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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS



Joe Gilmore, Jr.
[1919-1997]

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXIX, No. 1

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Editorial...

Much Too Soon, Joe Gilmore Is Taken From Us At Age 78

When Joe Gilmore, Jr., of San Jose, California, departed this life on October 5, 1997, by rights I should have been there along with **Garland Elkins, Bobby Liddell, Eddie Whitten, Noah Hackworth, H. A. "Buster" Dobbs, Randy Mabe** and possibly others to help preach his funeral. I was half a world away and so far from home there appeared to be no way that I could get back in time—part of the price one has to pay when totally committed to fulfilling the Great Commission in one generation.

Believe me, brethren, I tried. However, this time I was in Murmansk, Russia, above the Arctic Circle, a thousand miles north of Moscow; and although I did telephone his beloved **Joy**—twice—I was stuck, not able to return until the funeral was already over.

I am sure that she understood and that, under the circumstances, Joe would have, too. But I was ticketed via Braathens Airlines back through Oslo, Norway, for the return journey; and Braathens serves Murmansk only once a week. Seldom have I ever felt so frustrated.

Although Joe Gilmore and I grew up approximately 100 miles apart in central and southeastern Oklahoma, the first time that I recall ever meeting him was in 1943, when he and I were still single and young preachers together on California's West Coast. He was 24; I was 26—but this was the first time our trails had crossed. He was preaching at Vallejo, in the San Francisco Bay Area and I at Paso Robles some 250 miles farther south.

WE SHARED MANY THINGS IN COMMON

Once brother Gilmore and I did actually meet, our trails seemed to converge again and again across the years. He often reminded me of our laughing together in the back seat of his father's car and of **Joe, Sr.'s** admonishing us both from behind the wheel, "Get searce! Get searce!"

I always enjoyed hearing Joe tell of the "I Ams," a religious order who met underneath where he lived in a garage apartment at Vallejo. They would gather in the space below and chant, "I am, I am; thank God I am, I am."

One night Joe had about all he could take. Grabbing a broom, he turned it upside down, banging it on the floor, shouting, "You're not, you're not; thank God you're not, you're not!"

EQUAL TO ANY OCCASION

Because of his commitment to the truth of the gospel, brother Gilmore often was challenged by unbe-

lievers, having participated in perhaps 100 debates and discussions. By diligent study and long experience, he was equal to whatever arguments were presented on any occasion.

Among those who trained him, both in preaching as well as in debate, two of his mentors were some of the most capable preacher/debaters of his time—**Joe Blue** and **C. R. Nichol**. Among his closest friends were three of our greatest debaters—**Foy E. Wallace, Jr., G. K. Wallace** and **Robert R. Price**.

“SERVICES DISMISSED!”

The only time I ever heard of him not being able to hold his own in a given situation had nothing to do with *either* preaching *or* debating.

It was when he was a “boy preacher” at Allen, Oklahoma. Everyone in the congregation kept coming down with a virulent strain of intestinal flu.

Joe chided them all with just being physically weak—until one Lord’s Day morning, about halfway through his sermon, it hit him, too. Those present reported that he had to do *something* right then—and quick. Not knowing what else to do, he shouted, “**SERVICES DISMISSED!**” and ran for the door.

PREACHERS DON'T HAVE ANY FUN?

Those who think that preachers and Christians never get any enjoyment out of life never knew Joe Gilmore. In the days when I first knew him on the West Coast, local churches did not have what we now call “lectureships;” we called them “preachers meetings.”

At that time **Linwood Bishop** was still preaching at Salinas, California and had been for several years. When he announced a preachers meeting for Salinas, inviting brethren from up and down the West Coast and from as far east as the San Joaquin Valley to participate, Joe, our mutual friend **Earl Mansur**, then preaching at San Pablo, and I, then preaching at San Rafael, decided to drive down together from the San Francisco Bay Area.

BEANS FOR BREAKFAST

On our way home, brother Gilmore told of several preachers attending the Crosswell-Price Debate. During the debate, some of them stayed with a family named Houch. The preacher from San Jose, California, at that time, was **Paul Tucker** (who now has preached in Nashville, Tennessee for more than half a century).

One day during the debate, Paul told of a place he had been where they served beans for breakfast. Those hearing the story for the first time had a big laugh. That evening Joe and Linwood told the story to sister Houch, asking her to cook a pot of beans for breakfast the following morning.

At the breakfast table, Joe and Linwood asked Paul to tell the story about “beans for breakfast” one more

time. Just when everyone was laughing hardest, in came sister Houch setting that pot of beans right in front of Paul Tucker. Joe said Paul’s face turned red, then purple; nevertheless, he took a big helping of beans and passed them around.

PULLING A GOOD ONE ON LINWOOD BISHOP

Since Linwood had been participant with Joe in this practical joke on Paul Tucker, as we drove along Joe said, “When we get to San Jose we ought to pull a good one on Linwood.” It being already way past midnight, he suggested that one of us should call Linwood on the telephone, disguise our voice, and ask him to meet the bus to perform our wedding when we reached Salinas at 4:00 o’clock that morning.

None of us felt he could disguise his voice well enough that Linwood could not recognize who it was; so we decided to ask someone at the San Jose bus station to help us on this practical joke.

YOUNG LADY WAS ASKED TO HELP

At the station, we asked a beautiful young blond-haired lady if she would participate. She was game to try; so we wrote out instructions as to what she should say.

When Linwood answered our telephone call, she asked if he was the same Linwood Bishop who used to preach at Freer, Texas?

He said he was.

She asked if he remembered that young, blond-haired girl who used to sit on the third row on his right-hand side when he preached at Freer?

He thought he remembered her.

She said she always had wanted *him* to be the one to perform her wedding—that she and her fiance were on the bus at San Jose headed for San Diego and would he please meet the bus when it arrived at Salinas at 4:00 a.m. and perform their wedding during their bus stop?

LINWOOD WANTED TO WAIT TILL MORNING

Linwood asked if they couldn’t put it off at least until daytime?

She said, no, that as soon as they reached San Diego, her fiance was being shipped out to the war in the Pacific, and that their rest stop in Salinas would be their *only* chance for *him* to perform their wedding.

Reluctantly, Linwood finally agreed, asking how he could recognize her, it having been several years since he had left Freer, Texas.

BUS SCHEDULE HAD ELEVEN SECTIONS

“Just hold up your Bible,” she said, “and I will recognize *you!*” (What made this especially effective, it being wartime, this particular schedule had ELEVEN SECTIONS to it; so it would be necessary for Bishop to hold up his Bible ELEVEN TIMES—once for each bus—until he was sure all eleven buses had arrived!)

When Linwood hung up the telephone, his wife, Lillie, said that it was just some of those preachers pulling a practical joke on him on their way home, and to come on to bed. She was right, of course; but Linwood could not be certain.

We had written a note, saying, "BEANS FOR BREAKFAST," put it in an envelope, and handed it to our young blond accomplice, saying that if she did not think best to meet him at Salinas, to please take the note to the station manager there and have brother Bishop paged.

GEORGE DARLING REALLY WAS INNOCENT

When Linwood finally got back home from the bus station about 5:00 o'clock that morning, he was too upset even to *think* of going to bed. Being an accomplished cook, he went to the kitchen and started making biscuits for breakfast.

At the close of the preachers meeting, **George Darling** had stayed the night with the Bishops. When he awoke, seeing the light on, he stopped by the door of the kitchen, where Linwood was making biscuits. He said Linwood would roll up balls of dough, throwing them on the doughboard, muttering,

"This one's for Joe!"

"That one's for Ira!"

"This one's for Earl!"

Glimpsing George standing quietly in the doorway, Linwood demanded, "Were you in on that?"

"In on what?" George asked, all innocence.

"Don't try to dodge with me!" Linwood raised his voice—certain in his own mind that George knew all about it, too. But he didn't.

Poor Linwood. He had lost sleep every night of the preachers meeting—then had to be up all *that* night, as well, trying to accommodate a Joe Gilmore-Earl Mansur-Ira Rice-trumped-up wedding! You just don't hear of preacher-pranks like that one much anymore.

FULL-BLOODED AMERICAN INDIAN

Born into the family of **Joe, Sr.**, and **Isabel Gilmore**—both full-blooded American Indians—on August 16, 1919, at Allen, Oklahoma, Joe, Jr. had one sister **Imogene** (Mrs. Jack Chiles), still living, at Allen.

Having attended Abilene Christian College, Joe graduated with the bachelor's degree from East Central State University, in Ada, Oklahoma. His graduate work was done at San Jose State University, in California.

EDITOR PRESENT FOR JOE'S WEDDING

On December 16, 1945, I was present for his wedding to Miss **Joy Rhodes**, of Clinton, Arkansas, at the old 17th Street church address in San Francisco, California. (They met when **R. N. Hogan** preached one Lord's Day where Joe was then preaching at Vallejo, in the Bay Area.)

Joe and Joy had one daughter, **Melinda**, who now is Director of Customer Service of ArthroCare, a surgical equipment company, in California—her husband, **Ron Kolar**, having passed away five years earlier. One granddaughter, **Lisa Kolar**, is now in her second year at the University of California/Riverside, studying to become a medical doctor.

KNOWN AS INDIAN "BOY PREACHER"

Baptized at age 12 by **Perry Blue**, brother of the renowned **Joe Blue**, during a gospel meeting preached by **J. D. Boren** at Allen, Oklahoma, and encouraged by **C. R. Nichol**, of Seminole, Oklahoma, by the time he was 15 or 16 Joe already was preaching sermons upon occasion, though his "regular" preaching did not begin until he was 18.

When news got out that an Indian "boy preacher" was to hold his first gospel meeting, numerous Indians, cowboys, ranchers and others came to hear him preach. Having only five sermons prepared by that age, all on Acts 2:38, some 15 souls responded to his invitation.

When they insisted he preach five more nights, Joe protested he only had five sermons and that he already had preached them. They insisted he preach the *same five sermons* all over again. Reluctantly he agreed, preaching the points on Acts 2:38 in a different order and with a different approach. Five more were baptized. After that he was widely referred to as "Ole Acts 2:38!"

GILMORE'S PREACHING WAS UBIQUITOUS

Both locally and throughout the nation, brother Gilmore's preaching seemingly took him everywhere. While in college, he preached at Francis, Oklahoma—later doing local work at Chandler, Arkansas; Flore, Illinois; and at numerous places in California, including Vallejo, Whittier, East Los Angeles, Oakland [where he followed Foy E. Wallace, Jr., who recommended him for the work], Hayward, Central in San Jose, San Lorenzo, and last of all, East Bay Church of Christ in Hayward.

In great demand both for gospel meetings and to speak on Bible lectureships, particularly in his later years, wherever one went he seemed to be always there. If "ubiquitous" ever fit a gospel preacher, certainly it had to fit Joe Gilmore. In the closing decade of his life he was appearing on from 19 to 20 lectureships every year, requiring his writing innumerable chapters for lectureship books, in all parts of the United States.

PROUD OF HIS HERITAGE

Although Joe Gilmore worked smoothly with people of whatever race, color or nation, as the great-great-grandson of **William McIntosh**, Chief of Chiefs of the Creek Indian Nation, he was appropriately proud of his heritage.

Chief McIntosh was over all of what today is called Alabama and Georgia—Alabama being an Indian word meaning “here we rest”—including over 25-million acres of territory covering 85,000 square miles.

As an American Indian, it always rankled Joe that an Italian by the name of **Christopher Columbus** claimed to have “discovered” the land over which his forebears had ruled for centuries—maybe even millenniums. He often threatened to go “discover” Italy for the Creek Indian Nation the same way that Columbus discovered *his* country 500 years before—but, of course, he never did.

SPEAKING ABOUT AND TO INDIANS

As an Indian himself, brother Gilmore had entree among those of Indian descent that those of us who were *not* Indians could never enjoy.

In addition to speaking on Indian history to numerous school groups, he was able to preach in gospel meetings and on other occasions on Indian reservations to various tribes such as the Navajo, Oneida, Chickasaw, Oglala Sioux and others.

At one time, he and his personal Indian friend **Wayne Newton** were honored as special guests of 27 Indian tribes in Carson City, Nevada.

DETRACTORS OF GOSPEL PREACHERS OF YESTERYEAR OFFENDED JOE

When self-acclaimed, would-be “scholars” arose among us during the 60’s and decades following, denigrating those *genuine* scholars and *true* gospel preachers who went before, Joe Gilmore recognized such self-aggrandizement for what it was and refused to be deceived by their false claims. In fact such unfounded defamation irritated him beyond expression.

For several years, along with Noah Hackworth, he co-directed the West Coast Firm Foundation Lectureship at San Lorenzo, California.

Just prior to the illness leading to his passing, brother Joe and I had planned to be together for a series of lectures primarily concerning the Navajos at Gallup, New Mexico. When he suffered a stroke and couldn’t make it, I went ahead for both of us. [We also had projected some work among the Oglala Sioux; but now, with his passing, *that* contact for Christ is forever gone.]

THE GILMORES AND MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

An Appreciation Dinner for Joe and Joy Gilmore was hosted by the Memphis School of Preaching on Monday, March 31, 1997, during the annual MSOP lectureship. The timing could not have been better. Speakers at the Dinner included **Curtis A. Cates**, Director, **Harrell Davidson**, **Raymond Hagood**, **Noah Hackworth**, **Perry Cotham**, **Gary Colley**, **Robert R. Taylor, Jr.**, **Garland Elkins**, **Jim Laws**, **Ronnie**

Hayes, **Buster Dobbs**, **Eddie Whitten**, **Joseph A. Meador**, **Ira Y. Rice, Jr.**, **Wayne Coats**, **Keith A. Mosher**, **Dub McClish**, **Joe Gilmore, Jr.**, closing with a prayer led by **Billy Bland**.

As the years of their fruitful lives were winding down, Joe and Joy often discussed what should become of his voluminous library once he was gone. They agreed together that the most appropriate place to put it was with the Memphis School of Preaching, right here in Memphis, Tennessee, within a mile of where Vada and I live.

Once Joe died in November, Joy wasted no time in carrying out Joe’s wishes. Vada and I, having just returned from missionary efforts in the Philippines, Singapore and India, were delighted to learn that, while we were away, Joy had sent all 13,000 pounds of Joe Gilmore’s library to Memphis School of Preaching. It was off-loaded at the school’s sparkling new facilities on Forest Hill-Irene Road, which will have its opening, Lord willing, on January 11, 1998, just 25 days from this writing. We cannot express enough to Joy our appreciation for the way she stood by and supported her magnificent husband for the almost 52 years they had together.

When we consider all the manifold accomplishments of this truly noble Creek Indian gospel preacher, it somehow seems inadequate to say that “a prince has fallen in Israel.” But how else can we express the magnitude of our loss now that the great-great-grandson of Chief of Chiefs William McIntosh is no longer here! We miss you, Joe.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Faithful Schools Need More Books For Larger Libraries

When we learned that sister Joy Gilmore had given brother Joe’s entire library as a contribution to Memphis School of Preaching, we thought, how wonderful!

Not only Memphis School of Preaching, but several other of our faithful schools, need all the sound books and libraries they can get to fill out their own school libraries.

For instance, you might consider giving such not only to *Memphis School of Preaching*, but to *Houston College of the Bible*, in Spring, Texas; *Southwest School of Bible Studies*, in Austin, Texas; to *Florida School of Preaching*, in Lakeland, Florida—and, while you are at it, to *Four Seas College*, in Singapore; and to *Kakinada School of Preaching*, in Kakinada, India.

Those interested in contributing books and/or libraries to any of these schools, please write to us for their addresses—also how such gifts can be made so as to qualify for tax deductions.

While overseas in December, we noted such gifts are needed particularly in Singapore as well as in Kakinada. Once given, it costs a great deal to ship them there; but, in the long run, how eminently worthwhile!—*The Editor*

JOE GILMORE, JR.—SERVANT OF GOD

Garland Elkins

When Moses died God said “**Moses my servant is dead**” (Joshua 1:2). It is my conviction that God would have said if he were revealing his comments, “**Joe Gilmore my servant is dead.**” Joe Gilmore, faithful and able gospel preacher for more than 60 years, departed from

man of deep compassion and wholesome love for God, Christ, his fellow-men, and especially for his brethren (I Peter 3:8,9; Galatians 6:10). He was always very sensitive to the feelings of others and though the truth he preached might sometimes wound the feelings of some, it was never



this life, Sunday, October 5, 1997 in San Jose, California.

Joe Gilmore, Jr., was born into the family of **Joe Gilmore, Sr.**, and **Isabel Gilmore** on August 16, 1919, in Allen, Oklahoma. Joe became a Christian at the age of 12. He was baptized by **Perry Blue**, brother of the famed **Joe Blue** of Arkansas. In addition to his education in school Joe was taught and trained by two of the most capable and best known preachers of their day; brethren **C. R. Nichol**, and Joe Blue. Brother Gilmore often spoke of those two great gospel preachers, **Foy E.** and **G. K. Wallace**, and numerous other great men of an earlier time.

Since space is limited I shall discuss brother Joe from different standpoints:

AS A CHRISTIAN

Joe Gilmore was a great Christian gentleman. Genuine greatness is not for sale in the marketplace. It is the reward of one who truly dedicates his life to the Lord, and this brother Joe had done. There are many intangibles in the life of brother Joe, but I mention only a few of them. (1) Brother Gilmore was a man of deep conviction. He had a great respect for God's inspired word, the Bible. He declared to men what God decreed in his word. He also loved men who preached God's word; he loved them for their work's sake. He was deeply troubled that many are minimizing what God has revealed in the Bible. (2) Joe was a

done deliberately. Multitudes referred to him as “a good man,” “a great man” and one “who makes everyone feel special.” He was skilled in doing this because he was so very “special.” He was one of the most respectful and courteous men that I have known. He was a man of peace. He talked with me more than once about some who had treated him with less than “the golden rule” treatment. However, the last time that we discussed the subject his words were, “I am going to treat them right, I am a man of peace.” (3) Joe Gilmore was consecrated to the Lord's work (I Corinthians 2:2; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:21). Brother Joe has stamped himself so deeply upon my heart (and of countless others) that nothing shall ever erase the impressions for good.

AS HUSBAND AND FATHER

On December 16, 1945, Joe was married to Miss **Joy Rhodes** in San Francisco, California. They met when Joy attended services where Joe was preaching; **R. N. Hogan** was preaching that Sunday. Sister Joy was from Clinton, Arkansas. Joe and Joy were blessed with a daughter, **Melinda**, who is Director of Customer Service of Arthro-Care, a surgical equipment company. Her husband is deceased. The Gilmores have one granddaughter, **Lisa Kolar**, who is enrolled in the University of California Riverside. She is studying to be a medical doctor.

Brother and sister Joe and Joy Gilmore were a wonderful team. Sister Gilmore was always eager to carry out her role as "help meet" to brother Gilmore. She stood with Joe holding the banner high for truth (Psalms 60:4). In 1979, when **Thomas B. Warren** and I co-edited a book entitled, *The Home As God Would Have It And Contemporary Attacks Against It*, we assigned Joe Gilmore the subject, *What Shall We Leave Our Children?* Joe did a great job with his lecture and also in the chapter that he submitted for the book. After a good introduction he mentioned the following headings and then discussed each one. He listed: "A Good Name," "A Good Memory of a Christian Home," "A Personal Example," "A Good Education," "A True Faith In God," "An Appreciation of the Beautiful" and then the "Conclusion." In the conclusion he wrote,

These are some of the things that we should leave our children. Parents are responsible for the finished product. Children advertise our failure or success (Proverbs 20:11). May God help us that when they turn away from our graves that they will carry a righteous heritage!

AS A PREACHER AND DEBATER

Joe was always well prepared. His preaching showed great balance. No faction has ever been able to claim him as one of them, but rather he opposed and exposed them. He was a great preacher of the gospel. He preached "the word" (II Timothy 4:2). He believed that the gospel is God's power unto salvation, and he was not ashamed of it (Romans 1:16). He loved the truth, and he loved to preach it (I Corinthians 9:16). Not only did he love the truth, and love to preach it, but he also had a deep love for souls (II Corinthians 12:15). I think of him when I think of Barnabas "the son of exhortation" (Acts 4:36).

Joe was not just a child in God's family, he was a soldier in God's army. Clad in the Christian armor and with sword drawn, he stood in the forefront of the battles to save the church from errors that threatened. He went to the grave bearing some of the battle scars. However, in one sense God's warfare valiant soldiers never die, they just pass on to receive their crown (II Timothy 4:1-8).

AS A FRIEND

I have enjoyed the inestimable privilege of having Joe Gilmore as my friend for nearly a quarter of a century. For almost a quarter of a century we spoke on lectureships together, and what a joy that has been! We knew each other well, and had mutual respect for each other. Our friendship was grounded in complete trust and confidence in each

other. Likewise we shared sameness of interests, a common viewpoint in fundamental matters regarding truth. (John 17:20,21; Philippians 3:16). When I think of our friendship I think of the following scriptures: "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). "And Jonathan, Saul's son arose, and went to David in the wood, and strengthened his hand in God" (I Samuel 23:16).

AS AN EXPERT IN INDIAN AFFAIRS

Joe's great-great-grandfather, **William McIntosh**, was Chief of Chiefs of the Creek Nation. Joe was recognized as an authority in matters of Indian history and he often lectured on those subjects. After his death **Curtis Cates** said to me, "Joe has laid down his war bonnet" and my wife, **Corinne** said, "Joe has gone to the happy hunting ground." As he was lying in state prior to the funeral Joe held a Bible clasped with one hand as he did when preaching, and among the flowers stood his Indian headdress. He was proud, in the proper sense of the word, of his Indian heritage, but his major emphasis was his spiritual heritage: God, Christ, the church.

Brother Joe Gilmore could say with Paul, "For I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Timothy 1:12).

*"Servant of God, well done,
Thy glorious warfare's past;
The battle's fought, the victory's won,
And thou art crowned at last."*


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A LOYAL FRIEND, JOE GILMORE, JR.

Curtis A. Cates

The writer considered it a great blessing and privilege to have been counted a friend by Joe Gilmore, as were countless others who have diligently sought to hold high the banner of truth. Truly he loved the Lord, and he loved his faithful fellow soldiers of the cross of Christ. He, like Abraham, was a **"friend of God"** (James 2:23), being a great man of faith and of obedience (II Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8). What a blessing it was to be privileged, like David and Jonathan, to have Joe as a friend (I Samuel 18:1). When I think of Joe, I think of the following characteristics of this outstanding gospel preacher.

Joe made it his aim to **"show himself friendly,"** an indispensable ingredient of having friends. There is something special about friends. Note the friendship seen between God and Moses: **"And Jehovah spake unto Moses face to face, as a friend speaketh unto his friend"** (Exodus 33:11). Joe was ever glad to hear from his friends, as when **Ira Rice, Garland Elkins, Robert Taylor, Harrell Davidson,** and I were privileged to talk by telephone to him while he was hospitalized on the occasion of some earlier very serious surgery. He would always say, "You fellows have made my day." Solomon wrote, **"Oil and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of man's friend that cometh of hearty counsel"** (Proverbs 27:9). Also, **"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend"** (Proverbs 27:17). Yes, friendship is special.

