 Teaches?

Wayne Coats

We are certain that our Lord taught something when he uttered the words contained in Matthew 18:15-17. Can we know what Jesus taught? Can we understand what the saviour said? Is the passage too vague to comprehend? Surely we can know what Jesus wants us to know about these verses.

Over the past few years a new twist has been wound around the statement of our Lord. There is extant a number of brethren who will not stand for anything and will fall for just about everything. They have no real conviction about the truth. Their teaching usually sounds very similar to denominational pastors and they apparently feel impelled to spout forth a deluge of liberal theology and attempt to hide behind Matthew 18:15-17. Their view is that no one should attempt to refute their liberalism, false teaching, compromising theology, and error without first visiting them personally. No one ever heard a sound gospel preacher with any conviction make such a flimsy and compromising excuse. Let each person who reads this article, look into the mirror and ask, "Am I looking at the reflection of a weak, spineless, fearful, compromising person, or am I viewing one who is not afraid even though all hell assails?"

## WHAT DID JESUS REALLY TEACH IN MATTHEW 18:15-17?

If we cannot determine what Jesus taught in the passage under consideration, then I wonder how we might be able to arrive at what he taught in Matthew 16:18. Sectarian cultic groups have their notions about some sort of confederation of churches when they read Matthew 16:18. They see exactly what they want to see, and of course they refuse to see anything contrary to what they already think. They usually do not want to listen to any evidence which is different to their preconceived notions. The very same sort of attitude prevails among some of our present pastors, presbyters, and prelates. After they have said their piece, then they are able to tell what they think, and of course there are some who do not seem to be able to tell what they think until someone else programs them with the right kind of "software."

A number of commentaries on the book of Matthew are on the shelves of my library. Some of them are excellent and some are of little value. I do not agree with all of those comments made by mere men. A comment is just a comment. In the final analysis, the sacred text must be our chart and compass. It might be of interest to some, and may hopefully be of help to some of our younger preachers, to notice the comments of a great segment of writers as they give their views on Matthew 18:15-17. We should remember, however, that if all the writers in the world gave wrong interpretations about a verse, there is no reason to follow them.

## COMMENTATORS AND COMMENTS FROM A TO Z

**ALBRIGHT:** "The sayings here concern personal offenses that spring from the same kind of concern as found expression in verses 23-24."

**ALFORD:** "This direction is only in case of personal offense against ourselves and then the injured person is to seek private explanation."

**AUGSBURGER:** "This passage outlines the pattern of reconciliation when a 'brother sins against you' (Leviticus 19:17, 18). When there is a fault between brothers, Jesus holds the disciple sinned against responsible to initiate action for restoration."

**BARCLAY:** "Basically, this passage means that we must never tolerate any breach of personal relationships between us and another member of the Christian community."

**BARNES:** "Trespass against thee—that is, injure thee in any way, by word or conduct. The original word means, sin against thee. This may be done by injuring the character, person or property (Deuteronomy 19:15)."

**BEARE:** "The reference is to a passage in Deuteronomy which runs, 'A single witness shall not prevail against a man for any crime, or for any wrong doing, only on the evidence of two witnesses or three shall a charge be sustained (Deuteronomy 19:15).' It is taken for granted that the community life is affected by any ill treatment of one member by another."

**BOLES:** "If any member of the flock commits a fault, that one is to be sought and reclaimed.... It was the way Jesus laid down for his disciples to settle difficulties and troubles that arose around them. When a brother has committed an offense against us, how better to settle it than the way laid down here? God knew that his people would sin. He knew that they would sin against each other, hence the principle for dealing with those who do sin. The spiritual relationship of the disciples of Christ is compared to a family; hence, all dealings with the erring are to bear the marks of love and the salvation of the offender. A sin against an individual Christian is a sin against the law of love. It must be a definite sin and not an imaginary wrong or grievance that comes under the teaching here."

**BONHOEFFER:** "If the sin is of such a kind that it can remain a secret between you and the sinner, it is not for you to divulge it but to punish him in private and summon him to repentance and then, thou hast gained thy brother."

**BRIGGS-DRIVER AND PLUMMER:** "The thought is of personal offenses. The Christian disciple is to be reconciled to his offended fellow Christian before he can bring offerings to God."

**BRUCE:** "The idea is that the persistently impenitent offender is to become at length to the person he has offended, and to the whole church, one with whom is to be held no religious, and as little as possible, social fellowship."

**COX:** "Similarly, the local church or congregation in the resolution of disputes between brother and brother. If the dispute cannot be settled privately, Christian charity requires that the facts should be established by independent witnesses."

**DUMMELOW:** "The subject changes from that of doing injury to the little ones against which Jesus has been warning (vs. 10-14) to that of suffering injury, in view of which he prescribes the proper method of brotherly visitation."

**ELLICOT:** "Each of the disciples thought himself in some sense, aggrieved by others. It is significant that the substance of this precept is taken from the passage in Leviticus 19:17-18."

**ERDMAN:** "Jesus proceeds to show how the disciples are to treat those who are guilty of sinning against their fellow Christians."

**FENTON:** "'Behind this verse there lies a passage in the Old Testament which was frequently quoted by the first Christians. You shall not hate your brother in your heart but you shall reason with (tell him his fault) your neighbor lest you bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance on or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord (Leviticus 19:17).'"

**FOWLER:** "'He must instruct His disciples on how to act when they are not the cause, but the victim, or even the witnesses of wrongs.' '...Irritated, each apostle no doubt felt that, in varying degrees, the others had sinned against him'"

**HENDRIKSEN:** "Would not the admonition to have a private interview with an erring brother, somewhat favor the assumption that the sin referred to was also a private character? The phrase, 'against you,' ...makes the offense under discussion to be a personal one."

**M. HENRY:** "If a professed Christian is injured by another, he ought not to complain of it to others, as is often done merely up on report, but to go to the offender privately; state the matter kindly, and show him the injustice of his conduct."

**JOHNSON:** "'Sin against thee' personally, injure you or do you wrong."

**MacKNIGHT:** "Such are the rules which our Lord would have us observe in matters of private offense."

**MEYER:** "We now have the Christian brother generally *oadelphosson*—therefore the genus to which the *mikross* species belongs. But if thy brother shall have sinned against thee which he is supposed to do not merely *scandlo dato* but by sinful treatment in general—by an unbrotherly wrong whatsoever—The reference can only be to private charges to offenses in which the one sins against the other and which as such ought to be dealt with within the Christian Church."

**MOUNT:** "Matthew turns now to the question of appropriate action to be taken in case a Christian is guilty of sinning against another member of the community."

**TASKER:** "It is not every kind of sin that is here under consideration, but the personal wrong done by one brother to another."

**VINCENT:** "The verb means, first, to test, try, search out; therefore to cross-examine with a view of convincing or refuting; thence to rebuke or chide."

**VOS:** "Evidently the sin in view in verses 15-17 is not a careless slight, or an affront to an oversensitive believer. It is a sin of some seriousness that would be clearly recognizable by numbers of individuals if they knew about it."

**WOOLVOORD & ZUCK:** "This was in keeping with the O.T. precedents as in Deuteronomy 19:13. The Lord had just spoken about offenses. Now he talks about what should be done when known sin occurs."

**ZERR:** "The first thing a brother should do if another does him wrong, is to tell him to his face in the absence of any other person, and without having said a word to anyone else."

#### THE PITIFUL THINKING OF CERTAIN ELDERS

After reading the preceding comments, it should prove to be helpful to any open-minded person what Matthew 18:15-17 teaches. In view of the clear and explicit teaching of Jesus, there are still some who find security in taking the passage completely away from its context. One such interpretation was recently presented to me which came from an eldership. The statement is as follows.

After considerable study and prayer the Elders at (omitted by W.W.C.) believe that the principle Matthew 18:15-17 is a valid scripture to be used with **any erring Christian** regardless of the congregation or the geographical location. We also believe that where personal face to face contact is beyond reasonable limits, that contact by telephone or written contact is valid. We believe that only after every reasonable effort to restore the brother fails, are we allowed to make public statements regarding his trespasses.

What an interesting commentary! Any person's "belief" rests upon the revealed word of God (Romans 10:17). The flimsy opinions and theories of men usually stem from whatever they want. There is a difference in faith and opinion. The passage in Matthew 18:15-17 is absolutely not a valid scripture to be used with "**any erring Christian.**" This is wishful thinking. We have abundantly shown why one cannot use the passage with any erring Christian. Everyone knows that the sins of some erring Christians are completely private and unknown to other Christians. Who will deny this?

Do these brethren really believe that the passage is to be used regardless of the congregation or the geographical location? Now hold on just a minute! It is very often the case that an "erring Christian" is not any part or parcel of any congregation. He does not want to be, makes no claims of being a part thereof, and strongly insists that he is not. Please tell me how we would apply the New Perversion, "with any erring Christian." It cannot be done, and think-

ing people should know better than to place such dubious interpretations upon the Lord's statement.

But then let's take that "erring Christian," any "erring Christian regardless of the congregation or the geographical location" and try to apply Matthew 18:15-17. Does the congregation at \_\_\_\_\_ have even one erring Christian? If so, should I travel 500 miles to talk to him about his sin? Must I then take two or three witnesses with me and talk "with any erring Christian regardless of the congregation or the geographical location?" Hold on to your seats please! If, when, and wherever, that erring brother refuses to hear me and my witnesses, can I then get into the pulpit of the \_\_\_\_\_ congregation and tell it to the church?" Come on now, and let's crawl fish out of this dilemma. No sin is more grievous than a perversion of the word of God. When several brethren in a congregation teach error, how many Sundays will be allowed sound preachers in their efforts to "tell it to the church." Please do not hold your breath 'til we get any sort of answer.

Please note that, "We also believe that where personal face to face contact is beyond reasonable limits, that contact by telephone or written contact is valid," How is it that the passage can be used "...regardless of the ... geographical location," yet "face to face" contact is not necessary and the telephone, or letter can be valid? When has it become "valid" to change and alter a "valid" scripture into another set of "valid" circumstances? Any Methodist can write, "...We believe that where there is insufficient water to immerse a candidate or the distance to such water is beyond reasonable distance, that contact with water by pouring or sprinkling is valid." In fact, I know of no heretical practice that is ever considered invalid by its practitioners. Do you?