Joe was ready to help. He sought opportunities to do good, to encourage righteous endeavors, to use his great talents in the Lord's service. Like Paul, he was **"ready to preach the gospel"** (Romans 1:15); he powerfully used his talents in the kingdom. And, he was **"rich in good works...ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for [himself] a good foundation against the time to come..."** (I Timothy 6:18,19). One needed but to mention a special need, and brother and sister Gilmore were among the very first to encourage it. (An ex-

ample was when the Memphis School of Preaching announced its special goal for the new school building).

Joe was a man of great integrity. He, like Micaiah, had the attitude of **"As Jehovah liveth, what Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak"** (I Kings 22:14). Never mind what the 400 prophets of Ahab were saying, never mind that his life was in danger—Micaiah stood for and spoke principle and truth. Joe stood for principle—a man of sparkling integrity and ethics.

Joe was energetic. Preaching the gospel was his life, and he expended every energy to go wherever he had opportunity. To calculate the hours spent and the mileage covered in aircrafts as he went across this great land from coast to coast and from border to border preaching the gospel in meetings and in lectureships would be impossible. He literally wore himself out in the Lord's service and in helping his preaching friends in special efforts for the Lord. Though often weary with traveling, he expressed only great delight that he was the Lord's servant.

Joe never compromised. He knew the truth (John 8:32), and he was **"set for the defense of the gospel"** (Philippians 1:17). He was **"a good soldier of Jesus Christ"** (II Timothy 2:3), who never allowed himself to become entangled in the affairs of this life (2:4). He loved the New Testament pattern (1:13), and he preached it **"in season, out of season"** (4:2). He defended the truth in debate, and he stopped the mouths of false teachers (Titus 1:9-11; Galatians 2:5). He departed this life with his spiritual **"tomahawk"** in his hand (II Timothy 4:6-8), having always preached **"the truth in love"** (Ephesians 4:15).

Joe was dependable. God could depend on him, and faithful children of God could depend on him. **"A friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversity"** (Proverbs 17:17), **"But there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"** (18:24). **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"** (John 15:13). Christ is our great example in friendship, sacrificial and undying love. Joe loved as a friend, for he strove diligently to imitate his Savior. His goal was to love what Christ loves and to be a friend of those who are friends of God.

Our heavenly father has great things in store for his friends. Our beloved brother and loyal friend is now experiencing those wondrous blessings and delights. May the Lord bless our precious memories of our beloved companion in the word, and may he bless Joy and family.

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JOE GILMORE—A PREACHER'S PREACHER

Bobby Liddell

Our brother in Christ, **Joe Gilmore**, truly was a preacher's preacher. He reached a lofty pinnacle of godly endeavor as a faithful child of God, and even more, as a skilled proclaimer of the gospel of Christ, which he steadfastly set forth, in the presence of friends and in the presence of enemies, for more than 60 years. We loved to hear him preach because he loved to preach the word of God! He loved to preach because he had something to say, good news from God which the world needed to hear.

God blessed me with many opportunities to sit at Joe's feet, and for that I am deeply grateful. I learned much about preaching as I listened and observed this great man of God at work, doing what he did best and loved most. I was much impressed by what brother Joe never did. He never apologized for the truth, compromised the truth, deceitfully handled the truth, left out parts of the truth which might be controversial or disdained by men, made light of the truth, nor allowed it to suffer at his hand. He never preached the doctrines of men, sophistry, silliness, nor demeaned the pulpit by improper conduct or language. From the moment he arose to speak, his obvious love and deep respect for God and his inspired word were readily apparent to all. Upright in character and in posture, he held the Bible close to his heart, and powerfully preached the powerful gospel.

Joe not only loved to preach, he loved preachers. He was a great encourager to me, and to all who sought to proclaim the truth. He patiently counseled other preachers, heartily recommended good men for speaking engagements or to work with congregations, and treated young preachers as if they were among the most important preachers in the

brotherhood. He challenged us all to climb to greater heights, and opened doors of opportunity whenever he could. Our admiration was not misplaced.

Joe Gilmore set forth a great example of what is truly important in life. He was greatly honored among men, as a national representative of his beloved Indian people, and could have devoted his life's energy to such work. However, he sought more to be pleasing to God, and to win his praise; thus, he spent his life in serving him, and left the world a better place because he was here.

We sincerely believe Joe has won the victory, and has been welcomed home, carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. His life has been measured, not in years, but in deeds of faith; not in length of days, but in depth of love. Here, we mourn because of our loss, because of our love, reminiscing about the past. However, we also rejoice for the future, for we trust that, there, in that better place, he awaits to welcome us, if we, like he did, complete our journeys faithfully. How we shall miss him until that day, but how enriched we are because of him, and his life of service to our savior!

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TRIBUTE TO AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN

Dub McClish

News of **Joe Gilmore, Jr.**'s, crossing over the Jordan on October 5 reached me while I was in a gospel meeting series at Pottersville, Missouri. Lavonne called to tell me that someone had called her with the message. My first reaction was one of sympathy for **Joy**, his beloved wife of 51 years, and for their daughter, **Melinda**, and granddaughter, **Lisa**. My second reaction was to think of the degree to which the kingdom was diminished by his passing. He was one of several men of unusual ability and dedication to the truth we have seen pass to their reward in the past few years (some of them being **Bill Jackson**, **Andrew Connally**, **J. Noel Merideth**, **B. B. James**, **Guy N. Woods**, **Foy L. Smith**, **Frank Dunn**). My third reaction was the personal loss I felt at losing a good friend and encourager of my efforts in the kingdom.

I knew of and respected Joe from a distance long before I met him at a lectureship many years ago. It was my privilege in the last dozen or so years of his life to be associated somewhat closely with him in various settings. I got to hear him preach a number of times and was with him in numerous informal situations. We both spoke on some of the same lectureships (including the *West Coast Firm Foundation Lectures*, which he co-directed a few years with **Noah Hackworth**, and the *Annual Denton Lectures*, which I direct). When he was honored at *Memphis School of Preaching* earlier this year, it was an honor to be among those who were asked to say a few words concerning him.

For many years, and up to the very end of his earthly sojourn, he was in great demand all over the nation, evinced by the large number of gospel meetings and lectureships he preached in each year. Even when he reached the age when most men would have sought retirement, he kept up a crushing schedule of traveling and preaching. He continued this although physical problems brought him near death several times in recent years. Many of us, knowing his physical limitations, wondered if his torrid pace would not finally catch up with him. But there was no "retirement" in Joe Gilmore; had he "retired" he would likely have died sooner than he did.

Even strangers were not around Joe very long without learning of his American Indian heritage and blood; his was the blood of chiefs. He was full of Indian history and lore. He knew the Indian chants and he knew the War Whoop (did he ever know it!). Joe's roots ran deep in the Indian culture of "Indian Territory" (Oklahoma), particularly in the area in and around Allen, Oklahoma where he was born. He used his Indian ancestry as a means of opening doors for preaching the gospel to various tribes on more than one occasion.

Joe was a jovial man who loved to hear or tell a humorous story, whether true or fictitious. Many a time have I been part of the company in which he was present (often in a restaurant after the last evening lecture in a lectureship) when the "preacher stories" would start. Joe could tell a few himself, but he most certainly enjoyed to the fullest hearing others tell them. He was involved in more than a few uproarious situations himself, such as the famous episode in Las Vegas, Nevada in which he and **Curtis Cates** had to pull two "ladies" apart who got into a fight in the main aisle of the auditorium during a church assembly! He once picked **Bill Jackson** up at the Oakland airport, and, forgetting where he parked, was convinced his car had been stolen. Just before he called the police he spotted it. I remember the occasion when he came to Modesto to speak in a lectureship and had to speak in his golf togs—he left his bag with his suit in it at home! Then there was the time in a Memphis, Tennessee restaurant when he was goaded (it didn't take much!) into demonstrating his Indian War Whoop, prompting a cook, meat cleaver in hand, to rush out of the kitchen, ready to protect himself and his customers from an obviously insane person! Joe had a beaming smile and was a man of good cheer to those about him.

Joe's death marks the loss of yet another direct link between our time and some of the legendary Gospel preachers of yesteryear. He was baptized by **Perry Blue** in 1931. He did his earliest preaching under the influence and tutelage of such men as **Joe Blue** and **C. R. Nichol**, and he was justifiably proud of their influence upon him. He imbibed much of their tenacious spirit and quick wit, which so well equipped him both as a preacher and a debater. He engaged proponents of various errors in numerous public debates.

Joe Gilmore was a generous man. When brethren would call him to preach he would go if his schedule would allow it, and at his own expense, if necessary. He was directly responsible for the contributions to the support of my work made by the church in San Jose, California as long as he was there. The checks came from the church, but I knew that the fund from which the checks were written was contributed by Joe and Joy Gilmore. When I would not have been able to afford the expense of the trip to San Jose to speak on the lectureship which he helped plan and direct, he would "take care" of my plane ticket so I could come. One of his favorite activities each year during the lectureship there was to take a large group of speakers and others to his favorite barbecue restaurant and treat us to a great time of feasting and visiting.

His great love was preaching the gospel and encouraging others to do the same. He excelled at it. He was a striking presence in the pulpit with his piercing eyes, his sharp facial features, his dark hair, and his winsome smile. How-

ever, when he preached, everyone knew he meant business. Apparently, early in his 60 years of preaching he adopted a posture in the pulpit that was his trademark. He stood almost board-stiff behind the pulpit stand with his Bible clasped firmly in his left hand and held over his heart throughout his sermon. He loved God's word and gave no ground in either its defense or its proclamation. He took to heart, as well as any man can, Paul's admonition to Timothy to "**Preach the word**" (II Timothy 4:2). One heard no pop-psychology mush or mere story-telling from this evangelist! Joe was always well-prepared when he stood before a crowd; he knew what he wanted to say and said it in words that were understandable by the ordinary hearer. By him many were snatched from sin and error and pointed toward the Savior and the home of the soul.

It was clearly evident that Joe was devoted to his family. His wife, truly his "Joy," was able to travel with him fre-

quently in the last few years. He was blessed with a companion who fully understood his love of preaching and who was sympathetic with and supportive of his labors. Their daughter, Melinda, and granddaughter, Lisa, were likely the nearest things to idols he ever had. While they grieve with the special grief of a close filial relationship, Joe's absence is also mourned by thousands of others whose lives he touched for the better. While we all mourn, yet we all rejoice in the assurance that those who die in the Lord are blessed and happy indeed (Revelation 14:13).

By all godly and decent standards, Joe Gilmore, Jr., was an extraordinary man. We will miss his strong and eloquent voice for the Lord among men, but we cannot begrudge him his place of rest and peace in Abraham's bosom.

— 908 Imperial Drive
Denton, Texas 76201

JOE GILMORE STEPS INTO ETERNITY

Noah A. Hackworth

More than 30 years ago when I first met **Joe Gilmore**, he was preaching in Hayward, California. Sometime thereafter we became friends. Our paths crossed often over the years because of our participation in lectureships across the country, but because of the very nature of our work it was seldom possible to work side by side. And yet I was made constantly aware of his presence in the brotherhood. Joe enjoyed many years of good health and service in the church of our Lord. But eventually, the years took their toll from him as they will from us all.

The last few years of his life presented several health problems which constantly threatened to reduce him to inactivity. They did reduce his active schedule. Finally, his state of health became critical. In the early morning hours of Sunday, October 5, Joe was taken to the hospital because of tremendous physical discomfort. Efforts to rescue him from the physical and emotional trauma from which he suffered failed, and sometime later Joe lapsed into unconsciousness from which he did not recover. The last hours of his struggle with life and death were filled with confusion and uncertainties. When it all had ended, several hours later, an exact diagnosis of what had happened and the exact cause of death seemed unobtainable and unsatisfactory, at least to Joe's family. Joe Gilmore, Jr., accomplished the greatest task of his life October 5, 1997. He "put out to sea," he "crossed the bar," "he stepped into eternity." Tennyson put it this way:

Sunset and evening star, And one clear call for me! And
may there be no moaning of the bar When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep, Too full for sound
and foam, When that which drew from out the boundless
deep Turns again home. Twilight and evening bell, And
after that the dark! And may there be no sadness of fare-
well When I, when I embark; For tho' from out our
bourne of Time and Place, The flood may bear me far, I

hope to see my Pilot face to face When I have crossed the
bar.

Joe's immortal spirit has gone back to God who gave it, and his body now sleeps in the bosom of mother earth in a cemetery in San Jose, California, not terribly far from where he lived. Our brother, though plagued with failing health for quite some time, kept on fighting to survive. He was not acquainted with the word "quit." He did not use it often and when he did he had no reference to ceasing his fight to live, or to recant from his labors in the kingdom of God. Our brother had stood on the brink of Jordan before, but the Lord was not ready for him to cross. More than once it appeared that his turn to ride the "Pale Horse" had come, but again the Lord was not ready. On other occasions to drink the bitter cup seemed inevitable, but it did not happen. Finally, Joe accomplished all these things. He approached, entered, and walked through the valley of the shadow of death, but not alone; someone walked with him (Psalms 23:4). Our brother is now free from the body that tortured him. His days have passed, his years have come to an end, they have gone and he has flown away (Psalms 90:10). An unknown author has said:

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free. I'm following the
path God laid for me. I took his hand when I heard him
call, I turned my back and left it all. I could not stay an-
other day To laugh, to love, to work or play. Tasks left un-
done must stay that way. I found that place at the close of
day. If my parting has left a void, Then fill it with remem-
bered joy. A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss. Ah yes,
these things, I too, will miss. Be not burdened with times of
sorrow. I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow. My life's
been full, I savored much. Good friends, good times, a
loved one's touch. Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your heart
and share with me; God wanted me now. He set me free.

Only the Lord knows the full amount of good Joe did. He was a faithful gospel preacher. What better commendation could be given? His influence will surely remain in the lives of many. Though he is dead he will continue to speak (Hebrews 11:4). Like the illustrious array of Christians who have preceded him in death, Joe Gilmore died in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, he will rest from his labors; and his works will follow him (Revelation

14:13). Our brother will no longer feel the heat of summer or the chill of winter. Instead, he will bask in the sunshine of God's eternal love. We have lost another gospel preacher, another faithful soldier of the cross, but we know our loss is heaven's gain.

—4400 Tulare Avenue
Visalia, California 93277

JOE GILMORE, JR., VALIANT AND VICTORIOUS SOLDIER OF CHRIST

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Joe Gilmore, Jr., was 12 years my senior. He was baptized into Christ the same year I was born. I only knew him by reputation until some 20 or 25 years ago. I first met him back in the 1970's when he and I began to speak on the same lectureships. During the 1970's, the 1980's and the 1990's he and I were on numerous lectureships together. We were scheduled to be on three together this past fall which did not materialize due to his declining health and death in early October of 1997.

It was always a major highlight of any lectureship when his time to speak materialized. I NEVER heard him give a lecture or preach a sermon in a gospel meeting but that he was well prepared. He stayed with the subject assigned him developing and delivering it as the true master of assemblies which he was. He had lived with the Book for so long and so well that he had instant recall of any scripture needed to validate a point he sought to make.

Nature was exceedingly kind and gracious to him blessing him with a keen, analytical mind. His voice was melodious and his speech was fluent. His diction was excellent. Marvelous was his mastery of words. He was a painter of pictures by the beauty and dignity of language lovely to every listener. He was a man of broad education and wide experience. Wisdom adorned him in fine fashion. He was never at a loss for appropriate words to express his thought and convey his conviction to each avid auditor in his audience.

He loved God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the truth, his devoted family, little children, sound gospel preachers, and dedicated Christians. He loved the souls of the lost and those of erring children of God who had departed from that faith most holy. He proclaimed the saving gospel to the former and the reclaiming gospel to the latter. His magnanimous love flowed forth fervently in every syllable that fell graciously from his lips. He loved good and great preachers of the past. This was in eloquent evidence

when he would speak affectionately and appreciatively of **Joe Blue, C. R. Nichol** or some other great worthy of the past. He did not bash them or denigrate them in any fashion. He was totally unlike the new breed of preachers now a curse to our cause. He was a grateful recipient of the lovely legacy they passed on to him. He sought to pass the same torch of truth on to his peers. Generations yet to be born, if time continues, will profit greatly from the wonderful writings he left in dozens of lectureship volumes.

He loved his Indian heritage and did all he could to help these native Americans, as he fondly called them. His Indian kinsmen had no greater or more effective spokesman than Joe Gilmore during this current century.

He was eminently successful in business ventures which made possible his vast travels in telling the story of

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redeeming love. He went where duty called whether recompense was available or not. He helped others to go with the message of life who lacked funds to make necessary trips. I am included in that number.

He was a true warrior of the Lord when truth was under attack and he was called to refute error and defend the glorious gospel of God. Hundreds of times he was called upon to defend truth against the militant errorists of our time.

IN ELOQUENT EMULATION

He lived so long and so well with the wonderful worthies of the Bible that he reflected marvelously well their attractive attributes. Like Enoch he walked WITH God (Genesis 5:21-24; Hebrews 11:5). Like Abraham he walked BEFORE God (Genesis 17:1). Like Israel was counseled to go east of the Jordan he walked AFTER God (Deuteronomy 13:4). Like Noah he was a preacher of righteousness (II Peter 2:5). Like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob he was a man of victorious faith (Hebrews 11:8ff). Like Moses he was faithful as the Lord's servant (Hebrews 3:5). Like Joshua he was a fearless leader and desired that he and his house serve the Lord as reflected in the book of Joshua in general and 24:15 in particular. Like David he was a man after God's own heart (I Samuel 13:14). Like Hebrew prophets of old he ever sought to be a faithful spokesman for Jehovah. Like John the Baptist he spoke and people followed Jesus (John 1:37). Like John again what he said about Jesus was true (John 10:41). Like his Lord he loved righteousness and hated iniquity (Hebrews 1:7,8). Like the apostles and early evangelists he sought to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified (I Corinthians 2:2). Like Paul he shrank not from declaring God's whole counsel (Acts 20:26,27). Like Timothy he preached the word in season and out of season (II Timothy 4:2). Many of us as his avid admirers feel deeply that he, in Pauline emulation, fought a good fight, finished the course and kept intact that faith most holy (II Timothy 4:7).

We shall not again soon see his equal in disposition, dedication, and dignity as a truly great preacher of the gospel. He graced preaching as few men have ever done or can do. May his tribe increase!

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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. **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 Field 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.

—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.

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Portland—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, Tel. (512) 643-6571. Jerry Moffitt, Minister.

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Cheyenne—High Plains Church of Christ, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, tel. (307) 634-3040.

—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."

SUNRISE, SUNSET

Gary Colley

Joe Gilmore, Jr. passed from life's little day to his eternal reward October 5, 1997, in San Jose, California. Loving memorials were spoken at his services by **Buster Dobbs, Eddie Whitten, Noah Hackworth, Jim Wright, Bobby Liddell, Randy Mabe, Dr. Maurice Hood, and Garland Elkins.** Others, no doubt, have spoken lovingly of our friend in his passing, though we were unable to attend these services.

VALIANT SOLDIER

He was a valiant soldier of the cross of Christ. He lovingly and willingly bore the heat of the day for the Master whom he loved. His faithful preaching, debating, writing, and lecturing covered many years and many places over our nation. He was a fine example of Christianity. The kingdom of heaven was always foremost in his thinking; to that kingdom alone he devoted his time, energy, and abilities. He has now passed the torch to others.

It was my pleasure to be associated with him on many lectureships. We closed the Garfield Heights lectures in Indianapolis each year for many years. His uncompromising

work in preaching the truth bore much fruit, and will for time to come. "He being dead yet speaketh."

CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN

All who were acquainted with "brother Joe" knew him to be an unusually fine man. It was always a pleasure to be in his company. He presented a dignity in his appearance, speech, and actions that were always complimentary to the Lord's church. He was keenly aware that as a gospel preacher he was personally responsible for how people viewed the church of Christ. Whether in the pulpit or a restaurant, he had an appeal that few, if any, could resist. He attracted the favorable attention of people, whether they were brethren in Christ, waitresses, newspaper people, or school students. Before leaving any place, he would know if any had Indian blood, and they would know of his Indian heritage!

While holding a meeting for the East Main congregation in Tupelo, Mississippi, a few years ago, he asked ahead of time if he might speak to some local schools about Indian affairs. Having arranged for two or three speaking hours each day, he with joy would interact with the young people in an exceptional way, always mentioning the gospel meeting in which we were engaged. As he would be leaving one classroom, other teachers would insist that he talk with their classes. Though I know he was weary, he never refused any request and enjoyed every minute with the very attentive young people! The brethren asked for him to speak one night about Indian affairs following the worship services, which he did for over two hours to everyone's delight!

SENSE OF HUMOR

I am convinced that preachers have more true life experiences than most, and must have a good sense of humor to survive! Joe could always enjoy humor as well as anyone I have known. He enjoyed telling things about older preachers, such as brother **Joe Blue** whom he had known and admired, as well as personal references that others enjoyed. One such incident concerned his learning how to baptize others. When he was young and just starting out to preach, one of his friends whom he had taught while caring for her horses, requested that he baptize her. This he had never

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between

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Thomas C. Brite



done before, and was quite worried about completing the task. He went to the building one afternoon to "practice," by baptizing a broom! He was in the baptistry with the broom, and working so hard at the task that he was not aware of several, including the mayor, who had entered the building and were quite amused at his efforts to baptize that broom! He endured many jokes by his friends in town for his efforts. But he later baptized his friend without any problem.

FRIENDSHIP

Joe had many friends all over the nation. He showed himself friendly to all who would allow. It seemed without

fail that if he had enemies they were only those who were enemies of the Lord. Humility was his garment; truth was his sword; love for all was his intent. I spoke with him just a short time before his death...he was planning a great meeting on an Indian reservation. I counted him my friend! No doubt, many others can say the same. "Till we meet" on the other shore, our dear friend will be sorely missed!

—7606 Hawkeye Drive
Austin, Texas 78749

ANOTHER SOLDIER OF THE CROSS LAYS HIS ARMOR DOWN

Darrell Conley

It was with great sadness that I heard of the death of **Joe Gilmore**: certainly not sadness for him, for he, at the end of a long and faithful life in the Master's service, is now at home to receive his reward. But sadness for myself and others, that we would not see him in this world anymore, never again listen to him preach, and not engage in conversation with him, which was always a pleasure. Sadness that another great force for the proclamation and defense of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ was now gone.

How many have we had to say goodbye to? **Foy Wallace, Jr., G. K. Wallace, Andrew Connally, Guy N. Woods, Franklin Camp**, and so many more. All of them great soldiers of the cross and, one would think, indispensable. But they are gone and the work is left to us who are less talented, less knowledgeable, but no less committed to the cause for which they spent their lives.

Some ten years ago, having heard of Joe Gilmore and read his writing, I met him for the first time, and got to hear him preach at the El Paso Lectureship. My late wife was with me, although her infirmities were already making themselves felt. El Paso was her home and it was a wonderful opportunity to spend some time with her family. Her maiden name was Crow, as in the Crow Indians. Her father had been born in 1915 in what had recently been called Indian Territory. She was always interested and proud of her Indian ancestry and I remember the enjoyable conversations she and Joe had before and after the lectures. As a "paleface," I just listened and hoped to hang on to my scalp!

On April 21 of this year, I had the pleasure of having lunch with Joe in Sherman, Texas, not far from where both he and I were holding meetings. I remember getting up my courage to ask him why the Indians were called "Red-

skins," since my face was every bit as red as his. Treating my question as though it were serious, he patiently explained that my face was only red from time to time, probably when my blood pressure was up, but the redness of his skin was permanent.