We desperately need someone to elucidate, clarify, explain, and cogitate exactly the meaning of "reasonable limits." Who will decide? What will be the mileage? I am not ready to go off on a hackneyed chase into the wild blue yonder when it comes to exegetical studies of the inspired word of God.

The Bible is right and men can only be right as we revere, respect, and adhere to its teaching. No excuse can exist for such bizarre theories as is compended relative to the word of Christ in Matthew 18:15-17. May God help us to get rid of the soft, compromising, wishy-washy attitude which prevails and be determined to stand up for Christ and his word as good soldiers (Ephesians 6:10-17).

#### TWO PROPOSITIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. It is the case that no one teaches error.
2. It is the case that several brethren teach error and these brethren are scattered over the world.

Obviously proposition one is not true. We would all admit that proposition two is certainly true. I hope that we can see that if 50 brethren in each of the 50 states blast off with all kinds of error in public papers, then for example, before I can write an article exposing the error of some brother in Alabama, I will have to go see him to his face (no exceptions). If he will not hear me, then I would have to take one or two witnesses. If he will not hear the witnesses, then I

must tell "it" to the church. Which church must I tell it to? I really do not know. It is very likely that preacher A and elders B, C, and D in Alabama all believe and teach the same error. What a predicament! I have something to tell, but I cannot tell it. Brethren everywhere need to be shown the error that brother A is spreading all over the country but, "...there is no alternative." I must to go see him with my admonitions before I write one word. More than likely the elders will not let me tell "it" to the church.

After my visit to Alabama I head for Alaska. Those fellows in Alaska have been bugling error like a herd of bull elk. While I am in Alaska some more fellows in Alabama have been teaching falsehood in a new paper which they send all over the brotherhood. I try to answer the error of those in Alaska and head south again for Alabama to look up those brethren so I can tell each one his faults between "him and me alone." Then I try to get around to all the other brethren in all the other states, but there is just no way, so I decide to just love them and not say anything about their false teaching, albeit the bride of Christ is being divided by their foolishness. Ultimately I conclude that I will spend my time writing a commentary and insist that there are no exceptions to Christ's injunction requiring spiritual persons to go to the offender first alone.

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Mount Juliet, Tennessee 37122



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# MADISON SEMINAR

(Continued from page 1)

earn their doctorates in denominational seminaries, sing their songs and read their books. It is never made clear by Dr. Smith what all of this means.

The third problem lies in the fact that the Madison Church is a major cause of the very problems now being inflicted on churches of Christ because this church was the original sponsor of *Jubilee*. It was under the auspices of the *Madison elders* that Rubel Shelly, Steve Flatt, and Walt Leaver drafted the original *Nashville Jubilee, Inc.*, charter. This Tennessee State document was signed by Dan Dozier, now a minister for the Hendersonville *Community Church*. All four participated in *Jubilee '97*.

The fourth problem in my estimation is that this was a most unlikely setting for Stephen F. Flatt to promote Christian education in view of the fact that schools identified with churches of Christ are now under the control of boards of trustees who seem to have little understanding or concern for traditions which are both biblical and historical. Dr. Flatt has a big house-cleaning job on hand as he takes the helm at Lipscomb.

There is a fifth problem. Speakers on *Jubilee '97* and past Jubilees read like a roll call of the DLU Bible faculty which includes the highest three ranking DLU administrators—Steve Flatt, Harold Hazelip, and Carl McKelvey. But of course they have splendid facile rationales to justify their participation.

There is a sixth problem that Nashville brethren are reluctant to investigate. The *Power for Today* Seminar is Nashville based. The publication, *Power for Today*, is an affiliate publication of the *21st Century Christian*. Pull aside some of the coverings and the primary bases for its operation are discovered on the Pepperdine Campus and in Dallas, Texas.

Norvell Young is the powerful guiding hand of the *21st Century Christian*, and Prentice Meador is the editor. These two respected and admired leaders choose to identify with the leading postmodern liberals in the church. This is their personal choice which is only stated here. However, let it be noted that we understand the extent of the full power base of the liberal brethren as they move to win the hearts and minds of that great host of traditional churches of Christ across the land.

## THE DAY OF THE MADISON SEMINAR

The high point in the Seminar came when Willard Collins spoke at 10 o'clock. Everything before and after was anticlimax. And what he said spelled the doom for any prospects that Jubilee can ever rise from the ashes of its burnt out past.

Brethren Collins and Jim Bill McInteer have enjoyed a lifetime of confidence among their brethren for almost 50 years. They have become icons, in a manner of speaking, for their abilities as gospel preachers and highest standards of personal behavior.

## THE LAMENTATIONS OF WILLARD COLLINS

I have implicitly trusted Willard Collins as a friend throughout 50 years as we worked together that long at Lipscomb. I always found him to be forthright and honest in my personal dealings with him. There were times when I wondered how brother Collins could tolerate some people and situations which were imposed upon him which I would have personally rejected.

Brother Collins told a story that is known quite well to many. It was a lamentation filled with memories for a friend who did not stay the course. He told the story of Athens Clay Pullias, one of Lipscomb's greatest leaders. He described him as the first "change agent" who deserted the churches of Christ which had nurtured him from the cradle. He told of attending Clay's funeral whose service was conducted with the full ceremonial rituals of the Episcopal Church which was conducted by two robed Episcopal priests, one a woman.