I asked him did he prefer being referred to as "an Indian," or as "a native American?" He said that either one was all right with him, but that they preferred "native American," since the other had been given them mistakenly by Columbus.

These questions were only out of curiosity and to prompt conversation. The name we both went by, "Christian," was far more important than any ethnic name or identification. The color of skin is of no importance whatsoever. Does a soul have any color at all? To ask that is to answer it. Whatever may have been the animosities that existed between our ancestors, they did not exist between us. Joe knew much more than I ever would about the mistreatment of the "red man" by the "white man." My great- and great-great-grandparents may have seen the Comanche raids on Central Texas where they lived as matters of life and death. No doubt, they were. That was a different generation and a different time. But Joe and I were united in our fight against a far deadlier foe, one that will rob us and others of our souls: the perversion of the gospel of Christ by those who would replace it with the religion of emotionalism and self will.

I loved and admired Joe Gilmore. The church will miss him. May the Lord raise up more such valiant warriors. May those of us who are left never fail to raise the war cry of the faithful.

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Twelfth Annual Shenandoah Lectureship

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

9:00 AM	The Religion of Christ Is a Daily Religion	Michael Mayo
10:00 AM	Daily Exhortation & Provocation of the Brethren	Bill Burk
11:00 AM	The Christian's Speech	Robert Johnson
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM	Daily Thoughts of Heaven	Glenn Frasier
2:30 PM	Coping — A Biblical Perspective	Steven Lloyd
3:30 PM	Take Up Your Cross Daily	Richard Massey
4:30 PM	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 PM	The Need For Daily Study & Meditation	B.J. Clarke
8:00 PM	Daily Christian Living In Light of God's Grace	Mike Vestal

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

9:00 AM	The Need For Daily Evangelism	Matt Gibson
10:00 AM	Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16)	Furman Carpenter
11:00 AM	The Joy of Christianity	Dan Flournoy
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM	Daily Devotion — Worship & Service	Dave Miller
2:30 PM	Possessing Peace Which Passeth Understanding	Michael Wyatt
3:30 PM	The Christian In the Work Place	Richard Melson
4:30 PM	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Doing Alms, Prayer, & Fasting (Matthew 6:1-18)	Robert Taylor
8:00 PM	Overcoming Pride & Prejudice	Gilbert Gough

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MEALS

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Limited reservations will be accepted subject to approval of the Shenandoah Eldership and available space.

AUDIO AND VIDEO TAPES

All lectures will be recorded on audio and video tapes. These tapes can be purchased from Tullstar.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

9:30 AM	James Overview	Johnny Ramsey
10:30 AM	Successful Christian Living	Johnny Ramsey
11:30 AM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM	How Can I Be Holy As God Is Holy?	Gary Summers
2:30 PM	Seek Ye First the Kingdom (Matthew 6:19-34)	Kenneth Ratcliff
3:30 PM	The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)	Eddie Hill
3:30 PM	FOR LADIES ONLY The Beauty of Holiness	Iris Ramsey
4:30 PM	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 PM	The Challenge of Christianity	Don Walker
8:00 PM	Practical Points From Proverbs	Ken Hope

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

9:00 AM	Overcoming Worry, Fear & Doubts	Robert Stephenson
10:00 AM	The Need For Patience & Longsuffering	Bill Towery
11:00 AM	Prayer & Providence In the Christian's Daily Life	Ben Moseley
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM	Overcoming Discouragement & Developing Optimism	Darrell Conley
2:30 PM	The Need For Appreciation, Gratitude, & Thanksgiving	Terry Hightower
3:30 PM	Beware of False Prophets (Matthew 7:15-20)	
4:30 PM	SUPPER BREAK	
7:00 PM	Daily Anticipation of Christ's Return	David Brown
8:00 PM	Overcoming Temptation	Dub McClish

BOOKS

Lectureship books will be available during the lectures and by mail from the church office.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUNSET

Tommy J. Hicks

In a previous article, I said, "The first I heard that *Sunset School of Preaching* (now called *Sunset International Bible Institute*,) 'might' be teaching something it should not on the marriage, divorce, and remarriage question was in 1978." I also said that when I went to *Sunset* to inquire into this matter, **Cline Paden**, then the Director of the *Sunset School of Preaching*, provided me with a form letter, dated March 6, 1973 (see the December 1997 issue of *CFTF* for the complete Paden letter—Associate Editor). Just over Paden's signature, the concluding statement of that letter was: "Therefore, *Sunset School of Preaching* does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry." My article indicated that *Sunset* had not taught error on marriage, divorce, and remarriage while I was a student there (1967-69). It was also my impression from Paden's 1973 letter and my 1978 visit with him in his office that during those years the school was *still* not teaching error on that issue. **I was wrong!**

RICHARD ROGERS AND THE EVIDENCE THAT I WAS WRONG

Not long after my article was published, I began receiving letters and phone calls from other *SSOP* alumni. They let me know, in no uncertain terms, that *Sunset* had taught error on marriage, divorce, and remarriage **before** I was a student there, **while** I was a student there, and **after** I was a student there. One of the first letters I received came from **Perry O'Dell**, a classmate of mine at *SSOP* from 1967 to 1969. O'Dell succinctly told me — "You were wrong about the teaching about the 'guilty party.' **Richard [Rogers]** taught this false doctrine several times in class. He made mention that a person divorced was not married, therefore was free to marry." Another *SSOP* alumnus, **Wayland McClellan**, who attended from 1969 to 1971, wrote me and said, "In our classes with Richard Rogers, and I am not sure which ones it might have been, he used

the illustration of two being handcuffed together. The point, supposedly, was to show that if one was released (that *one* being the party which had the right to divorce) then the *other* (the guilty party) would not be tied to anyone. It sounded 'good' to a young Christian who sat in 'awe' of his teacher, but the truth being that there was no biblical basis for such a conclusion." McClellan went on to say that, until about a year after his graduation, he held the erroneous view taught to him by Richard Rogers. Fortunately, McClellan came to see that what he had been taught was error and he has renounced it. However, how many "young Christian" preacher students have "sat in 'awe'" of their teachers (Richard Rogers, **Abe Lincoln**, **Truman Scott**, **Ted Stewart**...) at *Sunset*, have believed and accepted the errors they have been taught there, and continue to hold those errors to this day? Not only that, how many have been taught error at *Sunset* and then have gone all over the world teaching that error?

SSOP alumni from the 1965-67 class, from the 1967-69 class, from the 1969-71 class, and from later classes have come forward to say that Richard Rogers taught, all those years, that the "guilty party" can remarry after a divorce. So, I stand corrected. **But, what does all this surfacing information reveal about Paden's 1973 letter?**

WHY WOULD PADEN WRITE HIS 1973 LETTER?

An abundance of evidence (testimony from the students who were there, many of whom no doubt still have their class notes) proves beyond any doubt that, all through the years between 1965 and 1973, Richard Rogers was teaching that the "guilty party" may remarry after a divorce. It is now evident that it was because of this very fact that many brethren were sending inquiries to Paden about what was being taught at *SSOP* relative to marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Evidently, so many inquiries were coming in that Paden felt it expedient to produce a "form letter" to

(Continued on Page 11)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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February/1998

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David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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Editorial...

“SPECIAL MAILINGS” FUND NEEDS REPLENISHING

As readers of *Contending for the Faith* are aware, it has been quite some time since any appeal has been made on behalf of our “Special Mailings” Fund to send each issue of the paper *directly to the families* of churches who are *causing doctrinal divisions and offenses* among churches of Christ.

One insightful sister in Michigan valued these “Special Mailings” so highly that she put us in her will making close to \$20,000 available for the support of this work when she died.

MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED ALREADY

From all the information we can gather, these mailings are the *one single thing* now being done with the *greatest effect* to preserve the doctrinal integrity of churches of Christ in general—brotherhood-wide.

At least 800 members were influenced to leave one large, apostatizing church going elsewhere to worship and placing their membership with faithful congregations. We know of hundreds of others who have been moved to act likewise. This has strengthened the hand of churches still determined to hold fast to the doctrine of Christ as they have been taught.

The time is now here, however, when we need to INCREASE such mailings, not just in Nashville, Madison, Antioch, Donelson, Tulsa, Fort Worth and San Antonio, but in Houston, Lubbock, Midland and other similar areas where opposition to sound doctrine is raising its ugly head.

“SPECIAL MAILINGS” ARE COSTLY TO MAIL OUT

The cost of putting out these “Special Mailings,” admittedly, is rather enormous. But when we consider the monumental sums our liberalizing brethren are pouring into each Tulsa Workshop, Nashville Jubilee and such like, our cost pales by comparison.

The elders of the Spring (Texas) Church of Christ have agreed not only to *receive* such contributions and to send *tax deductible receipts* for same but to make all such funds available that these mailings can continue going out.

Whatever amount you can send—whether \$10,000, \$5,000, \$1,000, \$500, \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10 or whatever you can send—please make your checks payable to **Spring Church of Christ**, clearly earmarked “**Special Mailings**,” and address them to **Post Office Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383-0039**. Whatever amount you can contribute, God bless you as you send.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

ANSWERING AND EXPOSING A LOVE LETTER FROM A LIBERAL LASS

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH
P. O. Box 2273
Spring, Texas 77383-2273

[No Date]

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to respond to the issues of your "so called publication".....

I did not ask or subscribe to all of the negative information that you continue to print!!!!

TAKE ME OFF OF YOUR MAILING LIST IMMEDIATELY!!!!!!

Why can't we all stand for Christ together, instead of looking for "so called faults"????

Get a REAL JOB, instead of tearing others down that are trying to bring us all together as ONE IN CHRIST!!!

JUBILEE was wonderful & fantastic experience!!! It's people like you that destroy any hope for UNITY!!!

Do not send me anything else from your organization!!!

(Signed)

Patricia A. Carter
2442 Fairbrook Drive
Nashville, TN 37214

There are eight sentences in the body of Carter's letter. Only one sentence (the first one) is not ended with an exclamation. Out of the other seven sentences, four of them end with three exclamations each. Two of the remaining three sentences end with four exclamations each. The one demanding to be removed from our mailing list ends with six exclamations, is capitalized, and bolded. The sentence preceding it is bolded. There are a total of 26 exclamations. The body of the letter is comprised of 99 words. If there ever was a screaming letter, this is it. I am very glad that she did not telephone her request to us or I might now be deaf.

May we not conclude that the character of her letter is exemplary of the liberal mind-set (By "liberal" I mean those who teach doctrines that loose where God in his word has bound)? By her letter are we not allowed to see the liberal's concept of love, kindness, tolerance, patience, and benevolence toward brethren who oppose their pernicious views? Does Carter manifest the same disposition of heart toward Bap-

tists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Pentecostals of every description, and the various Community Churches that she does toward us?

Let us analyze this liberal, tender, and loving mis-sive of feminine grace and demeanor. I shall do this by examining each line of her loud letter of liberal love. Each line will appear just as she wrote it.

"THIS IS TO RESPOND TO THE ISSUES OF YOUR 'SO CALLED PUBLICATION.....' "

The only responses I can find in her letter are in the form of several loud denunciations of us and praise for sectarian denominational *Jubilee* "unity." She cites no scriptures that we violated. There are no attempts to disprove what we have written about the so-called "unity" efforts of the *Nashville Jubilee*.

She calls us a "so called publication." I do not know what that comment is supposed to mean, for we are a publication. If we are not a real entity, what made Carter as mad as an ole settin' hen? Was it a figment of her imagination? Indeed, we are very real and we are in her face, just as Paul was in Peter's face, and for the same reason, sin; her liberal feminine mystique notwithstanding (Galatians 2:11). Furthermore, God giving us the strength we will remain in the face of all false teachers, screams or no screams.

"I DID NOT ASK OR SUBSCRIBE TO ALL OF THE NEGATIVE INFORMATION THAT YOU CONTINUE TO PRINT"

Negative is as negative does. As usual the liberals allow for themselves what they will not allow for others. To help Carter just a little, I will say this about her letter. It is positively negative. However, she is not really opposed to being negative. She just wants me to be against what she is against. If I choose to oppose her beliefs, then I am engaged in a **Patricia A. Carter** unauthorized negative. Thereby my negative stance becomes a wrong one. This is what I call the spoiled-brat syndrome; that is, "I want my way right now or I will throw a wall-eyed fit until I get it." In reality this sums up the liberal mind-set. I wonder if Carter was brought up in the nurture and admonition of a "youth minister." Moreover, could it be possible that she writes this kind of letter to any unsolicited mail received by her from the denominations.

**"TAKE ME OFF OF YOUR MAILING LIST
IMMEDIATELY"**

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines *exclamation* to be 1: a sharp or sudden utterance 2: vehement expression of protest or complaint. An "exclamation point" is defined to be a mark used especially after an interjection or exclamation to indicate forceful utterance or strong feeling. Obvious to anyone who can see through a ladder is the fact that Carter's exclamation points possess the constituent elements of the previous definitions. That means she has made a statement that is to be received by us as "a sharp or sudden utterance that is a vehement expression of protest or complaint indicating forceful utterance or strong feeling" to the sixth power. Well, if such a cry does not push the decibels above the pain level, I do not know what would. It just seems to me that one exclamation point at the end of a sentence with every word capitalized and bolded would be sufficient for Carter to make her point. If I had written a letter to her, using her letter as a pattern, I would have been labled unloving, harsh, and unkind. As **June Carter Cash** used to say, "Life gets tedious, don't it?"

**"WHY CAN'T WE ALL STAND FOR CHRIST TOGETHER,
INSTEAD OF LOOKING FOR 'SO CALLED FAULTS'**

In reality Carter wants us to be "UNIFIED IN RELATIVISM AND ALLEGIANCE TO EQUALITY." If the preceding quote looks familiar to our readers it is because it served as the title for an article written by **Tom Wacaster**, the preacher for the *Cedar Bayou Church of Christ* in Baytown, Texas, in the October, 1997, issue of *Contending for the Faith*. Wacaster's article exposes Carter's ludicrous view. Once again, please consider a part of what Wacaster said:

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."

Just maybe one can ascertain from the previous quote from Wacaster's article why Carter never made any reference to the scriptures. Herein is the reason she refers to our exposure of erroneous teaching at the *Jubilee* as "so called faults."

Seemingly, Carter does not have the foggiest notion about what it means when she expresses her desire for us to "stand for Christ together..." She does not understand that true biblical unity demands an absolute objective standard of conduct: "**the perfect law of liberty**" (James 1:25). She does not grasp that

the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice upon which the saints may be united (II Timothy 3:16, 17; Galatians 6:16). She has no concept of what it means to do only what is authorized by the New Testament (Colossians 3:17; Philippians 3:16). I seriously doubt that she has any idea about how the New Testament authorizes *anyone* to do *anything*. By her comments I am caused to wonder if she even cares about submitting to authority of any kind. Hence, she has no clear idea about what the inspired apostle to the Gentiles meant when he declared "**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.**" (Philippians 3:16,17). If she thinks that walking "**by the same rule**" means to walk by the rule of love, then she must understand that Jesus said, "**If you love me, keep my commandments.**" (John 14:15). The apostle John wrote to Christians, saying:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him... By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous (I John 2:3-5; 5:2, 3).

In part the apostle Paul wrote that love, "**doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;**" (I Corinthians 13:5, 6). Moreover, Paul declared that Christians are to "**speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment**" (I Corinthians 1:10). Carter and others of her persuasion simply do not believe what the Bible teaches regarding the aforementioned matters. Therefore, they are angry with the word of God (at least on these points) and are too ignorant and conceited to recognize their sad predicament.

ABOUNDING SUBJECTIVITY AND RELATIVISM

Carter is interested in one thing only: let me do as I please and never criticize me or those who believe as I do. If that is not her position, let her explain what it is. I wonder what twist her mind takes to allow her to spotlight what she perceives to be faults in us while in the same letter she faults us for "looking for 'so called faults.'" I suppose, according to Carter's approach to these matters, it is according to **whom** is at fault as to whether "looking for 'so called faults'" is wrong or not wrong.

One reason that Carter operates as she does is because she is subjective in her evaluation of what we have written. She and her spiritual kin are like ricocheting bullets; they may hit anything at anytime or anywhere. The mood in which they find themselves determines which way they glance. For whatever reason they have no real objective standard on which to base their decisions. Truly, they speak **"...words without knowledge..."** (Job 38:2). The sad part about the whole thing for such persons as Carter is that they end up shooting themselves to death. Can we help Carter and her spiritual kin to see the error of their way? Not unless they are willing to submit their will to the will of heaven (John 12:48; Colossians 3:17). Now we are ready for Carter's next juvenile statement.

"GET A REAL JOB, INSTEAD OF TEARING OTHERS DOWN THAT ARE TRYING TO BRING US ALL TOGETHER AS ONE IN CHRIST "

Again, with Carter it is who is attempting to tear down whom as to whether such is right or wrong. If Carter is not working with all of her might to bring upon us swift destruction, pray tell, what would she write if she intended to do so? Once again note that her statement is a prime example of emotional subjectivism that attempts to practice on those who disagree with her what she seeks to condemn in them. As usual such allow for themselves what they will not allow in others. The legs of the lame are not equal. This is a blue-ribbon example of the basic mind-set and fundamental biblical ignorance of those who make up the benighted herds of church members who follow the various "pied piper" false teachers such as **Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado**, and all the rest of their spiritual kin. Indeed, **"... if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matthew 15:14).

As a preacher for 33 years, such a comment as "Get a REAL JOB" is not new to me. Sometimes it has been made in jest. At other times the statement was made in all seriousness. Those who are really serious with such comments usually speak from afar or anonymously. They are wise to speak such words clandestinely and from a distance. However, when Carter continues with "instead of tearing others down that are trying to bring us all together as ONE IN CHRIST!!!" I must point out to her that she evidently likes the demolition business just a little herself. Again, as with her charges that we are negative, she really is not opposed to "tearing others down," a rather negative act. The very purpose of her letter is to attempt to rip and tear *Contending for the Faith*. Why, her ripping and tearing was so loud it may almost have awakened the *David Lipscomb University* Board of Directors. On second thought, I doubt anything can

make that much racket. Carter's real desire is that we should join with her to tear up what she wants torn up (or torn down, whichever way she prefers it); then everything would be just all right with her.

Carter has about as much of a correct concept of "ONE IN CHRIST" as the members of the United Nations possess concerning unity among themselves. Indeed, her concept of the unity of the church follows the pattern ... (Pardon me, I really should use the politically correct term "paradigm" in the place of pattern. Let me try again.) Pat's concept of unity follows the "paradigm of preference," namely, "You go to your church and I'll go to mine, and we'll all get to heaven together." Like all liberals she has **redefined** the words **"unity"** and **"one."** According to Webster, *unity* is "the quality or state of not being multiple; ONENESS." The Webster Dictionary people should have asked Carter and the liberals about their definition of unity before they settled on the definition they included in their dictionary.

"JUBILEE WAS A WONDERFUL & FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE!!! IT'S PEOPLE LIKE YOU THAT DESTROY ANY HOPE OF UNITY"

I do not doubt for one minute that to people who possess Carter's mind-set that "Jubilee was a wonderful & fantastic experience!!!" The Southern Baptist Convention is "a wonderful & fantastic experience" to those of that persuasion. Religious synods, conferences, and councils are marvelous things to those who believe in them. Billy Graham Crusades are great things to those who think as those folks do. There never has been a "holy roller" meeting in the world that was not a thing of beauty and greatly to be desired among those of that mental disposition. Some people even thought of **Tammy Faye Bakker** in the same way. Of course all of the previously mentioned human preferences prove only one thing: namely, that people left to their own subjective likes and dislikes may think that anything or anyone is wonderful and fantastic, even Tammy Faye (Acts 8:9-11; 12:21-33; Romans 16:18).

The work and influence of false teachers on certain women in the great apostasy were described by Paul when he wrote: **"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"** (II Timothy 3:6, 7). As Solomon declared: **"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun"** (Ecclesiastes 1:9)—Carter and others who are led around by the nose by false teachers notwithstanding.

Frankly, it makes me no difference at all that someone thought that "JUBILEE was a wonderful & fantastic experience!!!" I was there for a night and a day and as far as I am concerned it stunk to high heaven. Why did I not think it to be "a wonderful & fantastic experience!!!" The answer is simple. The whole Jubilee outfit from top to bottom has no respect for Bible authority. They love their denominational trappings and will not be kept from them.

Carter got this much right when she said that I fully intend to do all that is within my power and in harmony with the Bible to destroy any hope of UNITY AS DEFINED BY HER AND THE SECTARIAN DENOMINATIONAL JUBILEE CHURCH OF CHRIST. It is far past time for faithful churches of Christ to mark and avoid all who hold to such a human mess as is the *Nashville Jubilee* and their temple inhabitants (Romans 16:17, 18).

"DO NOT SEND ME ANYTHING ELSE FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION"

My, my, what an unloving and negative exclamation from this sweet-spirited, positive, and ecumenical woman. I almost snapped to attention, clicked my heels together, and cried out "Heil Hitler!" Do you think that Carter purrs just as lovingly when she cuddles up to her sectarian denominational "brethren?" As I have always said: "You haven't been loved, until you've been loved by a liberal." O consistency, thou art a jewel!

I suppose more could be said about this erring sister, but what good would it accomplish? It is obvious that she is sold on sectarian denominationalism and that she works hard at having a constant "warm and fuzzy feeling" about everyone and everything (but people like me). It is obvious from her letter that she has no correct concept of the absolute objective nature of truth and that such is the nature of the New Testament. She knows little or nothing about how to "rightly divide the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). She reacts to things on the basis of her constantly changing emotions rather than on the solid foundation of the unchanging objective standard that is the New Testament (II Timothy 3:16, 17). She is governed by her fickle emotions. Therefore, she seeks a warm

emotional encounter with everybody (excepting me and those who think as I do). She equates an emotional high with spirituality. Hence, to have someone criticize the source of her emotional giddiness is in her mind to attack her faith. Sadly, she exemplifies most of the people in every generation who run after some new thing. Unstable as water, they always take the course of least resistance. Carter well sets out the mind-set of those who comprise the present apostasy, for that matter any apostasy at any time. As ping-pong balls, they are subject to travel in whatever way the paddle of their subjective feelings slaps them. Such subjective relativists are doomed to a constant roller-coaster ride of the mind and spirit throughout life. The apostle Paul wrote of such persons when he penned that they are "**...tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive**" (Ephesians 4:14).

If there were any scriptural approach to get Carter and the myriad of unstable emotional and spiritual wrecks of her mind-set to see the error of their way, we would take it. However, if folks will not be persuaded by the absolute objective standard of divine truth, it cannot be done. Jesus said: "**He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day**" (John 12:48). Indeed the apostle requested of the Thessalonians that they pray "**...that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith**" (II Thessalonians 3:2). With the prophet Isaiah we plead,

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 1:18-20).

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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OTHERS ALSO WARNED, BUT TO NO AVAIL

[We first warned brethren of the "Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop" held at the Sheraton Astro-dome Hotel, Houston, Texas, November 6-8, 1997, in our October, 1997 issue. We continued to expose errors of the "Workshop" in our November and December issues. In this issue we continue to offer adequate evidence and credible witnesses documenting the error of certain ones who are heralds of heresy and who were a part of the Houston hybrid of the Nashville Jubilee and the Tulsa Workshop.

The leading churches of this apostasy event, the Lake Houston, Memorial, and Westbury congregations, show no indication that they are open to persuasion by evidence. Moreover, they reject the biblical obligation of the Lord's church to oppose false teaching and teachers. For example, the Lake Houston elders, Humble, Texas, met literally behind closed doors with their sheep to declare that they were no longer interested in entertaining any opposition to their continued support of the next Gulf Coast Workshop to be held in 1999. It is our understanding that the Workshop will alternate years with Dallas. This year it will be in the Metroplex and in 1999 back in Houston.

The letters of Charles L. Bowers, a gospel preacher, and the exchange he had with the Lakewood Church of Christ elders appear unedited. We commend Bowers for his willingness to stand up for the truth on this matter. The letters speak for themselves and are further evidence that the movers and shakers behind the Gulf Coast Workshop are not about to change a thing. Walking in the steps of their false elder sister, the Christian Church, they are determined to bring in their pernicious doctrines in their full-scale attack on the church of Christ in general and the greater Houston churches in particular.

Notice especially the erroneous application of Matthew 18:15-20 in the October 20, 1997 letter from the Lakewood elders to Bowers. Indeed, "...Matthew 18:15-20 says only what it says, not what some would like for it to say." That being true, how dare men wrest the passage out of its context and make it apply to a public setting. Read again Wayne Coats, article in the December, 1997, issue, pages 13-15, entitled, "What Did You Say Matthew 18:15-17 Teaches?" Would anyone, elders included, from the Lakewood church be willing to affirm in public debate that Matthew 18:15-17 applies to those who preach error publicly? We will not hold our breath until the Lakewood elders' and preachers' love for the truth moves them to do what faithful brethren have always done, namely, meet publicly on the polemic platform of honorable discussion to examine this matter. The Lakewood church along with many others (some are farther along the trail of apostasy than others) are in the process of becoming just another human church. With their present policies in place and practiced, they are assured of this goal. Given enough time, they may arrive at the high spiritual plane of the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists. What a thought! —Associate Editor, David P. Brown]

Charles L. Bowers
Bolivar Peninsula Church of Christ
Post Office Box 1108
Crystal Beach, Texas 77650

September 5, 1997

Elders
Westbury Church of Christ
10424 Hillcroft
Houston, TX 77096

Dear Brothers,

Ezekiel 33:6-7 "But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman's hand. Now as for you, Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth, and give them warning from Me."

Hebrews 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls; as they that must give account."

Over thirty years ago my wife and I were involved in the Lord's work with the Westbury church. We met in a school

building until the original auditorium was built. It was at Westbury that I made the decision to attend the Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas. The Westbury church has a very special place in my heart. I am grateful for the elders God has placed as watchmen over his work there and pray you will accept this letter as a matter of deep concern for the purity of the church of our Lord.

I am writing at the request of your minister. We spoke over the phone shortly after I received an advertisement for the Gulf Coast Spiritual Growth Workshop. I have prayed for the work of our Lord in the Houston area for many years. I am sincerely encouraged to see something of this magnitude being presented and supported by the various churches. I am, however, concerned with some of the choices that have been made, of speakers to be used at this workshop. I am especially concerned with Joe Beam, Wayne Kilpatrick, Gayle Napier and Fred McClure being used as speakers.

It has been my experience that many in the Houston area are not aware of the Jubilee held each year in Nashville, Tennessee, and the heretical teachings that are being put forth by

the speakers at this function. Men such as Max Lucado, who over radio station KJAC in Lubbock, Texas asked his listeners to say the "sinners prayer" with him for salvation. This is a man who calls a "brother" anyone who calls God their father. **Rubel Shelly** who advocates "fellowship" with denominations. I could mention others who have left the faith once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3); men such as **Buddy Bell, Jeff Walling, Mike Cope, Phillip Black, Joe Vanddyke** and **Joe Beam**. Joe Beam teaches the heretical doctrine of neo-Pentecostalism. He advocates monthly healing services by congregations with the elders praying and anointing with oil. He also affirms the continuation of divine revelation. He declares that we receive "leadings," "awakening" and that "the Holy Spirit does indeed speak to you outside the word of God." Beam's statements give evidence that he is a false teacher and should not be used by the Lord's church anywhere unless he repents. Joe Beam "runs" with the false teachers previously mentioned who teach Infant Dedication, instrumental music in worship, women in public roles in worship, partaking of the Lord's Supper on days other than the Lord's day, choirs, and the denial of the necessity of baptism for salvation. Brethren, if it walks like a duck, squawks like a duck and looks like a duck it must be a duck, and we know that "birds of a feather flock together." Joe Beam is a "clown." One woman stated she came early every night to get a front row seat because Joe Beam was "so funny" and kept her laughing. This man does not deserve to be on the same podium as faithful gospel preaching men of God.

I pray you brethren, as watchmen over God's flock, are familiar with the Willow Creek Community Church of South Barrington, Illinois and the Willow Creek Association. The "association" consists of member churches of the denominational groups. Among the denominational churches represented in the membership are Baptist, Nazarene, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist, Assembly of God, Christian Church, Christian Reformed, Mennonite, Salvation Army and "community churches" with names such as "Holy Spirit Church." Listed along with this conglomeration of denomination teachers of false doctrine are a number of Churches of Christ, such as the Carriage Hills Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, the Hebron Parkway church in Carrollton, Texas and the Lake Highlands church in Dallas, Texas. Now, why would a man like Wayne Kilpatrick, minister of the Homewood church in Birmingham, Alabama, feel it necessary to attend a seminar at Willow Creek.

The inspired apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:6-7 "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them." And again in Ephesians 5:11 "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." When men who claim to be faithful gospel preachers, have to partake of denominational associations to learn how to preach, they indict the entire Godhead as being negligent.

I also ask why you would want to have a man such as Gayle Napier as a speaker that has indicted the conservative congregations in our brotherhood as having more incest among their members. What a terrible indictment of the thousands of godly, faithful, men and women who fear the Lord and follow the teachings of the New Testament.

To remain faithful to our Lord Jesus, we must ever be alert, on guard, and aware of the evil ways of Satan (II Corinthians 11:13-15). Faithful men of God have stood against the false

teachings that Satan has hurled against the church. Doctrines which endorse the Boston and Crossroads movements have been exposed. The missionary society, premillennialism, instruments in worship, expanded roles for women in worship have all been withstood by faithful men of God. Elders and Evangelists must speak out against the evils that are now attacking the blood bought body of Christ. The stained cross of Calvary is too high a price to pay for us to remain silent. The apostle Paul warned the elders at Ephesus that "grievous wolves would enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29-30). Peter told of false teachers who would bring in damnable heresies (teachings) (II Peter 2:1). Paul suffered perils among false brethren to stay faithful (II Corinthians 11:26).

The inspired word of God is our authority, our only authority. Paul told Timothy to hold fast to that pattern of sound words (II Timothy 1:13). There are both sound and unsound words and the sound words of the inspired word of God is our pattern. Brethren, I found the Lord's church after many years in the denominational teaching of the Baptist church. As a Baptist I understood God's love and his grace toward mankind. What I was never taught was the need for obedience. Now comes these "change agents," as they call themselves, trying to tell us that we can fellowship those outside the body of Christ, and many other false teachings. These men need to be marked along with those lending support to them and their teachings by appearing with them on the same program. Ephesians 5:11, II Corinthians 6:17 and II John 9-11 teach us we are not to fellowship works of darkness, neither bid them God speed.

Jesus said in John 14:15 "if ye love me, keep my commandments." I Corinthians 7:19 teaches us that keeping the commandments of the Lord is necessary. I Corinthians 14:37 teaches us that the things Paul wrote are the commandments of the Lord. Now, how can men teach that we can be saved without baptism when Paul taught it so clearly in Romans 6:17-18. Brethren, do not be deceived by these men. They are on record teaching false doctrine. Do not support them in their false teaching by giving them a platform to preach their false doctrine from. Cancel their invitation to speak and let our brotherhood know that these men were removed from the list of speakers because of their ungodly teachings.

Brethren, why do I write this letter of concern? It is because that, as God's watchmen, God will not hold you without guilt if you partake of the evil deeds of these men. I love the Lord and the church he purchased with his blood. This is not an easy letter to write and is written with the greatest of love possible. I love the church more than my life, my honor and my reputation. I know there will be men that will mark me as a trouble maker or a "busy body" and that will be all right since I will be in good company with others who have taken a stand and stood for the truth. My only request is that you prayerfully and honestly, with an open mind, consider what has been written. Documentation on all that has been said is available to meet with any eldership so requesting.

Your brother in Jesus,
[Signed]
Charles L. Bowers

LAKWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 27, 1997

Charles L. Bowers
Bolivar Peninsula Church of Christ
Post Office Box 1108
Crystal Beach, Texas 77650

Dear Brother,

We are writing in response to your letter to the elders of the Westbury Church of Christ (copies to Memorial, Champions and to us) concerning, as you charge, the heresy of Joe Beam, Wayne Kilpatrick, Gayle Napier and Fred McClure (as well as Max Lucado, Rubel Shelly, Buddy Bell, Jeff Walling, Mike Cope, Phillip Black, and Joe Vandyke.

As this letter appears to be "telling it to the church" as in Matthew 18 and as you indicated on page three of your letter "keeping the commandments of the Lord is necessary" (and we agree), we are sure you have been faithful to follow the Lord's command in dealing with these brothers who you deem to have sinned. To help us further evaluate the

charges you have made against them, please provide us with the following.

1. Approximate date of your meetings "just between the two of you" and a short summary of your conversations or copies of the letters you exchanged.

Since the letter we received indicates your attempts to show these brothers their faults were to no avail, we would like to know.

2. The names of the brothers you subsequently asked to be involved in your meetings with those you have accused of heresy.

3. The approximate dates of these meetings and short summaries of the conversations or copies of letters that were then exchanged.

For the Lakewood elders,
[Signed]
Shannon Spears

**Bolivar Peninsula Church of Christ
Charles L. Bowers, Evangelist
Post Office Box 1108
Crystal Beach, Texas
(409) 684-2516**

September 30, 1997

Shannon Spears, Elder
Lakewood Church of Christ
7701 Bayway Drive
Baytown, Texas 77520

Dear Brother in Jesus,

Thank you for your reply to my earlier letter. The letter you received was sent because your congregation was listed on the "flyer" advertising the "workshop." The purpose of my letter was to alert the four congregations listed on the flyer, to the anti-scriptural doctrines and associations of some of the speakers who are scheduled to speak.

These men are on record, and documentation can easily be obtained, as advocating positions which are doctrinally unsound. This is an issue of doctrine, and statements have been made publicly, as to their false doctrine. This is not a brother to brother problem and therefore Matthew 18 would not apply in this case. As an elder you should be aware of the teaching of Matthew 18 as it applies to brother to brother problems. I have

enclosed a copy of brother F. Furman Kearley's editorial printed in the May 1997 issue of the Gospel Advocate.

I have attempted to speak with some of these men, however, their course of action is to ignore all attempts at correction or discussion.

As I mentioned in my earlier letter, there are many in our brotherhood that are not aware of the "Nashville Jubilee" and some of the teachings that are coming from these men. It was my desire to bring this to the attention of the four churches listed on the flyer and let them do their own investigation into the false teachings of some of these speakers.

Brothers, it is my hearts desire that our Lord Jesus be glorified in all things. I sincerely do not want to bring reproach to the body for which Jesus died. Please pray for me as I continue to preach Jesus Christ crucified!

Your servant,
[Signed]
Charles L. Bowers

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LAKEWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST

October 20, 1997

Charles L. Bowers
Bolivar Peninsula Church of Christ
Post Office Box 1108
Crystal Beach, Texas 77650

Dear Brother,

In reply to you letter of September 30 (with enclosure).

After having read your letter and examining the article you enclosed, it seems that we must disagree with your interpretation of God's word (especially the words of Jesus himself). We feel Matthew 18:15-20 says only what it says, not what some would like for it to say.

Additionally, in light of the nature of your enclosure, we suspect that we would not be in agreement with your interpretation of Jesus' parable in Matthew 13:24-30 which we see as clearly applicable. If you indeed see the men you have named as the "enemy," it seems to us that Jesus himself has spoken to the issue.

Further, in light of your letter and enclosure:

We do not see ourselves as having authority equal to the Apostles Paul and John, John the Baptist, or Stephen, all of whom we believe were inspired by God's Holy Spirit.

Maybe there is a lesson to be learned from the fact that God chose not to have the church ruled by a hierarchical organization.

Could it be that Satan is deliriously happy when Christians are at war with each other based on human interpretation of God's word?

We encourage you to continue to "preach Jesus Christ and him crucified" among the lost in your community.

For the Lakewood elders,
[Signed]
Shannon Spears

LAKEWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST

October 30, 1997

Charles L. Bowers
Bolivar Peninsula Church of Christ
Post Office Box 1108
Crystal Beach, Texas 77650

Dear Brother,

In reply to you recent letter and subsequent bulletins that were sent to us:

We believe the Lord's Body suffers great harm at the hands of those who publish material like that you sent to us.

We are saddened that those who proclaim such a great love for the truth seem so intent on twisting not only the words of their fellow Christians, but even God's own inspired word.

In light of your apparent alignment with these men, we think it would be fruitless to continue our dialogue.

For the elders,
[Signed]
Shannon Spears

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NOTHING NEW

(Continued from Page 1)

deal with them. It is in that “form letter,” dated March 6, 1973, that Paden emphatically declared, “*Sunset School of Preaching* does not, and will not teach that the guilty party may remarry.” In light of the fact that, in truth, it had been and it was being openly taught (at least by Richard Rogers) that the “guilty party may remarry,” **how could Paden honestly make such a denial?** Was he ignorant of what was being taught? Did he not investigate the matter even though it was repeatedly brought to his attention by the numerous inquiries he was receiving? Could it be that he knew what was being taught, but attempted to cover it up so that financial support and students would continue to come *Sunset’s* way? I do not know the answer to these questions, but I do absolutely know two things: Paden should have known what was being taught at *Sunset*. And, what he wrote in his March 6, 1973, letter (whether intentionally or unintentionally) was not the truth.

Cline Paden’s protestations and misinformation to the contrary notwithstanding, it has been and can be verified and demonstrated that, since the mid ‘60s to the present, *Sunset School of Preaching* has taught and continues to teach that the “guilty party” may remarry after a divorce. Richard Rogers, an *SSOP* faculty member (“on” and “off”—he is presently “on”) since the mid ‘60s, cannot successfully, correctly, and truthfully deny having taught, at *Sunset*, all through those years, that the “guilty party” may remarry after a divorce. He is still teaching that same false doctrine at *Sunset*.

Also, at *Sunset*, teaching that the “guilty party” may remarry after a divorce are Truman Scott and Ted Stewart, just to mention a couple (**Truitt Adair**, director of the school, other teachers, and *Sunset* staffers hold and teach the same view). I specifically name Scott and Stewart for a reason.

A REVEALING DEBATE

Truman Scott, in addition to being a teacher in the school at *Sunset*, holds the position of “Dean of International Studies.” In my “Open Letter” to *Sunset’s* elders, I wrote: “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 Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage issue, it shows Scott’s lack of intellectual integrity. **(PLEASE ASK ME TO PROVE THIS!)**” Upon reading this material, Stewart phoned me and accused me of having “maligned” his “good brother, Truman Scott.” However, he did not show me “how” or “where” I had “maligned” Scott. Since Stewart has accused me of “maligning” Scott, I am compelled to prove what I said about him. What I said about Scott is factual, true, and contains no errors or misrepresentations; therefore, I did not “malign” him.

On September 25, 1982, the church in Martinez, California, hosted a “study discussion” on the subject of di-

vorice and remarriage between Wayne Jackson and Truman Scott. That discussion was printed in book form and entitled, **Divorce & Remarriage**. In this book, it is revealed that Scott teaches that “fornication” and “adultery” are not “sexual intercourse outside of marriage.” On page 38, Scott is quoted, saying, “The Bible clearly teaches that any kind of sexual intercourse outside of the marriage covenant is sinful and damning for multiple reasons. **But that kind of contact is not fornication** (emphasis mine, TJH) and that is an extremely important clarification we need to make.” Further, on page 48, Scott said, “The basic, original meaning of our key word, **adultery**, therefore, **is not sexual intercourse, but covenant breaking** (emphasis mine, TJH).” Any serious Bible student knows that Scott’s efforts to redefine these terms are not only silly, they are futile. However, it was necessary for Scott to attempt to do so in his vain striving to support his false doctrine. The book under consideration revealed that Scott would tell a man or a woman in their second marriage, after they had divorced their former mates where neither party had committed fornication, to “do everything you can, and exhaust all of your resources to make that marriage work” (page 110). Thus, Scott teaches them to do everything in their power to stay in what Jesus called adultery (Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18). What does Scott teach concerning the remarriage of the “guilty party” after he/she has been put away by the “innocent party” for the cause of fornication? Pages 100-105 reveal explicitly and undeniably that Scott teaches that the “guilty party” may remarry after a divorce.

These previously mentioned things are in the book. Scott said these things. As a participant in the discussion, before the book was printed, Scott took advantage of the opportunity to proofread his presentations to make sure they were correctly set forth (see page 125). No. I did not “malign” Scott when I said, “That debate . . . revealed what Scott teaches regarding the marriage, divorce, and remarriage issue.” It does. If there was any “maligning” here, Scott did it to himself.

WHO “MALIGNED” WHOM? OR, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO INTEGRITY?

When Stewart accused me of “maligning” Scott, perhaps he had in mind my statement, which reads: “That debate . . . shows Scott’s lack of intellectual integrity.” If so, a question comes to my mind—“Has Stewart read the book?” (Does Stewart have the book **on hand**, available for sale in his bookstore?) If he had read the book, especially pages 122-128, I do not believe Stewart could seriously accuse me of “maligning” Scott relative to Scott’s “lack of intellectual integrity.” Throughout the discussion, Jackson, in a gentlemanly, scholarly, loving, Christian way, completely devastated and annihilated every one of Scott’s erroneous arguments.

None of Jackson’s arguments were more powerfully decimating to and exposing of Scott’s baseless argument (that adultery is not sexual activity, but rather that it is

“covenant breaking”) than his argument from John 8. Jackson said, “In John 8, the Bible says that the Jews brought to Christ a woman who had been taken in **the very act** (emphasis mine, TJH) of adultery.” Then, Scott was asked, “My question to you is this: **what did they apprehend her doing?** Breaking a covenant? Or was she involved in illicit sexual activity?” (page 122). It is here, in response to this argument, that Scott manifested his “lack of intellectual integrity.”

A “GREEK WORD” THE HOLY SPIRIT DID NOT USE

In response to the previous question, Scott said the phrase “the very act,” in John 8:4, is a mistranslation of the Greek word **autophonia**. Concerning this word, **autophonia**, Scott declared, “Now that does not translate ‘the very act of.’ That translates, ‘by her own mouth she accuses herself’” (pages 124-125). Furthermore, Scott said, “The expression ‘caught in the very act’ (‘the act’, ‘the very act,’) only occurs this one time in the Greek New Testament It only occurs, to my knowledge, one or perhaps two times outside of the New Testament” (page 123). How do these statements manifest that Scott lacks “intellectual integrity?” Jackson laid Scott’s lack of “intellectual integrity” bare when he showed, “There is no such word in the Greek New Testament as **autophonia**” (page 126). Contrary to Scott’s bogus definition of a word that does not even exist in the Greek New Testament, Jackson proved, “The word in John 8:4 is from the Greek term **autophoros** (the word that actually is there, TJH), a word found **frequently** [not a mere one or two times] in Greek literature, which means ‘caught in the act’ (cf. the lexicons of: Liddell & Scott, p. 264; Arndt & Gingrich, p. 123; Thayer, p. 87; Abbott-Smith, p. 70; Robinson, p. 110, etc.) I personally found the word used by several Greek classical writers in exactly the same sense as employed by the apostle in John 8:4” (page 127).

Is one manifesting a “lack of intellectual integrity” when he erroneously claims there is a certain Greek word in John 8:4, but no such word is found anywhere in the entire Greek New Testament? Is one proving he lacks “intellectual integrity” when he claims a definition exists (and gives it) for a word that does not in fact exist (but he claims that it does)? Is one demonstrating a lack of “intellectual integrity” when he presents himself to have so thoroughly studied a particular word that he is so authoritative on that word that he can 1) reject established and proven scholarship, 2) provide a definition for the word without etymological or linguistic evidence, and 3) claim to know something of how many times the word is used in and out of the Greek New Testament? This should be sufficient to expose Scott’s “lack of intellectual integrity,” **BUT THERE IS MORE!**

CAUGHT “IN THE VERY ACT”

Scott was caught “in the very act” of the previously mentioned misrepresentations and Jackson confronted Scott with his error. Regarding his use of the Greek word **autophonia**, in a letter to Jackson, dated October 4, 1982,

Scott admitted what he called “an obvious error on my part” and even called it an “inexplicable error.” More than that Jackson said, “He promised that he would ‘go back and discover the origin or cause of the misstatement.’ You can imagine my surprise—and my dismay—when, after more than **seven months** (May 13, 1983), I received Truman’s revised transcript and the **only change** was an alteration of **autophonia** to **autophoro**. Yet, left uncorrected was the entire false argument that had been erected upon his spurious word, namely, that the term meant ‘self-accused’ ” (page 127). On October 23, 1982, **Darrell Perry** (the brother who published the book) wrote to Scott, saying, “In addition, Jackson has informed us of your admitted mistake with regard to John 8. If it is your desire to add an appendix to the discussion correcting that error, let us know at your earliest convenience.” Later, on March 17, 1983, Perry wrote to Scott—“Concerning your comments on John 8 in the Question and Answer Period: You may wish, after going over that section grammatically and letting it stand as presented, to add a brief paragraph correcting the information you presented on that text. The number of words should hardly exceed the original number you employed.”

Jackson and Perry were magnanimous in their dealings with Scott. Scott made a false argument. He was caught and even admitted his error. He was allowed the time and the opportunity to correct the matter. A man possessing true “intellectual integrity” would have done so. Scott chose not to do so. On March 9, 1984, Jackson wrote to Scott—“I have no way of explaining why you have persistently refused to publicly admit your error in the John 8 argument other than the fact you simply do not wish to do it and **I know of no other light to view it save a lack of integrity** (emphasis mine, TJH).” Almost 14 years have passed since Jackson wrote that letter. Scott still has not corrected his false argument. He still lacks “intellectual integrity.” I did not “malign” Scott when I wrote that he lacked “intellectual integrity.” He did and he does.