[Athens Clay Pullias gave me a teaching job in David Lipscomb College in 1946. I never had a cross word with him, and tried to be his friend and support him until I no longer could. In the words of another retired Lipscomb faculty member who said that we may very well look back on those days that those were best of times for David Lipscomb College in what we now call the post-modern era. While searching for the grave site of Hall Laurie Calhoun in Nashville, I suddenly found myself looking down on the name of Athens Clay Pullias. I could not describe my emotions in that brief moment.]

Brother Collins laments the fact that it was he who brought Rubel Shelly on the campus. It was the *21st Century Christian* which appointed him editor-in-chief of their publication. And it was Copeland Baker, the elder of the Ashwood Church of Christ, who took the lead in bringing Rubel to Ashwood. He helplessly watched as Dr. Shelly seized control of the Ashwood church from its elders and drove them out. Too late to cry over spilt milk.

And it is a personal observation that there is very little that Steve Flatt can do to correct the situation at Lipscomb despite the fact that he talks a good game. Harold Hazelip knew full well what he was doing when he loaded the Lipscomb Bible faculty with liberals as teachers. Some are there now as untouchable tenured professors who are there for the duration.

This is the tail of the lead kite that Stephen F. Flatt can never launch. Ask your children about the undergraduate Bible classes with Randy Harris and Doug Varnado. Mike Moss now sits as Bible chairman where once David Lipscomb sat. Dr. Flatt will do as the pressures of his office dictate. Whether he approves or not, the liberals are secure in the "safe house" on the Lipscomb campus.

## WHO IS MY BROTHER?

F. LaGard Smith spoke for the better part of an hour. A good lawyer writes a clear succinct brief, and a good judge writes a clear opinion based upon the law, examples of relative court cases, and necessary inferences of principle.

Dr. Smith never made it clear to me just how and where he draws the line of fellowship.

Dr. Smith came out of an "anti institutional" background. He did not turn liberal after he deserted the "antis" as is the case with **Harold Hazelip, Mac Lynn, and Leroy Garrett**. However, it seems that an anti once returned to the fold never seems able afterwards to define himself, nor to shuck off his "anti" prejudices against the traditional churches of Christ.

## SUMMARY APPRAISAL

One fact stood out during the course of the Saturday Seminar at Madison in that Jubilee, Max Lucado, Rubel Shelly, and the "Sinner's Prayer" were not singled out and addressed. Other than the address by Willard Collins, the *Power for Today* Seminar had very little tangible substance. I am fully cognizant of the implications and impact of this article. AMEN.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard  
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

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# DID THE DIRECT OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN AND ON THE APOSTLES OF CHRIST INHIBIT THEIR FREE WILL?

David P. Brown

No. Regarding man's salvation God has never inhibited his (man's) free will. Moreover, God has never done for man what he (man) could do for himself. Yet, the Holy Spirit directly (without a medium) empowered and worked on the apostles. This immediate direct relationship of the Holy Spirit on the apostles enabled them to do the work that was theirs alone to accomplish. They could not have done their ambassadorial work without such direct supernatural help.

### THE DIRECT WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH THE APOSTLES

This direct involvement of the Holy Spirit in the apostles was the "Comforter" or "Paracletos" relationship that Jesus promised only to his apostles in John, chapters 14, 15, and 16. I know of no other faithful child of God who teaches otherwise. Because Jesus would return to heaven when he completed the redemptive work that he alone could do, he sought to help settle the troubled hearts of the apostles. He wanted them to know that they would not be left alone. He said to his apostles, "**And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: .... for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you**" (John 14:16, 17).

It is self-evident that it is impossible to have "another Comforter" without at least one other "Comforter" preceding it. The "Comforter" on whom the apostles had depended and who would need to be replaced by "another Comforter" was Jesus himself. The other "Comforter" whom Jesus promised to the apostles would dwell with them and be in them until ("for ever") they finished their apostolic ambassadorial work.

Such involvement of the Holy Spirit with, on, and in the apostles covers far more than the miraculous operation necessary to reveal to them the New Testament, inspire them flawlessly to record it, and confirm it. **Z. T. Sweeny** in his book *The Spirit And The Word* has an excellent dis-

ussion of the meaning and significance of "Paracletos" ("Comforter"). Sweeny uses the transliteration of the Greek word "Paracletos," "Paraclete," in his writing on the subject. On pages 68 and 69 he wrote:

This Paraclete is a distinct gift to the twelve, to take the place of the personal presence and guidance of the leader who is preparing to leave them.

What is the nature of this promised one? By examining the lexicons we find that Paraclete is

1. One called or sent to assist another.
2. One who pleads the cause of another.
3. A monitor.
4. An instructor.
5. A guide.
6. A helper.
7. A supporter.
8. A comforter.

Of this Paraclete Jesus says:

1. Whom the world *can not receive*.
2. He dwelleth with *you* and shall be in *you*.
3. He shall teach *you* all things.
4. He shall bring all things to *your* remembrance whatsoever I have spoken unto *you*.
5. He shall testify of me.
6. He shall convict the world of sin.
7. He shall convict the world of righteousness.
8. He shall convict the world of judgment.
9. He shall guide *you* into all truth.
10. He shall show *you* things to come.
11. He shall receive of mine and show it *unto you*.