EXAMINE THE EVIDENCE FOR YOURSELF AND ACT ACCORDINGLY

No one has to accept my word for any of these things. All anyone has to do is read the book, **Divorce & Remarriage, A Study Discussion**. I encourage everyone to do so and draw his own conclusions about Scott’s arguments and his “lack of intellectual integrity.” In the November, 1997, issue of *Christian Courier*, Jackson stated, “Those who are considering a joint effort with Sunset in various mission projects may well wish to take this matter into consideration. Truman Scott is a leading figure in Sunset’s mission efforts.” To this I add, if you are considering sending a “preacher student” to *Sunset* or if you are considering sending financial support to the Sunset preacher training school, consider the false doctrine, doctrinal error that is being taught there—consider the lack of “intellectual integrity” some of the instructors have—and then, **DO NOT SEND STUDENTS OR SUPPORT TO SUNSET!**

SECTION TWO:
ERRORS REGARDING THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is another book that reveals a great deal about how *Sunset* personnel stand regarding false doctrine. Before I give the title of the book, I want to pose some questions. Question One: *Do doctrinally sound elders, preachers, and teachers in schools of preaching endorse and help in the spread of false doctrines?* NO! (I Timothy 4:1-6, 16; Titus 1:9-13; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:11) It is wrong, sinful for anyone, even if he disagrees with a false teacher and the false teacher's doctrines to give encouragement to the false teacher and, in any way, aid him in spreading his false doctrine. **"For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds"** (III John 11). Question Two (this question is specifically for Cline Paden, Richard Rogers, Ted Stewart, *Sunset's* elders, and all of the faculty members at *SIBI*): *Do you deny that Terry Rush, in his book **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, taught (teaches) very serious doctrinal error?* If Rush did teach false doctrines in that book (and he most certainly did), then why did Cline Paden write the "Introduction" for the book? Why would Richard Rogers endorse the book, saying that it is "An unusual, practical, challenging book. I found it highly provocative and useful" (back cover of the first edition of the book). Another endorsement on the back of the book reads, "Terry Rush's book on the Holy Spirit is thought-provoking, exciting, encouraging, edifying, and challenging. Every Christian can derive great spiritual benefit by reflecting on the ideas presented in this Bible study.—Ted Stewart, Chairman, School of Missions/Graduate, *Sunset School of Preaching*." On the "Acknowledgments" page of his book, Rush thankfully noted, "Cline Paden, **Richard Baggett**, and especially Ted Stewart of the *Sunset School of Preaching* gave suggestions to improve the phrasing of the manuscript." According to this, the aforementioned *Sunset* brethren not only endorsed Rush's book, they helped him write it. There are no warnings, no disclaimers, no statements of disagreement, no expressed reservations to be found in Paden's "Introduction" to, or in Rogers' and Stewart's endorsements of, Rush's book. None of these brethren can rightfully claim that they "endorsed the man, not the book." In their remarks, they endorsed the book; therefore, they en-

dorsed (without expressing a single word of disagreement) the false doctrines contained within the book. They became and are partakers of the false doctrines in the book. *Doctrinally sound* men do not endorse and help to spread false doctrines. **I respectfully challenge Paden, Rogers, and Stewart to deny that this book, a book they endorsed, contains numerous, serious false doctrines.** It contains too many false doctrines for us to consider them all in this publication; however, we will take note of four of them.

ENUMERATING THE ERRORS

R.L. Popejoy wrote, "If there is a false doctrine in the religious world, our brethren will begin to clamor for it. Terry Rush in his book, **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, advocates Adoptionist Christology" (*Firm Foundation*, October 1995, p. 16). Speaking of this same book, Terry Hightower penned, "As incredible as it sounds, from his perverted view of the Spirit's operation, Terry Rush sets forth a form of the 'Adoptionism' heresy which holds that Jesus was merely a human during the early years of his life" (*Studies in Ephesians*, 1997 Denton Lectures, page 191). Though he at times attempts to buffer the full impact of this hideous doctrine, no one can successfully deny that Rush teaches a form of "Adoptionism" (between birth and his baptism, Christ was nothing more than and was only a human being). Concerning Jesus, on page 28, Rush said, "He was emptied of being on the level . . . of the **nature of the invisible God**" (emphasis mine, TJH). On page 48, he wrote, "Jesus was totally human." When Jesus was baptized, Rush stressed, "The Spirit moved toward the 'word-became-flesh' and immediately it was declared that Jesus is God's son" (page 18). Having taught a variation on the false doctrine of "Adoptionism" throughout his book, Rush seems to have reached a climax on page 124 with—"Jesus set the pace. He never misstepped. He was as common as a Missouri farmer. He was as good as a New England fisherman. And **until he linked with the Spirit of the Father, he was only a man.**" That is blatant, soul-damning doctrinal error. When Paden, Rogers, and Stewart endorsed the book, **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, they endorsed Rush's false doctrine of "Adoptionism." Doctrinally sound men do not endorse false doctrines.

Rush teaches the false doctrine of the "Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit" in his book, **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**. As mentioned, Hightower called it a "perverted view of the Spirit's operation." Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Rush expressly stated, "With him, we gain strength—invisible, **direct strength** (emphasis mine, TJH)—to do kingdom work" (page 74). Besides **direct strength**, Rush implied that the Spirit provides the Christian with direct divine revelation. He declared on page 70, "Christians are led by the Spirit conclusively in that *we are able to see secret signals*" (emphasis mine, TJH). Throughout his book, Rush falsely teaches that Christians can do only what the Holy Spirit directly "empowers"

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them to do. If that were true, Christians would have no “free will.” The concluding sentence of his book serves as a “parting shot” against those who do not agree with his “Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit” doctrine. His last words were, “May we be as committed to telling neighbors about Jesus, as we have been to telling ourselves that the Spirit does not work within us” (page 126). When Paden, Rogers, and Stewart endorsed **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, they endorsed the false doctrine of the “Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit.” (I am not speaking of the Holy Spirit’s work in “providence.” I am speaking of the Holy Spirit working **directly**, without a medium, upon the Christian.) **Doctrinally sound** men do not endorse false doctrines such as the “Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit.”

Another false doctrine Rush teaches, in **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, is the doctrine of “Divine Illumination.” The false doctrine of “Divine Illumination” claims that a man cannot understand the Bible unless the Holy Spirit “empowers” him to do so by “opening” his mind and heart to receive it. Rush expressed, “It is my observation that without the Holy Spirit the Bible only makes earthly sense” (page 14). To this he added, “I am thoroughly persuaded that the scriptures become nothing more than a book of ‘blah’ if we are not Spirit led” (page 14). If the Bible “only makes earthly sense,” without the leading of the Spirit, what of the unconverted? What of “free will?” Clearly, Rush’s false doctrine is more in line with Calvinism than it is with the Bible. Whatever “spirit” it is that is leading Rush to understand the Bible as he does certainly is not the Holy Spirit. Contrary to Rush’s false doctrine, the Bible does not need illuminating. It is the Bible that does the “illuminating;” it is the light that reveals to men God’s will. Psalms 119:10—“**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**” (Cf., Isaiah 8:20). Paul taught,

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” II Corinthians 4:3-4. (Cf., II Timothy 1:10).

When Paden, Rogers and Stewart endorsed **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**, they endorsed the false doctrine “that without the Holy Spirit the Bible only makes earthly sense . . . that the Scriptures become nothing more than a book of ‘blah’ if we are not Spirit led.” Now, if Paden, Rogers and Stewart do not believe this false doctrine, why did they endorse it? Why are they encouraging its spread?

RUSH MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL

Interestingly, Rush taught the false doctrine of the mutual exclusivity of “law” and “Spirit” in his book, **The Holy Spirit Makes No Earthly Sense**. Knowing what is taught at *Sunset* relative to “law” and “grace,” it does not surprise me that Paden, Rogers and Stewart would endorse a false doctrine on the mutual exclusivity of the “law” and the “Spirit.” Without mincing words, Rush asserts, “Spirit and law don’t mix” (page 38). Rush sees it as “Law versus Spirit” (page 60). On page 63, Rush wrote, “God and sin do

not co-exist; nor do Spirit and law.” Do not be misled into thinking that Rush is just considering the “Law of Moses” when he says “Spirit and law don’t mix” or they do not co-exist (as might be considered from I Corinthians 3). Rush includes “any and all law” in his statements disdaining “law.” Heretic liberals hate “law.” They deny it. They reject it. They condemn “law” and anyone who teaches that New Testament Christians do live under “law.” Be that as it may, Paul taught that “Spirit” and “law” *do* mix, that it is “law” *and* “Spirit” (rather than “Law *versus* Spirit” *a la* Rush), and that “law” and “Spirit” do co-exist. More than that, Paul taught that the Spirit *has* a law. He said, “**For the law of the Spirit** (emphasis mine, TJH) **of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death**” (Romans 8:2). If Rush’s false doctrine were true—that it is “Law *versus* Spirit”—then it would also be true that it is “Christ *versus* Spirit” because *Christ* has a “law.” Galatians 6:2 commands, “**Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ** (emphasis mine, TJH).” Not only is the “law” Christians live under called the “*law of the Spirit*” and the “*law of Christ*,” it is also called “*law of faith*” (Romans 3:27), the “*law of love*” (Romans 13:10), the “*law of liberty*” (James 1:25), and the “*royal law*” (James 2:8). Why do Paden, Rogers and Stewart endorse this heretical book that teaches this false doctrine (the mutual exclusivity of “law” and “Spirit”) when the scriptures teach so clearly that “law” and “Spirit” are not mutually exclusive?

These are not the words of a vengeance-seeking, unloving, disgruntled person. I take no delight in writing these things about my alma mater. No matter what anyone thinks or says, I love Cline Paden. I love *Sunset*. Because of all the good the school and Paden have done for me, I will be forever in their debt. I pray for them every day. My desire is that everyone reading these words will pray for them. Though some may choose to deny it, it is because of my love for the school and for Paden that I write these things. It is because of my love for the souls of men and for the truth that will save those souls that, until *Sunset* “cleans house,” getting rid of the false doctrines and provides a faculty that genuinely possesses “intellectual integrity,” I will continue to sincerely urge brethren—**DO NOT SEND FINANCIAL SUPPORT OR STUDENTS TO *SUNSET*.**

In closing, my final plea is, please do not take “my word” for any of the things I have written in this article. By that same token, please do not take the word of the brethren at *Sunset* either. There is evidence (letters, books, testimony of *Sunset* alumni) verifying everything I have said in this article. That evidence is available to you. Get the evidence. Sift through it for yourself. Check what I have written against that evidence. Then, draw your own conclusions. The books mentioned in this article can be purchased at a bookstore operated by brethren, through this publication, through Wayne Jackson, or through Ted Stewart. You may contact me for copies of the letters I quoted (send a 55-cent-stamped, self-addressed envelope).

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“THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST WILL NEVER GET ANYWHERE UNTIL THEY TAKE THE NAME ‘CHURCH OF CHRIST’ OFF THEIR BUILDINGS”

Noah A. Hackworth

Some years ago in the upper San Joaquin Valley, in a local church of Christ, the preacher reportedly stated his conviction that churches of Christ would never “get anywhere” until they take the name, church of Christ, off their buildings. It seems to be the thinking of some that the Lord’s people are better off without a sign on their buildings that says “church of Christ.” I believe this is correct in some cases because on the one hand what goes on inside the walls of such buildings is a reproach to the cause of Christ, and on the other hand the removal of the sign in question would serve to identify more correctly that those who reject having “church of Christ” on their buildings have **“gone out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us”** (1 John 2:19). There could possibly be a valid reason for not having “church of Christ” on a building or wherever the Lord’s people might be meeting, but such cases would need to be clearly identified and the reasons given for the omission. Consider, for example, John 20:19: **“When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”** The disciples were meeting in some kind of an edifice that had doors, no doubt a private dwelling. These doors were shut, possibly locked, because of the persecuting spirit of the Jews that was still lingering in the community (Zerr). It is not difficult to see why it would be unwise to have a sign indicating that this was where the disciples were meeting, at least on this occasion, but this should not be considered a precedent. Even the casual reader of the New Testament can see that **“churches of Christ,”** (Romans 16:16), **“the church”** (Acts 8:1), **“church of the firstborn ones”** (Hebrews 12:23), **“the body of Christ”** (1 Corinthians 12:27), **“the church of God”** (Acts 20:28, KJV), **“bride of Christ”** (Revelation 21:2), and the **“church of the Lord”** (Acts 20:28, ASV) are all designations used with reference to the church. One could attach any one of these designations to the place or building where the church was meeting and it would be scripturally correct as far as the designation goes. However, it is our contention, as well as that of many good brethren, that “church of Christ” is more distinctive than any other designation. It tells to whom the church belongs (Matthew 16:18); that it is the called (Ephesians 1:1;4:1); that it is the called out of the world (1 Thessalonians 2:12); that it has been called by the gospel (II Thessalonians 2:14). The church is inseparable from Christ. You cannot be in one without being in the other. The church is the body of Christ, **“the fulness of him that filleth all in all”** (Eph-

sians 1:23). Since these things are true, and they are, why would any brethren want to remove “church of Christ” from their buildings? Could it be that they are ashamed of the Lord? No. I don’t think this is the reason. I believe it is because of a desire to 1) identify more closely with the religious thinking of the community, and to 2) avoid giving anybody the impression that we think the church of Christ is the only church sanctioned by the Bible.

The truth about this whole matter is that 1) the Lord does indeed have only one church; 2) that those who are members of the church are not Christians only but the only Christians, and 3) that all the saved are in the church. Unfortunately, these are the things some of our brethren do not believe in the first place and we regret that this is the case, because the Bible certainly affirms them. I am certainly going to have to answer to the Lord for all the happenings in my life, but advocating the removal of the sign “church of Christ” from our church building is not going to be one of them.

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THE TWO MAJOR STORIES OF CHRISTIAN JUBILEE, INC., 1997

J.E. Choate

Two stories came out of Jubilee '97 which distort and twist the facts of 100 years of Restoration history. The telling of these stories has been delayed because I am puzzled to understand the purpose behind them.

We do know that Jubilee '97 [and all Jubilees since 1991] have heaped abusive ridicule on the New Testament churches of Christ. But we are at complete loss to understand why **Rubel Shelly** and **Victor Knowles** planned to discredit and bring dishonor to the names, lives, and influence of such renowned church leaders as **John W. McGarvey** and **David Lipscomb**.

Strange fires indeed have been kindled on the altar of *Nashville Jubilee, Inc.* History will not forget the puerile indictment of churches of Christ in 1991 by **Gayle Napier**, Harpeth Hills family church counselor, that churches of Christ controlled by autocratic elders have fostered the most depraved forms of deviant sexual behavior in church families.

THE TWO MOST SURPRISING STORIES TO COME OUT OF JUBILEE '97

All signs point to acts of "anything goes" with the Jubilee planners since 1991 to make Jubilee succeed. The growing opposition to Jubilee does not seem to register with DLU board members and elders of supporting Jubilee churches, e.g., West End, Harpeth Hills, Brentwood Hills, and the Donelson churches.

Some of the churches' most highly respected leaders once did, but no longer support Jubilee. We are indeed surprised that the Madison church and **Steve Flatt** just keep going and going with Jubilee.

The Jubilee "brain trust" concocted two sensational events which would put Jubilee '97 on the religious map. It is the purpose of this article to put the pieces together in order to tell the craziest stories yet to come out of Jubilee.

FIRST PART OF THE JUBILEE STORY

In January 1997, **Max Lucado** was tinkering with a plan calculated to "fire up" the Jubilee audience on the first night with his keynote address. What he had in mind suggests something like an emotionally charged *Promise Keepers* meeting, or a weird pentecostal "*Toronto Blessing*" service with people laughing, roaring like lions, and falling "slain in the spirit."

Lucado would call upon all the elders of postmodern Churches of Christ on the floor to come forward during the altar call. They would then confess the sins of elders and churches of Christ for the troubling and driving apart churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Church for the past 50 years.

This documented story surfaced during Winterfest 1997 in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. **Max Lucado** and **Richard Van Dyke** discussed the feasibility of the proposal January

1997 in a telephone conversation. The shabby ethics and morality of this is obvious.

Lucado lost face with the Nashville churches from the moment the copy of his 1996 Lubbock, Texas radio devotional arrived in Nashville. Lucado said in that devotional that to call "God, Father" brings instant salvation.

Lucado's weirdest admission was made April 1997 in a pre-Jubilee luncheon in Nashville. He said in the presence of **Don Finto** that—"Don Finto is my hero!" Of course Lucado is privileged to choose his own heroes. Shades of **John Wimber**, **Jack Deere**, and **Paul Cain**.

We are living in troubled times when there are desperate needs for a people to address monumental evil and wrongdoing to bring about healing. It is a strong opinion, and may be a crazy idea, that a comparison of the Lucado scheme with two highly-profiled world media events may help us to understand the psychology which inspired Lucado to come up with this contrived theological gimmickry.

The first example is that the people of South Africa are suffering from acts of horrendous cruelty and crimes committed against each other. We have some understanding of the enormity of the need for the guilty to confess their crimes and to seek forgiveness in order that some measure of civil normalcy is restored to the body politic.

We can understand what drives an emotionally-packed mass meeting of "crocodile crying" *Promise Keepers* and the *Million Man Marchers* who suffer remorse for their despicable behavior against their own blood, kith, and kin. And there will always be "idiots" in religious fellowships overwhelmed with personal guilt who must confess their sins in a glut of sorrow in some public forum.

There is only one way for such men to find the forgiveness they seek, and that is in the privacy of their homes and bosoms of their own families and their own shame. They need to stand up like men to declare their love for their families and tell them honestly that they are filled with remorse and guilt, and to seek their forgiveness.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE CHRISTIAN JUBILEE PLOT

It is a documented fact that the *second* half of this Jubilee plot was carefully incubated and hatched long before the July date of Jubilee '97. That the plan could have any measure of success depended wholly on the successful outcome of Lucado's plan to call the elders down on the first evening of Jubilee to confess the sins of others, not their own. The January scheme was aborted because the elements of genuineness, spontaneity, and surprise were gone.

The setting for the second part of the Lucado-Knowles-Shelly Jubilee act was set during the annual meetings of Jubilee and the North American Christian Church Conven-

tion then in session. The NACC which is sponsored by the Independent Christian Church has enjoyed 70 years of success in beating back the onslaughts of the liberal Disciples who would make shipwreck of their churches. On the other hand, the Jubilee operatives cannibalize the churches which have nurtured them since the cradle.

By prior agreement, Rubel Shelly and Victor Knowles would make their apologies July 3 on both the Jubilee and NACC floors at approximately the same time. Each would confess the sins and apologize for the honored church leaders a century ago for causing the division between the two Restoration churches as officially recorded in the 1906 U.S. Religious Census.

Knowles made his apology before thousands during the NACC Convention in Kansas City. In Nashville, Shelly made his confession in the Central Church of Christ just across the street from the old Ryman Auditorium where N. B. Hardeman preached his famed Tabernacle sermons.

While Knowles was apologizing for the likes of John W. McGarvey as troublers and dividers of churches on the floor of the North American Christian Convention in Kansas City, Shelly's voice was heard where the voices of Hall Laurie Calhoun and N.B. Hardeman were heard in another time preaching the gospel. And here was Shelly apologizing for such brethren as troublers and dividers of churches.

Just imagine this double setting. Two men are talking love and sweet unity between the Christian Church and the postmodern Church of Christ, and at the very moment both have their daggers going for the jugular vein of the New Testament churches of Christ to drive them into oblivion.

As soon as possible, we need to make the name of Victor Knowles a "household name" in churches of Christ. He is already that among the Independent Christian Church. He is the driving spirit behind the Restoration Forum, Joplin Summit, 1984, and editor of its publication the *One Body*.

JUBILEE '97 WASTELAND ENDED WITH A WHIMPER, NOT A BANG

Victor Knowles said the division came in 1906 "mainly over the instrumental music question." Victor Knowles is not stupid, and neither are we. It is unworthy for a man of the stature of Victor Knowles to make such an uninformed and undocumented statement.

Here are their statements of what they actually said:

Knowles stated: "I am sorry that the division occurred and deeply regret the separation in fellowship in subsequent years. Although I was not a part of the original problem, I want to be a part of the healing process. Ninety-one years is too long to make amends."

Dr. Shelly said, as was quoted by Victor Knowles in the *One Body*: "I hereby express my regret and sorrow over the divisions that have existed between us. I ask forgiveness for my contribution to maintaining or reinforcing them." Shelly said there were those in the audience laughing and crying with joy at this dramatic statement. Curtis Cates and David Brown witnessed this act in this "theater of the absurd."

[Dr. Shelly, have you lost every vestige of ethical and moral rectitude which would allow you to engage in such a public display of silly shameless arrogance?]

POSTSCRIPT

We await with bated breath like the expectant nest for Jubilee '98. What will they hatch next? We think that Rubel Shelly is a most clever, facile rhetorician. He has the polished skill of the ancient Greek sophists to argue equally well either side of a proposition.

We think that Victor Knowles is a gifted loyal son of the Independent Christian Church. He has no more intention to compromise any part of the theology and practices of the Independent "digressives" than did James DeForest Murch 60 years ago, who was forthright to say so.

And we will repeat the words of H. Leo Boles spoken in 1939 to inform the "brain trust" of the Restoration Forums that the same resolve is stronger than ever in New Testament churches of Christ:

You know where you left the churches of Christ; hence you know where to find them; come back and unity is the inevitable result. There will be no compromise or surrender on this point. The churches of Christ as long as they are loyal to the New Testament, cannot compromise on this or any other point so clearly taught in the New Testament.

[Brother Knowles, you will no more succeed in pulling the wool over the eyes of informed members of the churches of Christ than did James DeForest Murch. We won't speak for Dr. Shelly because he is doing such a good job himself.]

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A Warm Welcome Awaits Incoming Students!

[The following letter of correction to Steve Miller from the Harpeth Hills, Brentwood, Tennessee, elders is self-explanatory. It is good to know that the Harpeth Hills congregation is not a part of the Willow Creek Association. However, the fact "that one of the members, acting on his own, had enrolled the church," proves that elders cannot be overly vigilant in their superintendency of the church.

Moreover, if the Harpeth Hills elders really desire to cut loose from unscriptural persons and organizations, let them separate themselves from Gayle Napier, the Nashville Jubilee, and the

apostasy-infested David Lipscomb University. If the Harpeth Hills elders have already ceased such associations, let them go on public record by writing another letter precisely saying so. What good does it do to have one's name removed from the Willow Creek Association Directory, but continue in fellowship with those who view such an outfit as a thing of beauty, "pleasant to the eyes, and a thing to be desired to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6)? Indeed, "it is time to fish or cut bait." — David P. Brown, Associate Editor]



Mr. Steve Miller
9874 Knowlton Road
Garrettsville, Ohio 44231

December 12, 1997

Dear Brother Miller:

I am writing you at the suggestion of Dr. J.E. Choate in reference to your article entitled "Community Church Ideas Infiltrate Undernourished Minds" appearing in *Contending for the Faith*, October/1997. In that article, Harpeth Hills Church of Christ was cited as being listed in the Willow Creek Association Directory. This entry was not approved by the eldership and came as a surprise to us. We have investigated this and found in fact that one of our members, acting on his own, had enrolled the church. I called and requested that we be removed and was informed that they had dropped us as of 8-1-96. You were correct in that we had been listed in the 1996 publication.

We thought you would appreciate this information and hopefully in a future article, note can be made that we are not a "Church Associate" of the Willow Creek Association.

Thanks for considering this request.

Harris O. Yates, For the Harpeth
Hills Eldership

cc: Dr. J.E. Choate
3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

1949 Old Hickory Boulevard
Brentwood, Tennessee 37027
(615) 373-0601

SUBSTANTIATION OF CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Kenneth D. Cohn CPA

From time to time we shall address primarily Federal tax matters that may be of interest to elders, preachers, congregations, and individuals. This is an informational service only. Each individual's tax situation is peculiar to him; therefore, a qualified tax practitioner should be consulted respecting one's tax reporting responsibilities and planning opportunities.

Charitable contributions must be properly substantiated in order to be tax-deductible. Generally, a canceled check provides proper substantiation for cash contributions. Canceled checks alone, however, cannot be used to substantiate a single cash contribution of \$250 or more. For each contribution of \$250 or more (noncash contributions of \$500 or more have some additional substantiation requirements; see IRS Form 8283), you must obtain a written receipt from the donee organization (for church contributions this would be the church). The receipt should set forth the date and amount of the contribution and must indicate if any goods and services were received by the donor in exchange and the value thereof. The excess of the contribution over such value would be the tax-deductible amount. If the donor received no goods or services, then the receipt

should state that the donor received only "intangible religious benefits" for the contribution.

For example, if a member contributed \$100 each Lord's day during 1997, no written receipt is required. If the same member contributed \$300 one Lord's day, \$100 as a regular contribution and \$200 for some other work of the church, then the member must obtain a written receipt for the \$300 contribution. If no other single contribution equals or exceeds the \$250 threshold, no other written receipt is required. If a member contributed \$250 each and every Lord's day during 1997, each contribution must be substantiated by a written receipt. This receipt must be obtained before the 1997 income tax return is timely filed.

A simple way to do this would be to list separately each and every contribution of \$250 or more in a single receipt in which is made the required declarations of "goods and services received," if any, and value thereof, or receipt of "intangible religious benefits" only. If the required receipt is lacking by April 15, it would be wise to extend the filing date of the return in order to get the required receipt. Otherwise, each and every unsubstantiated contribution of \$250 or more may not be deductible.

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SOME 1992 BAPTIST'S THOUGHTS ABOUT MAX LUCADO

[The following letter was first published on SBCnet, a public forum on CompuServe. It was written by J. Larry Holly, M.D., reported to be a member of the Southern Baptist Convention. The letter is addressed to Chad Brand, purported to be a pastor and professor at Southwestern Theological Seminary. Moreover in a telephone call to Pat Hile, a friend of mine confirmed with Hile that he did receive the following letter. — David P. Brown, Associate Editor.]

Chad:

This is the letter that I wrote to Lucado's assistant pastor. It addresses my concerns about our promoting his material and quotes a letter that I wrote to a prominent SBC pastor who was doing so.

February 12, 1992

Reverend Pat Hile
Oak Hills Church of Christ
8308 Fredericksburg Road
San Antonio, Texas 78229

Dear Reverend Hile:

Your graciousness in speaking with me on the telephone for the second time requires me to put into print for you the concerns that I have in regard to the recommendation by main line evangelicals of the writings of your pastor, **Max Lucado**. In a recent letter to the leader of a Christian ministry, I said:

In a recent issue of _____, I read an interview with Max Lucado. I first became aware of this man and his ministry when my daughter read one of his books while she was in Romania. Because Carrie was so taken with him, I decided to find out who he is. His first several books did not identify his church affiliation. That fact alone disturbed me. When I was able to identify who he is, I was alarmed to find that he is a Campbellite, i.e., a minister of the Church of Christ.

Still, I wanted to give him the benefit of the doubt and so I called his church and his home. I visited with his wife as he was out of town. She was a gracious lady and my spirit witnessed that she is a fellow believer. She indicated that they do not believe what the Church of Christ believes about baptismal regeneration, losing your salvation, or that the Holy Spirit does not indwell the believer except as the believer learns the Bible.

I then talked to Reverend **Pat Hile**, an assistant minister at Oak Hills Church of Christ where Max Lucado is senior pastor. Reverend Hile sent me a copy of their "Life Lessons which is a study course all new members of Oak Hills Church of Christ go through. I am enclosing a copy of the page entitled "Worksheet: The Bridge." You will see that an interesting addition has been made to the way in which **Dawson Trotman** originally wrote the tract called "The Bridge." That addition is Acts 2:38.

Reverend Hile agreed with Mrs. Lucado that they are not part of the old line Church of Christ. Yet, they do not have musical instruments and continue to identify themselves as a Church of Christ. The study course "Life Les-

sons" only has subtle, yet disturbing, overtones of the old line church of Christ in it.

"_____ " my reasons for writing you about these are:

1. Max Lucado is one of the cleverest writers being published today. I believe he is the first ever of the Church of Christ to have a reading audience as broad as his.

2. He is still identified with a group which because of their defective soteriology, I would identify as a cult.

3. When you published an interview with Max Lucado and did not even identify his church affiliation, I believe you spread a snare for the feet of young Christians. And, when you recommend a man's books, no matter how good they are, when he holds and supports doctrinal positions that you would agree are heresy, I believe you compromise your message.

Take for instance, what if a person gets saved as a result of your ministry? They then begin to receive your magazine. They either live in San Antonio or they move to San Antonio. They think, "God used [_____] to bring me to salvation. _____ endorses Max Lucado, I'll join the Oak Hills Church of Christ. Because of Max Lucado's warm love for the Lord Jesus Christ, his doctrinal aberrations may not be so great, but then that person moves to Houston. Like a Baptist who moves from one town to another, this young Christian now looks for a Church of Christ to join. He finds one, but there is a different spirit. He either is offended and quits going to church or he is seduced and buys into the legalism and works righteousness of the Church of Christ and lives the rest of his life in defeat and depression.

Worse yet, what if this young Christian becomes a student of the word and gets into a conflict with his adopted church, The Oak Hills Church of Christ. When he realizes that he must leave that church because of its error, he would then feel obligated to reject the minister who introduced him to the Church of Christ, _____.

"...I told Reverend Hile that if Max Lucado will renounce the errors of the Church of Christ and rename his church, I would love to encourage people to be ministered to by him. Without any such public renouncing of the heresy which the church he embraces stands for, I would be required to warn anyone and everyone I can, that they should avoid Max Lucado, no matter how interesting his work is..."

In part these concerns express some of my problems with Moody Monthly, Multnomah Press, Word, InTouch, Billy Graham, Chuck Swindoll and others encouraging Christians to read and follow the ministry of your pastor.

While I have appreciated your openness each time we have talked, two things that you mentioned in our telephone conversation of February 11, 1992 concern me:

1. The identification of your church on your radio broadcast in San Antonio. You said that one week it is identified as Oak Hills Church and the next week it is identified as the Oak Hills Church of Christ. As I indicated to you, I would have more respect for you if you made up your mind. Either you are a Church of Christ that denies the blood atonement and believes that baptism and good works are required for salvation or you do not. Until you clarify for yourself and then for others your position on that critical and central doctrine of the Bible, you will continue to find many of us who appreciate your spirit, rejecting your fellowship.

2. You indicated that the problems with the Churches of Christ only began twenty years ago with the false doctrines attributed to that church, i.e., baptismal regeneration, losing your salvation, the Holy Spirit not indwelling the believer except as he learns the Bible, etc. You then corrected that when you related these problems to the 1920's (that was seventy years ago). You then stated that you were very comfortable with being identified with the origins of the Churches of Christ, i.e., with the Campbell brothers whom you indicated did not share the doctrinal aberrations later identified with the Churches of Christ. This was at least part of your reason for having no motivation for changing the name of your church.

3. You will remember that I challenged that view. All of the errors associated with the Church of Christ have been present since its formulation. The Campbell brothers were heretics, as is the church that they founded. There is some charm to the idea that there is only one in each community and that that church should maintain the simplicity of the name, The Church of Christ. Yet, the elimination of the name of a "denomination" does not avoid the error of the same and does not bring greater honor to Christ, particularly when his atoning work is denigrated by doctrine held by the Churches of Christ and when the name which is chosen to avoid the error of a denominational name becomes in itself the name of a denomination.

Reverend Hile, you indicated that your objection to the "hard-line doctrines" of the Churches of Christ is like the differences among Baptist churches. As you object to the position of some Churches of Christ, you said, I would object to the position of some Baptist churches. While there is an element of truth to that statement, it ignores one critical point. There are no Baptist churches which hold positions that I would consider to be heresy, the embracing of which could result in their damnation.

The Church of Christ, which does hold positions that are heretical, runs the danger, if its people trust in the church and/or in their good works rather than in the Blood of Jesus Christ, of seeing people damned who embrace its errors. Your continued identification with that church by name and by your being comfortable with that 'tradition' exposes the people you influence to this danger. I am not willing, for the sake of inspirational writing, to risk exposing people for whom I am responsible to that message, either in name or in reality.

What do I think you should do? While this may sound presumptuous, it cannot hurt you for me to detail what I believe you must do if you are going to minister to a larger audience than those who embrace the Churches of Christ and/or those who find Max Lucado's writing sufficiently interesting to ignore the doctrinal problems with the church with which he is identified. I believe you should:

1. Examine very carefully what you and your church believe about salvation and about baptism. You should state it unequivocally. An unambiguous statement on baptism would be critical, particularly if you choose not to change your name.

2. Publish your doctrinal position on the issues of salvation, security of the believer, baptismal regeneration and the indwelling person of the Holy Spirit.

3. Provide to Reverend Lucado's publishers a copy of this statement and insist that they publish an abbreviated form of it on the fly leaf of each of his books and in the credits section of each of his articles.

4. Resolve the conflict over your name. You either are or you are not a Church of Christ. If you believe strongly that you want to be known only by the name of Jesus Christ, you could name yourself, The Oak Hills Church, a church of Jesus Christ.

Whether you use musical instruments or not is a local church issue. Whether you embrace the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ is an issue for the Body of Christ at large to

**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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—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.

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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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—North Carolina—

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—Tennessee—

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

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Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd. South, Memphis, TN 38125-2501. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, minister, (901) 751-2444.

• • • • •

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.

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Cheyenne—High Plains Church of Christ, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, tel. (307) 634-3040.

—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*."**

address. This will and should be addressed, not by a synod, a council or an inquisition, but by influence and challenge of error when and where we find it.

What you do, Reverend Hile, is very obviously your decision. I genuinely wish you well and hope that you can resolve these problems in such a way that all of us can fellowship together in the person and the passion of Jesus Christ.

God bless you, Reverend Hile. According to II John 9-11, if I believe that you and Reverend [Lucado] do not have the "doctrine of Christ," this greeting would be inappropriate. I do not wish to patronize you or to be gratuitous. I do wish to affirm you as I challenge you. God may have great things in store for you and for the Oak Hills Church. It is his responsibility as to how extensively you will be used; it is your responsibility to clarify your message.

In Christ's love and service,
Larry Holly, M.D.
Proverbs 22:17-21

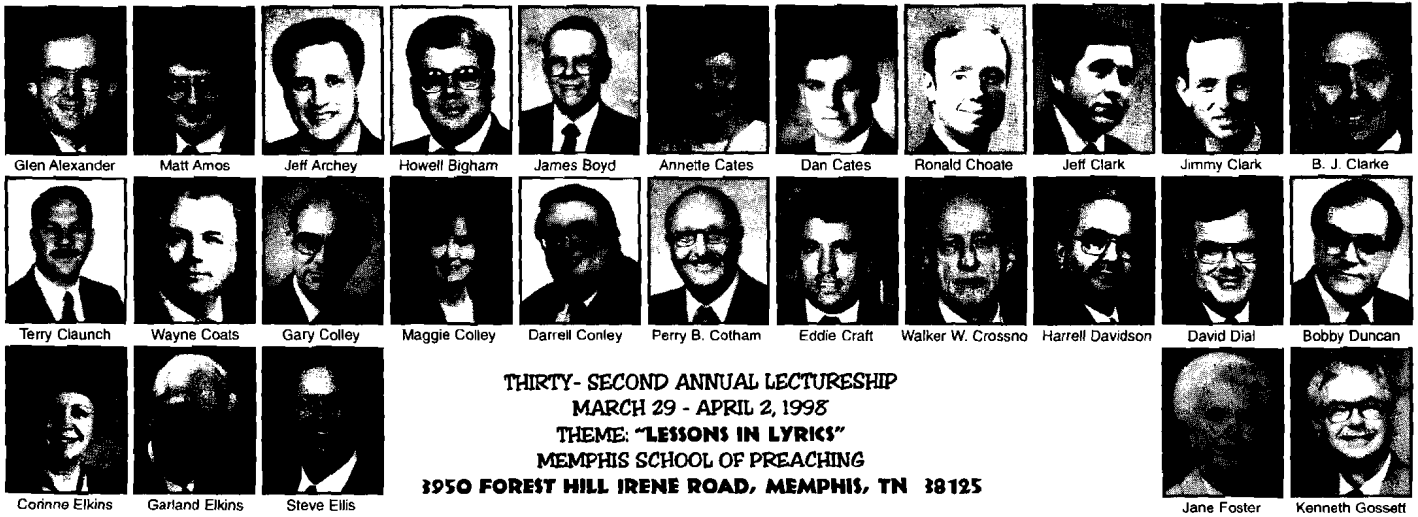
[Although the previous letter speaks for itself, for emphasis sake it should be noted that Holly's letter is dated February 12, 1992. That was six years ago. If Holly did not tell the truth, the Lucados and Hile have had six years in which to deny it. Moreover, Holly's letter has been public over the Internet for some time, yet there has been no effort of which I am aware on the part of, "Chad," the Lucados, or Hile to refute it.

There is one thing on which I agree with our Baptist physician, namely, that Lucado should renounce what Holly falsely calls "the errors of the Church of Christ and rename his church. ... Without any such public renouncing of the heresy (in reality the truth, DPB) which the church he embraces stands for, I would be required to warn anyone and everyone I can, that they should avoid Max Lucado, no matter how interesting his work is..."

Of course, if Holly, the Lucados or Hile have changed over the last six years, then they are free publicly to say so. However, it is interesting to see just how certain folks think about "fence straddlers." If the letter is untrue, will Holly, "Chad," the Lucados, or Hile declare it false or that they have changed?

Is it any wonder that Lucado is anybody's dog that will run with him. If ever there was a preacher who labored to tell people what they wanted to hear, it is Lucado. —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

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THIRTY- SECOND ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
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THEME: "LESSONS IN LYRICS"
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3950 FOREST HILL IRENE ROAD, MEMPHIS, TN 38125

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 1998

9:30-10:20 A.M. "This Is My Father's World"
 10:30-11:30 A.M. "A Mighty Fortress"
 6:00-7:00 P.M. "Give Me the Bible"

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1998

9:00-9:50 A.M. "O Thou Fount of Every Blessing"
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "To Us a Child of Hope is Born"
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Count Your Blessings" (Women's Class)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Were You There?"
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?"
 Class 2: "How Shall the Young"
 Class 3: "A Beautiful Prayer"
 Class 4: "Ten Thousand Angels"

LUNCH

1:10-2:00 P.M. "Low in the Grave He Lay"
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "He Bore It All"
 Class 2: "There is Just One Way"
 Class 3: "Savior, Thy Dying Love" (Women's Class)
 "Ye Must Be Born Again"

"OPEN FORUM"

INTERMISSION

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00-7:30 P.M. "Amazing Grace" (John R. Vaughan)

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 1998

9:00-9:50 A.M. "O Happy Day"
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord"
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "God's Family" (Women's Class)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "Only in Thee"
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Have You Counted the Cost?"
 Class 2: "Master, the Tempest Is Raging"
 Class 3: "The Church's One Foundation"
 Class 4: "The Kingdoms of Earth Pass Away"

LUNCH

1:10-2:00 P.M. "Whosoever Will"
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "All Things Are Ready"
 Class 2: "What Will You Do With Jesus?"
 Class 3: "My Task" (Women's Class)
 (Tommy Hicks)
 (Wayne Price)
 (Eric Owens)
 (Jane Foster)

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS SEMINAR

2:10-3:00 P.M. "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name" (Dub McClish)
 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. "Do all in the Name of the Lord" (Bobby Duncan)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1998

9:00-9:50 A.M. "A Beautiful Life" (Harrell Davidson)
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Will Your Anchor Hold?" (David Dial)
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Is Your Life a Channel of Blessing?" (Women's Class) (Vada Rice)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "In Heavenly Love Abiding" (Darrell Conley)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (B. J. Clarke)
 Class 2: "Fairest Lord Jesus" (Eddie Craft)
 Class 3: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" (Jeff Archey)
 Class 4: "Sing and Be Happy" (Riley Nelson)

LUNCH

1:10-2:00 P.M. "I'll Never Forsake My Lord" (Wayne Coats)
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Class 1: "Can He Depend on You?" (Roy McConnell)
 Class 2: "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?" (Frank Paris)
 Class 3: "He Knows Just What I Need" (Women's Class) (Martha Manley)
 "Soldiers of Christ, Arise" (Roy J. Hearn)

"OPEN FORUM"

INTERMISSION

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:30-8:30 P.M. "Seeking the Lost" (James Segars)

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 1998

9:00-9:50 A.M. "The Ninety and Nine" (Wayne Lankford)
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "Shall I Crucify My Savior?" (Larry Reynolds)
 10:00-10:50 A.M. "If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today" (Women's Class) (Irene Taylor)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. "His Eye is on the Sparrow" (James Wyers)
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Class 1: "Yield Not to Temptation" (Jeff Clark)
 Class 2: "Lovest Thou Me More Than These?" (Steve Rook)
 Class 3: "Blest Be the Tie" (Terry Joe Kee)
 Class 4: "God Is Calling the Prodigal" (Glen Alexander)

LUNCH

1:10 - 2:00 P.M. "We Are Going Down the Valley" (Ira Y. Rice, Jr.)
 Class 1: "What Will Your Answer Be?" (Steve Sanders)
 Class 2: "Whispering Hope" (Matt Amos)
 Class 3: "Does Jesus Care?" (Women's Class) (Dorothy Mosher)
 "Will Jesus Find Us Watching?" (Perry Cotham)

"OPEN FORUM"

INTERMISSION

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:30 - 8:30 P.M. "When All of God's Singers Get Home" (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.

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ON THE DRAWING OF CIRCLES

Jeff Sweeten

When I first became a member of the church, my circle was very big...for it included all who, like myself, had believed. I was happy in the thought that my brethren were many but, having a keen and observant mind, I soon learned that many of my brethren were erring. I could not tolerate any people within my circle but those who, like myself, were right on all points of doctrine and practice. Too, some made mistakes and sinned. What could I do? I had to do something! I drew my circle again...

Leaving the Publicans and sinners outside, excluding the Pharisees in all their pride, with myself and the righteous and humble within. I heard ugly rumors about some brethren. I saw then that some of them were worldly-minded; their thoughts were constantly on things of a worldly nature. So, duty-bound to save my reputation, I drew my circle again...

Leaving those reputable spiritually-minded within, I soon realized in time that only my family and myself remained in the circle. I had a good family, but to my surprise, my family finally disagreed with me. I was always right. A man must be steadfast. I have never been a factious man! So in strong determination, I drew my circle again...

Leaving me quite alone.

"I AM" DREW MY CIRCLE

When I first became a member of the church of Christ, my circle was very small. I understood that I had been added by God to the body of Christ, the bride of Christ that wore his name (Acts 4:12). After hearing the gospel (I Corinthians 15:3,4), I believed in Jesus as the son of God (John 8:24), repented of my sins (Luke 13:3, 5), confessing his lordship before men (Matthew 10:32), and obeying my Lord's command to be baptized for the remission of my sins (Mark 16:15, 18; Acts 2:38). I put off the old man of sin, put on Christ (Romans 6:5, 6), and understood that very few in this world (Matthew 7:13, 14) are willing to submit to Jesus' words (John 12:47, 48; 14:23, 24). Then, I listened to "change agents" in the church condemn the old paths as being too restrictive. I did not want to appear be self-righteous, as though "I was the only one going to heaven," or as though I was "right on all points of doctrine and practice," so I drew my circle again...

I included obvious error, hypocrisy, and "alternate lifestyles." Of course, following this philosophy led me to wonder, "Why would I be so judgmental as to say that anyone that believed in Jesus might not be saved. Isn't God a merciful God?" This naturally led me to the open-minded position of accepting anyone who believed in Christ or claimed to be a "Christian"; regardless of how they claimed to have become such, how they lived, how they worshiped, or what religious name they wore. They just might be saved and I should fellowship them. Again, "change agents" told me I was on the right track, especially since claiming to know something is right or wrong is dogmatic and negative. These terms, indeed, sounded unchristian, so I drew my circle again...

I was feeling pretty good about myself (which is very important) when I realized that not being able to really know the truth obviously meant my friends, who worshipped Allah, Brahma, and Buddha, are good moral people. Now, who am I to say that they may not have the truth (since I can't really know)? Now, the "change agents" became very dogmatic and judgmental. But, I know now that mankind is my brother, my sister, my mother. So, I drew my circle again...

Then, in the absurdity of it all, I wondered: "Why am I drawing circles? Who do I think I am, God? Is it my place to say who will be saved and who will be condemned?" The burden was too great so I turned the chalk over to Jesus. And he looked around in a circle at those who sat about him, and said, "**Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God is my brother and my sister and mother**" (Mark 3:34, 35). And to those of you who like to draw circles, "**If it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**" (Joshua 24:15).

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

JUBILEE '98: IT'S DÉJÀ VU TIME ALL OVER AGAIN

J.E. Choate

We [editorially] thank you, **Phillip Morrison**, because you have something to say about *Jubilee*. We know the works of *Jubilee* that "thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead." *Jubilee* is like the hooded horseman riding the apocalyptic pale horse who comes annually to leave death and destruction in his path to churches of Christ.

We have hoped that this pale "apocalyptic equestrian" had made its last mission of death in '97. But, lo and behold, here he comes again. Phillip writes: "Contrary to some published speculation, there will be a *Jubilee*, July 1-4, in 1998." We have speculated as we continue to wonder after this marvelous creature with mortal neck wounds. Whose are the "deep pockets?" We know the "deep throats."

This "quasi-Church of Christ" appendage named *Jubilee* does not even resemble a missionary society. An article by me printed in the June 1994 *Firm Foundation* described *Nashville Jubilee, Inc.*, as a corporate body which had neither face, bones, flesh, nor blood which arrogates to itself the authority of Christ and his church.

Phillip Morrison took me to task in a severe personal letter in 1994, chastising me for exposing the corporate machinery of *Nashville Jubilee, Inc.* Phillip then circulated a white paper at a *21st Century Christian* luncheon charging that I had told "nine lies" about *Jubilee*. I wrote Phillip that he was way in over his head on this one. Then **Rubel Shelly** joined the dialogue with short notes and brief letters. He denied that he knew about, or had any hand in the circulation of the white paper with the alleged nine black lies. I advised Rubel that he, too, just might be in way over his head.

THE NEW NASHVILLE CHRISTIAN JUBILEE CORPORATE STRUCTURE

Actually there is nothing new about this 1998 scaled-

down remodeled "jerrybuilt" quasi-religious corporate structure which no longer claims to be sponsored by area churches. Phillip put on the ACU Server Internet what we have been saying all along about *Jubilee, Inc.*:

We have now revised the bylaws of *Christian Jubilee, Inc.* to provide for a board [emphasis mine] comprised of elders of supporting churches. Our chairman is A. D. Pollock, elder of the Western Hills church and president of the Nashville Christian School; vice chairman is Paul Martin, an elder at the West End church and retired Major General in the USAF; secretary is Larry Bridgesmith, an elder at Woodmont Hills and managing partner in a major law firm; and the treasurer is J. D. Elliot, an elder at Madison. Churches are providing more money and more people support for *Jubilee '98* than ever before.

For the lay reader's understanding, the organization of the *North American Christian Convention* is a long standing love affair extending over 70 years with the *Independent Christian Church*. The organized societies and conventions within and under the umbrella of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are part and parcel of one church inextricably intertwined. Neither the NACC nor the societies are designed to disembowel their mother churches.

And who really is Dr. A. D. Pollock that he is the "chairman of the board?" How is it that he is the president of a school associated with churches of Christ? Just maybe after *Jubilee '98* Pollock may realize that he should have stuck to school administration of a Christian school established by his conservative brethren.