Here we have eleven distinct things that the Paraclete is to do for the apostles.

All these offices of the Paraclete were needed by the apostles in their work of proclaiming Christianity and establishing the church.

Not one of the direct actions of the Holy Spirit on the apostles in any way, form, or fashion inhibited their free wills. Furthermore, such action of the Spirit did not cause the apostles to think that they had any less natural responsi-



bility to comply with all that God obligated them to do in order to obtain their salvation. Also, the presence of the miraculous gifts in the infant church did not cause her members to lessen their natural efforts in discharging their salvation obligations to God (I Corinthians 12:7-11; Acts 8:17-18; 19:6; I Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 5:19-26; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3; I Timothy 3:15; II Timothy 2:15).

#### THE DIRECT WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH THE APOSTLES PAUL AND PETER

Being an apostle of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul possessed the "Paracletos" relationship of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 11:5; 12:12). However, such a direct work of the Holy Spirit did not cause Paul to be any less determined to will himself to submit to Christ in all things (I Corinthians 9:24 - 27). Furthermore, this direct work of the Spirit did not weaken or hinder Paul's natural sense of obligation or determination to correct sinners (Galatians 2:11). It is obvious that Peter did not think that he could blame the Holy Spirit for his own improper exercise of his freewill (Galatians 2:11-14). To conclude otherwise is to reveal an abysmal ignorance of the Bible's teaching concerning the work of the Holy Spirit on the apostles.

Every permanent essential obligation of the gospel the first century church had in order to be saved and remain saved, we have today. Not one direct miraculous action of the Holy Spirit on members of the first century church lessened or weakened the responsibility of every member to work very hard to discharge their duty to God in the use of their time, opportunity, and ability (James 2:14). To conclude otherwise is to deny the teaching of the infallible word regarding the direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the apostles and in the lives of those to whom they imparted miraculous gifts. Furthermore, such a false view reflects on the integrity, sacrificial dedication, and godly characters of the saints of old.

What about the miraculous gifts of the spirit in the church at Corinth? It should be remembered that even the miraculous gifts in the church at Corinth did not prohibit their carnal minds from making a big mess out of many matters necessary (obligatory things or matters pertaining to salvation; I Corinthians 11:20) for living the Christian life. Miraculous gifts may have been used correctly or misused and abused. Such was in the power of those who possessed them (I Corinthians 14:32). Further proof of this point is seen in Paul's admonition to Timothy. Paul told him not to neglect his miraculous gift (II Timothy 1:6).

#### FALLACIOUS REASONING

We must "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). If the Holy Spirit and Paul had reasoned the way some brethren do, he would not have written the Corinthian brethren. Why write a letter to correct those who have miraculous gifts? They already have the gifts to guide them in living the Christian life. Was the presence of the miraculous gifts (supernatural aid) hindering the normal rational natures and free wills of the Corinthians from doing all they naturally could do to discharge their obligations to God? The Holy Spirit and the apostle

Paul whom he inspired did not think so. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. ... Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:37,40; Also see 4:21; 15:58).

Are we to conclude that the reason for the Corinthian's errors is found in their possession of miraculous gifts? Do we mean to say that the presence of such gifts inhibited their free wills and weakened their self-determination? Is there evidence to cause us to believe that they thought that the Holy Spirit would do for them what they must do for themselves? If the answer to the previous question is yes, the following syllogism sets out the fallacious reasoning that leads to such an erroneous conclusion.

**Major Premise:** If one in the first century received a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, then his will was inhibited.

**Minor Premise:** Paul received a direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, Paul's will was inhibited.

The form of the syllogism is valid. However, the major premise is false. Therefore, as has been proven in this article, the argument is not sound. Hence, as my daddy says, "Down comes the whole cob house." (For the information of those less learned in agriculture nomenclature [country talk] or logical parlance, daddy meant a house that country children used to make out of corn cobs. When a cob in the foundation is removed from the house, the whole house falls). The direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the apostles or those to whom they imparted a miraculous gift did not inhibit their natural abilities and free wills in discharging their salvation obligations to God. To take any other position is to fly into the face of the material in the New Testament that the Holy Spirit himself has revealed for our instruction on this subject.

What about today? As we have studied, the "Paraclete" relationship of the Holy Spirit was by Jesus promised **only** to his apostles. By that power the apostles had the ability to impart miraculous gifts to the infant first century church through the laying on of their hands (Acts 8:13-19; Why can we not see what Simon saw? Also see Acts 19:6). When all the apostles and those to whom they imparted miraculous gifts died, all such direct work of the Holy Spirit on the saints ceased. Over and over again in debate with those who claim such powers from the Holy Spirit today we have proven their affirmations false.

#### PROVIDENCE

What about God's providence? Providence simply defined is a careful supply of needed resources. In the case of divine providence on behalf of Christians it is something beneficial for us that God does on our behalf. It in no way hinders one's free will. Miracles fall under the head of temporary and provisionary providence. Since their cessation God's providential acts may be called general providence and in no way today involves miracles. No one knows what

all Deity and all the holy angels are doing on our behalf (for us). That is God's business and not ours (Deuteronomy 29:29). How God providentially works in the kingdoms of men is not revealed to us (Daniel 4:17).