The NCS may not survive another crisis for this reason. The lessons of courting mammon and counting the cost do not seem to be lessons learned by postmodern liberals.

The name of Major General Paul Martin reminds us that a Christian Church preacher, James A. Garfield, was a

(Continued on Page 10)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXIX, No. 3

March/1998

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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

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

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.

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Editorial...

DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO DIE TO MAKE THE FRONT PAGE OF *Contending For The Faith*?

When **Barry Grider** was serving as one of the preachers to the Knight Arnold congregation, in Memphis, Tennessee, someone asked him one day if he aspired to appear on the *front page* of *Contending for the Faith*.

"No," he replied, "you have to *die* to appear on the front page of *Contending for the Faith*." So many of our preaching giants have died and been front-paged in recent years, it almost seems that way for sure.

TOO MANY DYING TOO FAST

With so many of our friends and faithful fellow workers leaving this life too closely together these days, even this will not guarantee that we can get them *all* on the front page. In fact, sometimes it seems hard to get them into any particular issue of the paper at all!

For instance, when one of our very best friends and fellow workers—**Bill Claiborne**—died September 13, 1995, I was in a countdown situation to leave for another missionary effort in Murmansk, Russia. When his family called asking me to preach his funeral, it broke my heart not being able to respond. I had to decide what brother Claiborne would have me do—cancel my work-trip to Russia or preach his funeral? I knew what his answer would be—so I went on to Russia.

CLAIBORNE'S, OTHERS' PASSINGS RECORDED IN THIS ISSUE

In fact, I have not been able to include the passing of brother Claiborne and several others on these pages, which normally should have appeared long before now. So many other important things were happening claiming an unusual amount of space over the past couple or three years that several obituary accounts just had to wait.

In this issue, however, *Contending for the Faith* is trying to "make up for lost time." Therefore, as Editor, I herewith am focusing attention not only on brother Claiborne's passing but the demise of several others, as well. You will find five pages of these accounts starting from Page 18.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

POLITICS AND RELIGION

Let it be clearly understood that I know when one begins to criticize the conduct of civil servants (especially the elected variety) in a religious forum, the cry is raised by some that one is "mixing politics and religion" (whatever that is supposed to mean). However, may I remind us all that it is God, not man, who determined the principle and work of civil government (Romans 13). Those in government are not excused from amenability to the will of God because they are in government (Proverbs 14:34; I John 3:4). Indeed, being in such a significant position of leadership, government officials should be greatly concerned with their religious and moral character and conduct. Furthermore, Christians under the government authorized by the Constitution of the United States should exercise their rights and privileges thereof to speak out against immorality in high places and promote biblical morality and religion. Herod being the Tetrarch did not stop John the Baptist from declaring that his union with Herodias was an adulterous one. Moreover, John had none of the freedoms that Americans take for granted. Nevertheless, John declared that it was unlawful for Herod to be married to

Herodias (his brother Phillip's wife). What law had Herod violated if it was not God's law? Please remember that God's law always supersedes man's law (Matthew 14:3,4; Acts 5:29).

Homosexuality is immoral behavior (sin) and is condemned by God (Genesis 19:1-28; Romans 1:26,27; Leviticus 18:22-23; I Corinthians 6:9,10; Jude 7). Those who die practicing homosexuality will go to hell (Revelation 21:8). Hence, Christians diligently work to teach, not only homosexuals, but all sinners to cease their sinful conduct and turn from their sinful way in obedience to God (Acts 17:30; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Romans 1:16).

It is obvious from the public moral policy (indicated in every area of the media) that President Clinton and Vice President Gore are champions of homosexual behavior. No matter whether one is a Democrat, Republican, or whatever, if that person supports sin, he or she should be exposed, rebuked, and, where possible, an attempt at correction made. Members of the Lord's church should not be a part of any group, party, or institution whose policy is to support immorality—the president, vice president, members of congress, political parties, denominational churches, and silly unrighteous brethren notwithstanding.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

PRESIDENT CLINTON BACKS ALL-OUT PUSH FOR HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS

Using every public and political ploy, the Clinton administration has become relentless in its effort to overthrow traditional morality in favor of a pro-gay culture.

Clinton promised his continued support for gay "civil rights" legislation when he addressed 1,500 homosexuals attending the Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) annual national dinner in November. The 200,000-member HRC, a gay lobby group, also gave a civil rights award to actress Ellen DeGeneres, who was in attendance.

Vice President Al Gore is also enthusiastic about the gay rights movement. In October the vice president praised Disney/ABC's *Ellen* for forcing Americans to "look at sexual orientation in a more open light." And in September Gore promised his help to a cheering audience at the *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force* annual gala.

By virtue of his speech, Clinton became the first U.S. President ever to address a gay rights group in person. His promise of support is seen as critical as House and Senate Democrats prepare to reintroduce the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) as soon as possible, either as stand-alone legislation or as an amendment to another less controversial bill.

ENDA would make it illegal for a business, including those owned by people whose religion regards homosexuality as immoral, to consider sexual orientation as a factor in hiring, promotions or firing. The legislation was first defeated in 1996, when the Senate rejected ENDA by a vote of 50 to 49.

"REDEFINING" BIBLICAL MORALITY

At the HRC banquet, the President promised to play his part in a bold undertaking, saying, "We have to broaden the imagination of America" to accept homosexuals as equals. "We are redefining in practical terms the immutable ideals that have guided us from the beginning."

Conservatives were outraged by the suggestion that God's laws were subject to human tinkering. Columnist **Cal Thomas** wrote, "Bill Clinton didn't create the world. God did. And God designed norms for behavior that are in our best interests." Thomas said, "When we change the original standard, there can be no standard left except popular opinion. And that has historically led to destruction of people and of nations."

But gays in attendance loved the 23-minute speech, interrupting it with applause 25 times — and seven of those times the applause turned to standing ovations. One of those standing ovations was initiated by DeGeneres and her lesbian partner, actress **Anne Heche**. DeGeneres was there to receive HRC's National Civil Rights Award.

HATE CRIMES NEXT ON CLINTON'S LIST

Just days later, the President also participated in a White House conference on "hate crimes," where he endorsed the concept of "diversity education." Clinton and other speakers called for K-12 instruction aimed at teaching children tolerance of, among other things, the homosexual lifestyle.

Attorney General **Janet Reno**, who hosted the conference, said, "We need to speak out against prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry whenever we see it and wherever we find it," adding that such anti-gay attitudes lead to hate crimes. And such attitudes, Reno said, "are learned."

Learned, for the most part, *from parents*. That was the general consensus among participants, according to the

Washington Times. Even the President said schools were a necessary vehicle because parents were failing to teach their children to accept homosexuality.

"Children have to be taught hate," Clinton said. "We want to teach them a different way."

According to Thomas, as a result of this new proposal, the departments of Justice and Education would be circumventing parents by sending "anti-hate crime resource guides" to public school districts. Thomas complained that the move would turn schools into "re-education camps."

In fact, Reno suggested to the 42 participants that they return to their schools and make certain that diversity training programs are in place. Such programs, she said, should include a "conflict resolution plan," so that problem children could be enrolled. "Find out what your schools are doing in diversity programs to teach others how to appreciate diversity," Reno said. [*American Family Association Journal, January, 1998, Pages 1, 5*]

[The following letter was written in answer to a letter from **Bob Berard**, a staff writer for *Contending for the Faith*. He wrote the Vice President to learn of his stand on moral matters. The letter speaks for itself regarding the Vice Presidents view on morality.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]



THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

April 14, 1993

Mr. Bob Berard
904 Glen Oak
Austin, Texas 78745

Dear Mr. Berard:

Thank you for sharing your views with me. I appreciate hearing from you.

I believe people should be judged by their contributions to society, not by their sexual orientation. Every person should have the opportunity to participate fully in a nation that is united in those goals of importance to us all.

This Administration opposes needless discrimination against any American who works, pays taxes, and obeys the law. In my view, this is--and should remain--a matter of personal privacy.

Again, thank you for letting me hear from you.

Sincerely,

Al Gore

THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Mark McWhorter

Referring to religious events around the world in 1997, executive editor of *Christianity Today* magazine, **David Neff**, stated, "Once again we have discovered that America is a very religious nation, but one less and less tied to historic labels. People looked to public rituals to help them understand the big questions, which is religion in its purest form." **James M. Wall**, editor of *The Christian Century*, stated, "There's a growing interest—almost a revival—in our culture in the religious instinct. All of these events illustrate a spiritual hunger and yearning that's not always well understood by the popular media." (Both quotes from *The Birmingham News*, Friday, January 2, 1998, 1H)

I would say there is a big difference in being a religious nation and being a biblical nation. Egypt during Moses' life was a very religious nation. Many of the cities in N.T. times were very religious. And notice that this present interest is not rooted in historical belief. The change agents fall into this category quite well. So while it seems there is a growing interest in spiritual matters, many religious leaders are leading the interested into "new" spirituality. We must take hold of the opportunities of this time and spread the true gospel.

.....

Herb Jahn, 79 yrs old, has used the Pashitta to translate the New Testament into English. **Jahn** believes that Jesus spoke Aramaic almost exclusively. He states, "Jesus spoke Aramaic, and I had always wanted to have a Bible translation that better reflected what Jesus really said and how he said it. I wanted to find the real Jesus."

Jahn says he is a Bible fundamentalist. But he was troubled that most of the translations we have today were translated from the Greek. The Pashitta which he used is a second-century Aramaic Bible. He used an Aramaic concordance written in the 1800's that gives English synonyms for each Aramaic word. **Jahn** acknowledged that he does not have formal training in the field but contends that his 70 years of Bible study and his faith have given him the background to do his project. Before this work, **Jahn** worked on the Exegeses Ready Research Bible and the Exegeses Parallel Bible. (*The Birmingham News*, Friday, January 2, 1998, 3H).

This could prove to be a valuable study tool. But I am not sure that this will get you "closer to the real Jesus" as the author contends.

.....

President Clinton has still not had his choice for Surgeon General confirmed by the Senate. And conservatives better hope that the Senate does not confirm **Dr. David Satcher**. **Satcher**, as one would expect, is not a moral conservative. **Satcher** has stated, "I believe that the decision to have an abortion should be between a woman, her conscience and her doctor, and that abortions should be safe, legal, and rare." (I wonder if infanticide should be between a woman, her conscience, and her doctor?—MTM)

Satcher also has said, "I support the President's position" on partial birth abortion. (This is only one of the most gruesome acts a "physician" can perform in today's society. One would be hard pressed to argue that the "Great Physician," who left us the example of true love, would perform such an act.—MTM) **Satcher** approved research that allowed babies to be exposed unnecessarily to the AIDS virus. As director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **Satcher** approved research in Africa and Asia that treated HIV-positive pregnant women with useless sugar pills instead of the anti-viral drug AZT. The AZT could have decreased by two-thirds the likelihood that those women would transmit HIV to their babies. *The New England Journal of Medicine* (September 18, 1997) branded this action as unethical.

Satcher has stated,

I believe that ideally parents should be involved in decisions about their unemancipated minors use of birth control or whether to have an abortion. It is unfortunate that we still have many situations in this country where youth are not fortunate enough to have responsible parents, or in some cases no parents at all. Because some teenagers are not equally endowed with responsible parents, it is important that local communities be allowed to develop strategies for meeting the needs of all of their youth.

(Do you want even local governments deciding what parents are responsible?—MTM) One of the first acts as head of the CDC that **Satcher** directed was to broadcast prime time television ads, featuring rock stars and T.V. personalities, explicitly promoting condom use. He says, "We've got to be more aggressive. What are we going to tell our children and grandchildren when they ask us why we allowed political, cultural and religious differences to prevent us from attacking this problem?" (Why not use the Bible to prevent the problem? **McWhorter** updated this material with the following information prior to our mail out:—*Editor*) **Satcher** was appointed Surgeon General this past week. The Senate confirmed him by a 2 to 1 margin. (It is unbelievable that the Republicans gave in on this appointment. What a sad day in our nation's history!—MTM) (*Human Events*, January 23, 1998, Vol 54, No 3, page 8, "Six Reasons to Stop **Satcher**" by **Terence P. Jeffery**)

.....

Lee Silver, a Princeton University biologist, states concerning cloning humans,

It would almost certainly be possible to produce human bodies without a forebrain. These human bodies without any semblance of consciousness would not be considered persons, and thus it would be perfectly legal to keep them 'alive' as a future source of organs. (*The New American*, Vol 13, No 4, February 16, 1996, page 8).

This only magnifies the level of immorality that many in our society have attained. These scientists have no way of proving that there is complete lack of thought with the lack

of a forebrain. A person is human from the time of conception. And besides, not only are they now speaking of attempting cloning, but they will manipulate the cells to try to get what they want. Many questions are raised from the above quote. Included is who is going to willingly carry a "source of organs" for nine months in her womb? Will there be individuals paid to do this? Will the organs be sold

to the highest bidders? Who will hold the licenses to hire the carriers? Who will hold the licenses to 'manipulate' "non-human" fetuses? And most importantly, will God hold back his wrath if our nation stoops to these depths?

—*The Electronic Gospel Herald*
Volume 1, Issue 6B, February 15, 1998

NORTH MADISON CHURCH OF CHRIST MADISONVILLE, TEXAS

David P. Brown

Today, many elders, preachers, and church members do not believe that denominations are lost in sin with no hope of heaven. Recently the elders of a church out in the western part of Texas were appalled when they heard that an African missionary they helped support was attempting to convert Baptists. They could not understand why he would attempt to reach people who were already believers in Christ. They thought that he should seek the "unchurched." Such persons may continue to have a "church of Christ" sign in front of their building, but they have "sold out" to sectarianism. They are in the grip of apostasy. Given time they will become just another denomination, a pitiful monument to the pride, arrogance, and folly of men who love to do things their own way.

A case in point is the **North Madison Church of Christ, Madisonville, Texas**. Here is an unedited excerpt from an article by their preacher Lanier Stevens entitled

"*What Are You?*" The article appeared on the front page of their August 3, 1997, church bulletin.

In spite of the great temptation to denominationalize, sectarianize, or exclusivize (my word) the disciples of Jesus Christ, the scripture says "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Acts 11:26 (May I add they were called JUST Christians.) Brother Rubel Shelly has been tarred and feathered (figuratively) and literally branded a false teacher and a heretic because he dared to write, "I Just Want To Be A Christian" in which he said it is altogether possible for us to be "Christians Only" and not necessarily the "only Christians." I salute his boldness. Our brother, Marvin Phillips, wrote, "Don't Shoot, We May Be On The Same Side!" What am I? I'm just a Christian! What are You?

All false teachers must get people away from the true meaning of words in order to sway them to their way of thinking. Hence, they redefine words to suit their desired goals. This is exactly what Rubel Shelly, Marvin Phillips, Max Lucado, and "tag-alongs" such as Lanier Stevens do. The previous quotation is an excellent example of redefining terms and applying them to suit one's self. Stevens defines "sectarians" and "denominationalists" to be those of us who continue to uphold the New Testament as a perfect divine blueprint.

To Shelly, Phillips, and Stevens the church of which they are members is no better or worse than (on second thought they may think that the church of Christ is worse than other churches), to name a few, the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopal, Community, and the various Pentecostal churches. They think there are Christians in all of these churches and that such religious people are acceptable to God in the practice of their various, sundry, and contradictive religious beliefs and practices. This is why these previously mentioned men feel free to fraternize with and fellowship just about any sectarian that claims Christ as his "personal Savior." Stevens, and others who believe as he does, are not trying to keep the church from sectarianism, they are doing their best to lead the church into sectarian denominationalism.

In their September 7, 1997, bulletin of the North Madison Church of Christ, **Dale Underwood**, the church's "Music/Youth and Education" person wrote an article en-

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Bob Berard, Director
David P. Brown, Academic Dean

Spring Church of Christ

P.O. Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383 (281) 353-2707
Fax: (281) 288-3676 Email: BobBerard@juno.com

titled "Which Way Does the Church Go?" In the article he revealed that when he and Stevens "travel abroad" they are "from time to time" asked, "Where are we headed?" His answer to such queries is, "It depends on who is in control."

THE OLD PATHS

He then points out that, "There are those who quote the prophet Jeremiah and tell us to 'take the old paths'." Underwood immediately begins to tell us what those people mean when they urge him to "take the old paths." Please note his tender words of love and kindness as he tells us what he thinks these people mean when he and Stevens are urged to "take the old paths,"

Of course, the 'path' or 'pattern' we are told to take is one of conformity to methodology and a type of lawkeeping (sic) reminiscent of Pharisee-ism. They then set themselves up as Ezekiel's "watchmen of Israel" in a self-commissioned role. And, much like the Gustapo (sic) of Hitler's day, they use scare tactics and a spy network to ensure compliance. If you don't, then you find yourself excommunicated by this modern-day papacy.

Jeremiah did not mean what Underwood said that certain ones meant when they urged him to "take the old paths." Moreover, if those who urged him to "take the old paths" meant what Jeremiah intended, they did not mean what Underwood attributed to them. Jeremiah declared:

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken (Jeremiah 6:16,17).

Jeremiah's idea of "the old paths" and "the good way" was obedience to the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 5 and 6). Since men today are under "the perfect law of liberty" and not the Law of Moses, it is obvious that "the old paths" and "the good way" of our day are found in the last will and testament of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18; Colossians 2:14; 3:17; Hebrews 8:13; 9:15-17; James 1:25).

TERMS OF ENDEARMENT

Over and over again it has been proven that you have not been loved until you have been loved by a liberal. Does anyone think that Underwood would spurt such venom toward the Baptists, Methodists, and their spiritual kin? Certainly not. But his own brethren, who simply expect him to teach the truth of the New Testament, are monsters worse than Adolph Hitler. Moreover, Stevens and Underwood may not like Ezekiel's or Jeremiah's watchmen, but God does, and no one has New Testament authority to oppose those who strive to follow in their faithful steps as they "watch" in the light of the New Testament truth. One of the chief areas of an eldership's work is watching for the spiritual well-being of the souls under its oversight (Hebrews 13:17). Hence, elders are watchmen. It is obvious that little "scriptural watching" has been done at the North Madison congregation.

The truth of the matter is that Lanier Stevens and Dale Underwood have converted to denominationalism. Evidently the "powers that be" at the North Madison

Church think it is just wonderful. They can "love" and "fellowship" any person that comes down the road; that is, everyone but those who believe and teach as we do. For some strange reason their own brethren are not worthy of the loving words they regularly apply to Baptists, Methodists, and the other churches founded on the commandments and doctrines of men. They purr like contented kittens when speaking of their brothers and sisters in the denominations, but they snarl like rabid dogs when they refer to people such as we when we expose their unscriptural beliefs and actions.

Notice the following terms of endearment employed by Underwood in referring to those who urged him to "take the old paths."

1. "the 'path' or 'pattern'...is one of conformity to methodology"
2. "and a type of lawkeeping (sic) reminiscent of Pharisee-ism"
3. "They...set themselves up...in a self-commissioned role."
4. "...like Gustapo (sic) of Hitler's day,"
5. "...use scare tactics and a spy network to ensure compliance."
6. "...then you find yourself excommunicated by this modern-day papacy."

He then declares the result of his own fabrication in the following words. He writes:

A Church that's scared of its own shadow; more concerned with the acceptance of men than the mission of its Master. How many beautiful Christian people have been stunted spiritually by such an apostasy, the Lord only knows. How many souls that could otherwise be won instead of the wringing of hands about conformity, the Lord only knows.

No one's spiritual growth has ever been "stunted" by being urged to "conform" to the doctrine of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:17, 18). The Lord's church practicing the Lord's will has no reason to be frightened any more than David was afraid of Goliath. When we do *only* what is authorized in the New Testament, we have full assurance of our faith and destiny (Colossians 3:17; John 12:48; Hebrews 4:11; Ephesians 6:17; II Peter 4:11).

WHO ARE GOD'S PEOPLE?

We know that "beautiful Christian people" are those who believe in Christ (Romans 10:17), repent of their sins (Acts 17:30), confess their faith in Christ (Romans 10:9, 10), and by the authority of Christ are baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in order to obtain the forgiveness or remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; Matthew 28: 18-20; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3, 4; Galatians 3:26, 27; I Peter 3:21; Acts 2:41, 42, 47). **Hereby we know who is and who is not a Christian. Hereby we know who is and who is not in fellowship with God (Acts 2:47; I John 1:7; Acts 2:42). Hereby we know that no one else is a member of the blood-bought body of Christ, the church that Jesus built (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2; 20:28). Hereby we know the organization of the church, what Christian living is, and what constitutes scriptural worship. Hereby, we know that such men as Stevens and Underwood are false teachers.**

Stevens, Underwood, and their spiritual kin are leading people away from the infallible, complete, static, standard of God's word which they abhor, but to which they give lip service (II Timothy 3:16, 17; James 1:21; Luke 8:11; Hebrews 4:11; Matthew 7:15-23). Jesus said that the love of God always manifests itself in obedience to his commandments (John 14:15). Jesus will save only those that obey him (Hebrew 5:9).

How do Stevens, Underwood, and the "North Madison Church of Christ" show their love for God and his church? By belittling, mocking, and making light of those brethren and churches who refuse to submit in all things to anyone but Jesus Christ. They show no appreciation for those who beg them to return to the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet, almost in the same breath they appear to be so piously shocked that anyone (given their perception) could lower himself to belittle, mock, and make light of someone else. Have these people forgotten the meaning of hypocrisy?

WHO CONTROLS STEVENS' AND UNDERWOOD'S LIVES?

Yes, indeed, *"It depends on who is in control."* And, the only way Christ has of controlling anyone is by one submitting to Christ's will and his will alone. This is the reason that such men as Stevens and Underwood are opposed openly and without fear. Would to God that they would repent of their sins and tell the old gospel story that is as fresh and powerful as the day the Holy Spirit put into the world. Truly, it is God's **only power** to save the believer (Romans 1:16). Yet, Stevens and Underwood would rather feed upon and declare **"the good words and fair speeches"** of men than the truth that is the gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:17, 18; John 8:31, 32; 17:17; II Timothy 4:1-5).

I am authorized by the New Testament to fellowship anyone who is in fellowship with God (Colossians 3:17; II John 9-11). I am authorized to **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"** (I Thessalonians 5:21). My Lord has authorized me in his word to **"...believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** (I John 4:1). He expects me to have such a living and active faith that I will **"contend for the faith"** (Jude 3). Our Lord also expects Stevens, Underwood and all others to obey the same scriptures that I must obey.

FALSE TEACHERS ARE INCONSISTENT

Is it not interesting as well as sad that these men are so blind that they cannot see their own inconsistencies? Stevens and Underwood are writing in opposition to their critics. They are attempting to expose and refute them. Yet, they declare those church members whom they judge to be participants in the same kind of activities in which they readily engage to be bad people. Indeed, **"The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools"** (Proverbs 26:7).

In the 1997 Nashville *Jubilee* Rubel Shelly made it clear that, *"Jesus did not die for organizational unity."* How silly can one be? If the church is an organization and Christ died for the church, then Christ died for the organization of the church as it is revealed in the New Testament.

Shelly also apologized to the Independent Christian Church for mistakes by members of the church of Christ that helped bring into existence the Christian Church. Will someone tell us how anyone may apologize for people who are dead? Furthermore, how is it possible that Shelly may apologize for men who did not think they were wrong in opposing the unscriptural innovations of the Christian Church?