The specific details of how he answers prayer are not revealed to us. However, James wrote:

**The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit (James 5:16-18).**

He can and does answer prayer without the use of miracles. Paul said that the Corinthians had been of help to him in their prayers on his behalf (II Corinthians 1:11). Would the help of their particular prayers been available to Paul if they had not prayed? Peter instructed husbands to treat their wives properly lest their prayers be "**hindered**" (I Peter 3:7). If they did not treat the wives correctly, would their prayers not be "**hindered**?" Just a few verses later Peter wrote that God's "**...ears are open unto their prayers:...**" (I Peter 3:12). Does God hear us when we pray according to his will? Paul said that, "**...in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God**" (Philippians 4:6; See also Ephesians 6:18). If Christians did not make their "**requests**" known to God, would it make any difference in his dealing with them? He also asked the Colossians to pray "**...that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ...**" (4:3). Does this not imply that God hears prayers and answers prayers regarding specific requests of Christians? May we pray such prayers today and expect them to be answered without God working a miracle to do so? The apostle John answered the question when he wrote: "**And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him**" (I John 5:14, 15). John says that God hears and answers scriptural prayers. Do you teach what John taught and continues to teach? Indeed, as we live in harmony with his will and ask according to his will he hears and answers our prayers according to his wisdom. We are not told how God answers these prayers, but answer them he does. Surely we have not concluded that the only thing we can do is thank God for what he has already done, which action on his part was determined by his attribute of omniscience before the world was.

We waste all manner of time and get into all sorts of hurtful wrangling in an attempt to explain the unrevealed and/or the unexplainable. In the long ago the final solution to such things was given by the Holy Spirit when he inspired Solomon to write: "**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man**" (Ecclesiastes

12:13). To emphasize something that has no bearing on one's learning and discharging of his obligations to God cannot do anything but hurt the cause of Christ as well as those who advocate it. For the sake of the whole blood bought body of Christ and the cause of our Lord we should concentrate on "**the conclusion of the whole matter,**" rather than on something no man can fully understand. Why can we not conclude what the Holy Spirit concluded and place our emphasis thereon?

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# **Beeville Church Mourns Loss Of Elder T.R. "DICK" Stevens**



**Mr. and Mrs. T. R. ["Dick" and "Mickey"] Stevens  
on their Golden Wedding Anniversary, July 15, 1995  
at Beeville, Texas**



Dick Stevens (above right) working in Texas oil fields.

Some brethren accomplish so little in life that, when they die, they are not really missed—at least not by more than their own immediate family.

Such could not be said of **T. R. “Dick” Stevens**, one of the elders of the Adams Street church of Christ, of Beeville, Texas. When he died, April 2, 1997, not only the church members and townfolk of Beeville mourned his passing, but fellow Democrats as far away as Austin, as well.

Born September 1, 1917, near Yoakum, in DeWitt County, Texas, the son of **Charles Almon (Am)** and **Lois Magee Stevens**, he was 79 years old at his death.

In 1920, his family first moved to Mineral where his father ran a blacksmith shop, a Model-T garage, and a small truck farm. Dick helped out on the farm, plowing with mules from as early as age 5.

At age 16, he left home to join the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the Great Depression. After that, he worked all over Texas as a mule skinner digging slush pits, a weevil in a rig-building crew, a truck driver, a heavy-equipment operator, and as a roughneck in the oil fields. Still later he owned a mattress factory and a furniture store. Toward the end

of his life he went into cattle ranching until a bad drought forced him to sell most of his cattle when the price of hay shot to \$60.00 per round bale.

Married to the former **Margaret Emma Parish**, on July 15, 1945, at Taft, Texas, she described brother Stevens as a “jack of all trades.”

To their union three children were born: **Margaret** (Mimzi) married Jerry Horn; **Richard** married Anita (Skeeter) O’Hair, and **James** (Jim) married Karen Newhook. All three children graduated from Abilene Christian University.

Grandchildren include **Wes Horn**, married to Rebecca Stewart, **Russ Horn**, married to Heather Grey, **Jill Stevens**, **Grant Stevens**, and **David Stevens**.

Dick and Mickey left Bee County in 1946 for Edna, Texas, where they had their mattress factory and furniture company. Selling these, they moved back to Mineral, going broke during the “dry ‘50s.” To pay off their farm debt, they went into ranching. Also Dick worked in a gasoline plant; and Mickey taught school.

From the time he first obeyed the gospel as a young man, Dick Stevens loved to teach. He was not the kind of teacher who had to be the head man or

out in front of others. By 1954, he was made a deacon; and by 1977, an elder.

From the beginning of his eldership onward, he liked to keep folks busy. Even though he lived on a ranch 15 miles west of Beeville, near Mineral, when others could not be at the church building, he would leave his ranch and make himself available.

Few knew brother Stevens like Beeville’s minister, **Joe Cox**. Writing in *Doulos*, Beeville’s church bulletin, for April 6, 1997, brother Cox said that Paul’s words to Timothy, in I Timothy 6:11-12, might just as well have been directed to Dick Stevens:

**But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.**

“I have seen Dick walk away or avoid a situation when he realized temptation might be lurking,” brother Cox wrote. “He would often stop in mid-sentence rather than following through with the words he was saying because he realized it would be neither wise nor prudent to say them...”

“No man that I’ve ever known

bowed himself more lowly in the presence of God than did Dick Stevens."

Of his many characteristics as a Christian elder, brother Cox judged Stevens' ability to love as "the greatest talent that God bestowed upon him.

"He loved God supremely, he loved his brethren in the Lord, and he loved the souls of the lost...His love for others allowed him to see their needs. He would starve himself to help feed others. He was the epitome of kindness toward his fellow men...

"After my son was run over a few years ago, Dick and Mickey would come over and spend the night in the already crowded hospital waiting room so that Paula and I could get some rest.

"To tell you how many times he sacrificed to help me would be impossible for me to estimate. However, he willingly sacrificed his time,

efforts, labor and talent for hundreds who could give the same testimony today..."

Although, as an elder, brother Stevens felt his primary responsibilities were with the local congregation at Beeville, nevertheless, he maintained a healthy interest in world evangelism, too. He made three evangelistic journeys to Honduras; others to Panama and Costa Rica; and many to Mexico. In 1995, he, together with Frank Carriger, Joe Cox, and Jack McKinley, made a special journey to the Far East, including visits to Hong Kong, China and Singapore. And his furnishing transportation for others to attend gospel meetings was endless.

One of the last decisions he helped make as an elder at Beeville was for the congregation to participate with the Portland, Texas, brethren in sup-

porting Sareth Voun in his missionary work at Battambang, Cambodia.

Dick was active in the community, having served as a Pawnee School Board trustee, a Bee County Farm Bureau director, an officer of the Mineral Cemetery Association, and as Mineral Democratic Precinct Chairman.

Although many brethren are reluctant to dabble in politics, Dick Stevens went all out the other way. Until the Dwight D. Eisenhower elections, he always was a Republican. For whatever reason, after that, he switched to the Democrats, and sought mightily to improve the Democratic Party in Texas.

They, too, must have thought a lot of him; for the following resolution was passed at Democratic Party headquarters, in Austin, and forwarded to his family subsequent to his funeral in Beeville:

#### RESOLUTION

Whereas, T. R. "Dick" Stevens ably served as Democratic Precinct Chair for Bee County since 1960; and

Whereas, T. R. "Dick" Stevens was a man of compassion, principle and courage; and

Whereas, T. R. "Dick" Stevens was tireless in his work to promote and nurture the Democratic Party and the ideals of our Party in Bee County and South Texas; and

Whereas, T. R. "Dick" Stevens was not only a leader and a sustaining member of our Democratic Party but also a rancher and an elder of the Church of Christ; and

Whereas, T. R. "Dick" Stevens served Bee County and Texas tirelessly, making them better for his leadership;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the State Democratic Executive Committee, Texas Democratic Party, mourns the death on April 2, 1997 of T. R. "Dick" Stevens; and

Be it further resolved that we extend to the family and friends of T. R. "Dick" Stevens our deepest sympathy and condolences on the passing of this great and good Democrat.

Unanimously adopted by the State Democratic Executive Committee, Texas Democratic Party, April 26, 1997.

[Signed]

Bill White, Chair

Of course, "when the roll is called up yonder," it won't mean a thing that brother Stevens was a "great and good Democrat." What will matter was his faithfulness as a Christian—and as an elder, who must "give account" for how well he ruled over those souls

committed to his trust and for whom he "watched" those final decades at Beeville, Texas.

Dick Stevens was my friend and a friend of the Cause that I serve. Not just his family, fellow elders, Joe Cox, Beeville church members and his hun-

dreds of personal friends now miss him, but I miss him, too. It is my hope that both of us can make it through to that "pearly white city," when Jesus comes to call us home.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Editor

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# LILY-LIVERED LIBERAL

Michael Light

Recently we began publishing a paper entitled *Seek Ye First*. Several of our members have made this work possible by their financial support of the paper. The paper is free of charge to any and all subscribers. The first publication came out a few months ago and consisted of 2,500 copies. The response has been amazing. We have received compliments from several elderships and members in the central Texas area. The second issue is due to be shipped in about six weeks.

However, as the title indicates this article is not about our new paper. I want to deal with some other responses to the paper. As some of you know the paper is mailed to members and non-members alike. In Bangs currently over 300 copies go to "non-church of Christ" households. We are planning for saturation mail outs within the next few months wherein every home in the Bangs area (over 2,000 addresses) will begin receiving the paper.

As expected there were a few non-members who were less than pleased with the paper. I had the privilege to talk to each one of these people in person and discuss with them the reason for their choice not to continue receiving the paper. Every one of the discussions was very beneficial and conducted with a great amount of mutual respect and concern for each other. In fact one of the people who originally wanted to be taken off the mailing list changed her mind and wants to continue receiving *Seek Ye First*. A local preacher told his congregation not to read such material, which of course motivated many to read it anyway. Four very good studies have resulted in Bangs alone due to the paper's influence, praise God!

Oddly enough the most hostile and brusque response did not come from a denominational preacher or member, but rather a fellow member of the Lord's church. As mentioned before, we mailed the paper to several area congregations hoping to make the paper available to as many of their members who would like it. Many congregations sent us lists of members and friends who want the paper. But one of our sample papers was returned by an area sister congregation (the **Coleman Church of Christ** that meets on Elm St.) and a note was written on the back of the publication. It was the tone of the note that prompted me to call the church office and talk to the preacher there.

The note simply said, "Do not send! We do not want it! Not even one more!" I was somewhat surprised to receive such a note from our own brethren. I called the church office and asked to speak to the preacher. At the time I did not know who had written the note for it was not signed. I introduced myself as **Michael Light** of Bangs and mentioned that our paper had been returned with a note. The preacher, **James Bailey**, informed me that he had written the note and returned the publication. I asked him if he could inform me as to what he found so repulsive since the entire issue simply dealt with scriptural worship. He stated, "I didn't like the tone of the paper, and we don't need you to be spreading that fertilizer around here."

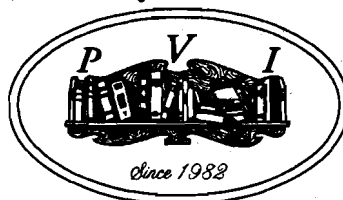
Next, he asked, "where did you go to school?" I answered, "Southwest." Without hesitation or further discussion he said, "That figures. I would NEVER let anyone from Southwest... into MY pulpit." I told him that his attitude about me certainly seemed rather merciless and premature, since we had never met or spoken before this day. How can anyone give a blanket condemnation of all graduates of any of our schools? What kind of heart and attitude prejudices brethren in such a way? I do not know of a school that can boast of complete faithfulness of every graduate. Furthermore, I do not know of a school that has failed to graduate at least one faithful student. What arrogance and condescension.

I asked Bailey again, "what in particular did you not like about the paper?" He said, "I don't like the way you call names of brethren." I was surprised at this response, because no names were mentioned in the paper. Not one brother or denomination was examined in the issue in question. I pointed this fact out to him. He responded by saying, "Well, in your bulletin you called **Max Lucado** a false teacher." I pointed out that there was no specific connection between the bulletin (Bangs Church of Christ) and *Seek Ye First*. I went on to ask if he had read the article, in which I dealt with Lucado's radio speech. I find it interesting that Bailey did not like me calling Lucado a false

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teacher, when in fact Lucado showed himself to be false by what he said. For those of you who receive our bulletin please read the transcription of Lucado's speech again. If Lucado did not teach heresy concerning how one is saved in that speech then it can not be done.

Bailey went on to say that, "Max has brought a lot of good publicity to the church." And that this good publicity should counteract some things. I reminded him that several years ago a man named **Pat Boone** also brought the church some "good" publicity, and look where he is today. The truth of the matter is that I attacked a sacred cow of Bailey's and he didn't like it. He therefore lashed out at me. I asked him what I should have done in relation to what Max was and is teaching. He informed me that I should go to him and talk to him personally. When a man teaches error in public the correction and or exposing of such needs to be just as public. Jesus on several occasions publicly called the Pharisees and Sadducees false teachers. I happen to know a preacher in the area, who while living in San Antonio, tried to meet with Lucado and he was denied a meeting. He sent numerous letters which were returned unopened. Finally he sent a certified letter, this too was rejected and returned.

I informed Bailey that I personally had just two months ago spent my own money on airfare and expenses just to travel to Nashville to hear Lucado at the *Jubilee*. I refuse to repeat hearsay, and therefore went to hear for myself. I sat in classes taught by: **Rubel Shelly, Joe Van Dyke, Joe Beam, Mike Cope, Max Lucado** and others. I also purchased over twenty tapes in order to be fair and just with my brethren. I stand behind the article entitled *A Sad Day In Israel*, wherein I discussed Lucado's speech. I challenge Bailey or anyone else to defend Lucado in light of the Bible. It should be obvious to all that Bailey seems to be more concerned with defending Lucado than defending the truth of our Lord and Savior. I harbor no ill will in my heart for Lucado. I love his soul and wish he taught the truth. But he does not. His fraternization with denominationalists is well documented, as well as his compromises while at the *At-*

*lanta Promise Keeper's* meeting.

Bailey also informed me that, "We don't need someone from *Bangs* telling us what's right and wrong." As I heard these words I could not help thinking of the same type of thing being said about Christ concerning his being from Nazareth. What difference does it make where a man is from when it comes to his knowing and teaching the truth. Are there some towns that possess all truth and the rest are just left to grovel in the dark? Again an attitude of condescension oozes from this guy. He went on to call me a Pharisee, based on what I do not know.

I asked Bailey if we could meet sometime and discuss these things. He told me, "No, I don't have time." Here is a man who says we should meet with those with whom we disagree, it is obvious that he and I disagree on these matters, but he refused to meet. Brethren it has been my experience that men who oppose the truth will have little to do in actual examination of it. The majority of "change agents" in the Lord's church have no desire to meet and study with those of us who are determined to stand with the truth. They are lily-livered, spineless, cowardly, and in many cases dishonest.

I am really saddened by these events. I have yet to meet James Bailey. I know of no specific doctrine about which the church in Coleman is in error, and wish them well in their work, and will gladly support them. I do however, pity a congregation that is plagued with a man as hard of heart and condescending toward brethren as James Bailey. I hope and pray that the above information will serve as a warning to other brethren about the apparent callousness of this brother.

I want to implore all brethren every where to be longsuffering one toward the other. In matters of opinion freedom must be allowed. But in matters of doctrine, God's will must be respected.

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