Then, as the dog returns to his own vomit, here comes Lanier Stevens, Dale Underwood, and their ilk lapping it up. Moreover they get hot, bothered, flustered, and upset with those of us who refuse to "lap" with them (II Peter 2:20-22). What kind of character desires warmed-over denominational regurgitation ladled up by men who are not nearly so adept at serving it as the Baptists, Methodists, and all the rest of the sectarian chefs? Yet listen to Underwood as he concluded his article:

For those concerned with which way this Church is headed, my answer must be, "wherever the Lord takes us next." It's not an easy answer, but is it an honest one. I would much rather be unsure and in the Lord's hands than know exactly what I wanted to do and not have the Lord guiding me. (Punctuation mistakes are his, not mine, DPB).

If one cannot absolutely know from a study of his New Testament where the Lord is leading him, just how will he ever know anything about from where he came, what he is doing here, and where he is going? The Lord cannot take one anywhere regarding salvation if one refuses to go.

In closing this article I will end with a few questions to Lanier Stevens and Dale Underwood (also to anyone else who believes as they do).

1. T F Saved people (Christians) are found in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches.

2. T F Mechanical instruments of music used in the worship of God is sin.

3. T F The first day of the week is the **only** day on which the church may observe (partake) of the Lord's Supper.

4. T F Max Lucado taught the truth regarding how and when one becomes a Christian when he told those lost in their alien sins to pray the following prayer:

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.

5. T F God's saving grace rules through the commandments of God.

If Stevens and Underwood think of me as Goliath, then let either one of them play the man and be David. If I am as the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, then let one of them be Elijah and win the day for God. If they label me an erring Peter who is worthy of blame, then let one or the other of them be a loving Paul and withstand me to the face.

Yes, let us meet honorably where each may have a fair and equitable hearing before all (I Peter 4:11; Jude 3; Acts 13:6-12; 17:17; 19:9; Galatians 2:11-14).

— 25403 Lancewood
Spring, Texas 77373

ARE PREACHERS AND CHURCH STAFF EMPLOYEES OR SELF-EMPLOYED?

Kenneth D. Cohn, CPA

It has been said that there are only two kinds of preachers: those that are looking for a job and those who have not yet started. While that may be, the Internal Revenue Service classifies preachers (the IRS uses the term "ministers") as either employees or self-employed (in tax-speak, an independent contractor) for federal income tax reporting purposes. The IRS audit guidelines for preachers released in 1995 advise its agents to first determine whether the preacher is an employee or an independent contractor. Unfortunately, this determination can be complex and quite confusing. The rules applied by the IRS and courts are applied the same to "nonministerial staff" for income tax reporting purposes. The reason for the use of the term "for income tax reporting purposes" is that preachers are always treated as self-employed for purposes of social security taxes. On the other hand, the income tax reporting status of "nonministerial staff" determines their status for social security taxes.

There are at least four recognized tests for determining whether a "minister" or "nonminister" staff person is an employee or self-employed. These include: (1) the common law employee test set forth in the income tax regulations; (2) the 20-factor test announced by the IRS in 1987; (3) the 7-factor test announced by the United States Tax Court in 1994; and (4) a 12-factor test developed by the

United States Supreme Court. The common thread of these tests is the degree of control and direction the employing organization exercises over the person rendering the service.

Most gospel preachers should report their federal income taxes as employees since most preachers are employees under application of the above tests and, for that reason, the IRS considers most ministers to be employees. Indeed, the IRS prefers preachers to report as employees since the income reporting compliance rate for employees is significantly higher than for the self-employed. Consequently, the IRS audits a greater percentage of the self-employed than it does employees.

Generally, in the churches of Christ, preachers either are employed as "located preachers" who occasionally hold gospel meetings, or work full-time holding gospel meetings and the like. Based on application of the various tests set forth above, the relationship between a church and the "located preacher" and "nonministerial staff" is almost always an employer/employee relationship. The preacher working full-time holding gospel meetings and the like is almost always an independent contractor. Tax reporting responsibilities shall be the subject of a future article.

—4015 Evening Trail Drive
Spring, Texas 77388-4937

GOT TO GO "INTO" BEFORE YOU CAN BE "IN"

Mark K. Lewis

Faithful Christians have long used the argument, concerning baptism, that one must enter "into" Christ before he can be "in" him. Since all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3), including grace (II Timothy 2:1), are "in Christ," it behooves us to enter "into" him. Hence, how does one get "into" Christ? Through baptism: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27); "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3) Just as one must enter "into" a building before he can be said to be "in" it, even so a person must enter "into" Christ, through baptism, before he can be said to be "in" him, where all spiritual blessings, including the forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7), are found.

This is not merely an argument of sophistry. The Bible itself recognizes this concept that one must go "into"

before he is said to be "in." In Mark 1:12-13, we read, "And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into (Greek, *eis*) the wilderness. And he was in (Greek, *en*) the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan." Notice that Jesus had to go "into" the wilderness before he was "in" the wilderness. Both the Greek and the English make this distinction. There is no brilliance of detection here; such is just plain common sense that men apply in all walks of life—except, it seems, when it comes to the Bible doctrine of baptism.

Let us continue to use this argument with the force it deserves. One cannot be "in" something until he first goes "into" it. Thus, one cannot be "in" Christ unless he has first entered "into" him through baptism. This is the truth to which both scripture and reason attest.

—2912 North Chester
Bakersfield, California 93308

IT'S DÉJÀ VU

(Continued from Page 1)

general and president of the United States. A man of his intelligence knows the logistics of military science, but has he mastered the simple pattern of the New Testament church? How is it that the West End Church continues ties with *Jubilee*? There are two classes of liberal elders—those who run things, and those who give them the majority.

The name of Larry Bridgesmith, introduced to us as a Woodmont Hills elder and the secretary, raises a very fundamental question. The yellow flags are run up whipping in the wind that here is a brother coming from Shelly's church. Does he endorse the doctrine of baptism as expounded by Shelly and Lucado?

And what about Rubel's obvious endorsement of **Don Finto** who had a personal meeting with God who told him straight off the chin that he is a called apostle with authority equal to the "Rock?" And to think that there are elders of traditional churches of Christ in Nashville who lack the moral courage to stand against this pious "claptrap."

And to J. D. Elliot, an elder at Madison and DLU board member, treasurer, what do you have in mind as you continue to support this stuff? You and **Steve Flatt** have been wired in with *Jubilee, Inc.*, for ten years. [Elliot, was not at the *Power for Today Seminar* (October 15) conducted by the Madison church to condemn the false doctrine which Lucado preached during *Jubilee*.]

Why don't you and Steve Flatt cut this albatross from around the neck of **Lipscomb**? History dictates that you must deal with the school's problems put in place by **Harold Hazelip** over eleven years.

When a brother put in my hand Phillip's ACU print out, I said that what this means is that it raises a thousand new questions. Some of the most provocative of these questions are put on-line. The question is put to **Willard Collins** and **Jim Bill McInteer** who condemned *Jubilee '97* by word and action—"Is not *Jubilee '98* an open slap in your face?"

The *Gospel Advocate* and the *21st Century Christian* did not have booths on the *Jubilee '97*, but two of their high profiled representatives were there. Will this be repeated July 4, 1998?

And, **Marlin Connley**, what will your answer be? You rejected *Jubilee* having in the past appeared on its program. You spoke against *Jubilee* at the Concord Road church July 3, 1997.

You are the highly esteemed preacher of the Hillsboro church where once **B. C. Goodpasture** and **Batsell Barrett Baxter** preached. You bluntly answered **Randy Harris**, who wanted to know why the Batsell Barrett Baxter Chair of Preaching, funded by the Hillsboro church, was installed in the DLU Communication department. It is reported you told him that it was because of "loose cannons" in the DLU Bible department and that he was one of them.

Miles E. Ezell, Jr., chairman of the DLU board, remarked that Lipscomb had been carried to its present height under the administration of **Harold Hazelip**. History reminds us that Lipscomb, plain man, farmer, and editor, took on the mighty men of the Christian Church, and defeated the digressives with a handful of dedicated brethren, as the digressives mounted their organized campaign to force the organ and missionary society into the churches of Christ of the Southern region.

The biggest question of all is reserved for **Steve Flatt**. Just how are we to understand this barrage of rhetoric coming out of DLU headquarters that you mean to keep your solemn covenant with the DLU patrons to honor 106 years of Lipscomb traditions? And the next question is: When do you plan to start? What will you do with your liberal Bible faculty? Steve, some of your diehard believers seem to think you are a miracle worker. They think, as they say, that you will turn things around at Lipscomb. That will be the day.

President Flatt, you talk a good game, but do you plan to play by the rules of the Nashville Bible School charter as you have covenanted to do? Do you have any other choice?

Then there are the anti-*Jubilee* churches, namely the Hillsboro, Crieve Hall, Jackson Park, and Goodlettville churches of Christ. My question to them is: Is not *Jubilee '98* another calculated slap in your face?

That the churches of Christ/Churches of Christ are dividing in bitterness and distrust is of a magnitude greater than a Greek tragedy. The great shame is that the likes of *Jubilee* supporters, e.g., **Rubel Shelly**, **Harold Hazelip**, **Max Lucado**, and **Jeff Walling** just don't seem to care.

POSTSCRIPT

Ours is a free constitutional society with a special guarantee of religious expression. When the "change agents" use such public platforms as *Wineskins*, *Jubilee, Inc.*, and university forums and lectureships to expound their personal views, philosophy, and theology designed to compromise and downgrade traditional churches of Christ, do they not know that they will be held strictly accountable?

May I be so bold to say that like the apostle Paul said of his critics that I do not consider myself a whit behind the chief change agents to read the signs of the times. Not since Phillip Morrison has a single critic come forth to challenge my documentation with the exception of a personal reference here and there to which I have given immediate personal response.

— Yokefellow

Volume 25, number 1,
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"WHY THE CHURCH IS DYING"

Danny L. Box

As a self-supporting preacher of the gospel, I have worked for the past 25 years as a registered nurse. In the course of those years, I have been at the bedside of untold numbers of people as they passed from this life due to various causes. As each one died physical death, I felt a sense of sadness and sorrow, but none of those deaths bothered me as much as what I am seeing happen all across the brotherhood now. I am seeing congregations of the Lord's people die spiritually. The reasons for this spiritual death are many, but we will look at only a few.

The Lord's church is dying because it is not being fed. Just as we need the right kind of food for this physical body to grow and be healthy, so must the church have the right food. That food is the word of God. One of the entreaties given to the elders in Acts 20:28 was to "feed the flock." What are they to feed the flock? According to Peter, we are to be fed and desire the "sincere milk of the word," that we might grow in the knowledge of the Lord (I Peter 2:2). Paul told the young man Timothy to "preach the word." He went on to tell Timothy to use this word to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering." When the word is being preached from the pulpit, in our classrooms and from house to house, we do not have to worry about the church dying because this spiritual food

will sustain us. Brethren, let's stop starving the church to death, and feed it.

The church is dying because it is being poisoned. We are being poisoned by men who would pervert the gospel. Paul warned against those who would pervert the gospel of Christ and told the church at Galatia that anyone who would preach any other gospel would be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9). We have men now among us preaching their "damnable heresies," and thereby many brethren are being led away from the truth. John warned us in I John 9-11 not to have anything to do with these men. If we do, we are just as guilty of poisoning the church as they are. False teachers are deadly to the church!

The church is dying because it is being neglected. The church is being neglected by the elders who are instructed to "take heed unto the flock." If an eldership is paying attention as it should, then false doctrine, worldly practices, and sin that will destroy the church will be kept out. The church also is being neglected by many of its members. We have members who pay no attention to Hebrews 10:25. They willfully forsake the assembly and think nothing of it. These members put more emphasis on playing and their own entertainment than they do on worshipping God. Little do they realize that their behavior is causing the church to die.

The church is dying because its mission has been falsified. The mission of the church has been, and will always be to teach the gospel to the lost (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16); to edify, or build the brethren up spiritually (I Thessalonians 5:11; I Corinthians 14:26; Romans 14:19); and benevolence, or the helping of those in need (Galatians 6:10; Matthew 25:36-46). Today, the emphasis is placed on entertainment, playing, and pleasing ourselves.

The church is dying a little more each day, congregation by congregation, individual by individual. What can we do to turn it around? Paul told us in I Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore my beloved brethren, Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Every one that makes up part of the body is worth saving and it is our responsibility and duty to work to that end!

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"Rivers (and men) get crooked by following the line of least resistance."

WAS PAUL THE CAUSE OF DIVISION?

David Jones

The apostle Paul was a preacher who was ridiculed almost every place he preached. He was a man who would have given his life for the cause of Christ. In fact, that is what was said of him in a letter drawn by the apostles and elders at the council in Jerusalem: **"It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Acts 15:25-26). It has been said of him that wherever he preached, either a riot or a revival took place. He was accused of having **"turned the world upside down"** (Acts 17:6).

We read in Acts 24 of Tertullus' accusation of Paul and of Paul's defense of himself. Tertullus was an orator and he spoke nicely about Felix, the governor. He commended him for the quietness which they enjoyed and for the very worthy deeds which were done for the nation by his providence. However, when Tertullus addressed the apostle Paul's record, he had quite a different picture to paint: **"For we have found this man [a] pestilent [fellow], and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"** (Acts 24:5). Paul was accused of being a pestilent person, that is, a person who plagued anywhere he dwelt. He was accused of being a person who caused division by his words and actions. Tertullus even accused Paul of trying to be the ringleader of the Nazarenes. Actually, Tertullus was ridiculing the church. Paul went on to say: **"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets"** (Acts 24:14). The Jews called the "way" heresy, but Paul called it worshipping God according to the will of God. Paul was accused of causing division although he was simply preaching and defending the gospel of Christ. Why was Paul accused?

CALLING NAMES

On more than one occasion, the apostle Paul called the names of men who had departed from the faith. We read in his first letter to Timothy, **"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme"** (I Timothy 1:19-20). Paul did not want Timothy to fall victim to these men, so he named them. Also Paul wanted Timothy to avoid them. Paul had withdrawn fellowship from them, not invited them to dinner or to speak to the church. He also pointed out some men in his second letter to Timothy:

"But shun profane [and] vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrec-

tion is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:16-18).

Notice Paul was not afraid to say that these had erred concerning truth. Why did Paul point them out? He marked them so Timothy would be aware and would avoid them and their error.

Was Paul causing division when he did such a thing? No, he was actually helping to unite brethren of like precious faith.

CONFRONTING THE ERRING

Paul confronted those who needed to obey the Gospel because he loved their souls. Notice what Paul said to the Romans: **"That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh"** (Romans 9:2-3). However, he did not reason that since he loved them so much he would not tell them what they needed to hear. So when he would go to cities, he would go to the synagogues on the Sabbath days because he knew he would find Jews, whom he loved, worshipping according to their religion. One such occasion is recorded in Acts. The inspired Luke wrote:



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Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ” (Acts 17:1-3).

We read further that many of the Jews were moved with envy and created a riot because of opposition to Paul’s preaching. Was Paul to be faulted because a riot followed his preaching of the gospel? No, it was the fault of those who were not honest in heart.

We are hearing uncertain sounds today from the liberal element concerning those who do not walk according to the truth. They would have us not stand and proclaim that we have an absolute standard of authority. They would have us preach a more subjective gospel, that is, not “draw so many lines” and let people decide for themselves what is truth. They accuse us of following the “traditions of our fathers” or our “religious heritage” while they are the ones (in their own minds) who truly have the mind of Christ. However, if one will read the account of the rich young ruler, he will find that Christ spoke what people needed to hear whether they liked it or not. When the ruler asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him to keep the commandments. (If some preachers of today had been present at this event they would have labeled Jesus a legalist!) When the ruler told Jesus he had kept the commandments from his youth up, Jesus responded: “**One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions**” (Mark 10:21, 22). Please notice that Jesus loved him. Therefore, he told the young ruler what he *needed* to hear. Furthermore, it is important to note that when the young man left Jesus, having refused to obey him, our Lord did not run after him with an easier alternative.

Not only did Paul confront the Jews, he confronted his own brethren in the Lord when they needed it. We read in Galatians 2:11-14,

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the

other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel I said unto Peter before [them] all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”

Peter was withstood by Paul because he had not walked according to the truth. Paul did not just lovingly overlook Peter’s error.

CONCLUSION FOR TODAY

Today we might be accused of being unkind, unloving, and mean-spirited because we oppose those who do not teach truth any longer. We need to make sure we have the proper attitude toward those in error, but we had better make sure we stand and are heard for the truth we speak. Paul admonishes us: “**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**” (Romans 16:17-18). We cannot just look the other way, but rather, we must mark and avoid false teachers. We must be aware that wolves exist in the church (Matthew 7:15-20; Acts 20:29-32), and we must be willing to mark them and avoid them for the sake of truth. We also must do this for the sake of the flock and for the sake of the false teachers themselves. Perhaps they will take a serious look into what they are doing and repent before they enter eternity. May we have the courage and conviction to continue to stand and be heard for the truth we speak. Let us always remember the words of Paul, “**And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not**” (Galatians 6:9).

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PRIDE

Graham Cain

What has been the one most devastating, disruptive element or facet in all of God's creation? What has caused more havoc in God's economy than anything else? The answer has to be PRIDE. With its many manifestations and meanings it is always found in man's sin. Let us notice the effects and meanings that are encased in the word *pride*.

They are: vanity, self-exaltation, conceit, authority, high-mindedness, egotism, jealousy, haughty, envy, unmerciful, insolent, puffed up, self-righteous, disdainful, supercilious, boastful, pompous, power, superiority, pre-eminence, self esteem, overbearing, selfishness, and rule over others. There are other words you may add to our study and it would still be incomplete.

THE PROBLEM WITH PRIDE

It is difficult to discuss fully such a broad subject, but let us try to cover the following three areas:

1. *The origin of pride.*
2. *The evils of pride.*
3. *The roots of apostasy.*

THE ORIGIN OF PRIDE

Pride was first found in Satan. In a study of Satan, although there is wide variation of opinion about his origin, we do know that he was a being created by God (not evil), he *became* evil, exercising the free moral agency which was inherently a part of his nature. This is true of all of God's intelligent, responsible creation. In any event, the problem that caused the fall of whomever is being discussed is pride.

There is a verse in the New Testament that clearly points to our subject. It is a negative statement to keep the novice from being appointed to the eldership of the church. It says, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Timothy 3:6).

Read the decree from Isaiah 13:11 about the doom of Babylon: "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity, and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the naughtiness of the terrible."

THE EVILS OF PRIDE

1) *It brings strife and contention.* Proverbs 13:10 says, "Only by pride cometh contention."

2) *It produces spiritual decay.* In Hosea 7:8-10 we see the plight of Israel in their rebellion and wickedness exposed, and verse 8 says that Ephraim, the ruling tribe of the northern kingdom, "...is a cake not turned" (scorched and burned on one side—uncooked on the other). Verse 10 says, "And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face; and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek him for all this." Thus, we see the spiritual decay at work in Israel as their pride leads them ever deeper into disobedience.

3) *It prevents growth and progress in one's life.* The wise man of Proverbs said in 26:12, "Seest there a man

wise in his own conceit? there is more hope for a fool than of him." The braggart, the puffed up, the one who is haughty and insolent degenerates and perishes in his own conceit. He is a fool.

4) *Pride is a barrier between the one afflicted with it and his creator (God).* Psalm 10:4 says, "The wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts."

5) *It is connected with one of the most common, pitiful, pitfalls known to affect man: self deceit.* Jeremiah 49:16 says, "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart..." This was said with relation to the prophecy against the Edomites. They thought in times of war or danger they could take refuge in caves of the high mountains of their area. Deceived by their pride, Obadiah, speaking on the same subject said, "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee..." (verse 3).

There was a church that had this problem as noted in the book of Revelation. In 3:17 we read, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing (proud, arrogant, self-satisfied, high minded) and knoweth not that thou art wretched, and poor, and blind and naked..." The thing we all need to understand is that we are all much like this. The big difference is that the sensible, sincere soul does not "think himself to be something when he is nothing..." (Galatians 6:3). The humble servant of Christ knows that he is just made from the "dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7), and the only reason that he is of any worth whatsoever is because God breathed into him "the breath of life." Therefore, he does not "think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).

6) *Pride leads one into all manner of excesses and fleshly abominations.* Examine Ezekiel, chapter 16. Here God is berating Jerusalem, pointing out the utter unfaithfulness of his people—comparing them to a lewd, unfaithful wife (verses 25-47). Then, in verses 48-50 he compares them to Sodom. In verses 49 and 50 we are told what the iniquity of Sodom was. "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither strengtheneth the hand of the poor and needy and they were haughty and committed abomination before me, therefore I took them away as I saw good." This passage reveals that sodomy is the fruit of their "iniquity" which was connected with their pride and material prosperity. Thus, they were haughty and committed their terrible abominations.

In Romans the first chapter, beginning in verse 21, we find the general condition of the Gentile world just prior to the gospel of Christ. The rest of the chapter goes on to point out the vile actions. Nothing was left out. Everything that could be thought of was included. The words lust, fools,

reprobate minds, envy, deceit, and proud are used. The word "pride" is the root out of which every sin emerges.

There are many similar events in the church which are too many to list here. However, these are sufficient to prove that pride is involved in too many of them.

THE ROOTS OF APOSTASY

In Acts, chapter 20, we see that Paul calls the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him by coming to Miletus. Paul was on his way to Jerusalem and expected to be treated very badly there. (Acts 20:28-31). The first point of concern is to "take heed...unto yourselves." This is especially so in the case of the elders who are to do this, and to the "flock"—a community of God's saints. Paul foresees two disturbing elements of concern that are coming:

1) "Grievous wolves." In Matthew 7:15 Jesus compares "false prophets" who come among God's people in "sheep's clothing" as being actually "ravening wolves."

2) "Of your own selves." This is pure pride; the very thing we have been discussing. Their desire for acclaim, for enforcing their will and authority upon others. The power of directing and ordering the very lives of others is a strong pull on many. To lead, to know that others are looking up to one as a figure of authority, as the maker and enforcer of rules, is a power that many desire and few can handle. Isaiah 5:21 says, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight."

Let us read II Thessalonians 2:1-10. This is considered by many to be the most difficult passage in the New Testament. The main question here is who the man of sin is in verses two and four of this passage. The most commonly accepted answer is that this refers to the Papal System of the Catholic church. I do not believe that is the correct answer. Note that the basis, the very foundation principle in-

involved here is the raw, deliberate assumption of the right to change, modify or nullify God's holy decrees and take away any and all of God's power. Read verses three and four again and see if you can imagine any type or degree of pride that can be found in them.

Some think that the principle of utter lawlessness is most graphically demonstrated in the Catholic church. It is not displayed by the Methodist "Pastor" who sets aside God's law in sprinkling babies. Nor the Baptist preacher who insists that the salvation he preaches is by "faith only." What about the one who teaches that, "I believe deeply that the New Testament teaches that salvation is a free gift of God, period. You are saved by grace alone" (taken from a tape of Randy Mayeaux as he spoke in Lubbock, Texas, in October 1989). There can be no doubt that the Papal System is the highest exemplification of this man of sin principle ever known; but it is just a matter of degree. Remember that false teachers can appear to be the greatest of saints—"as ministers of righteousness" (II Corinthians 11:15).

We can devote our time to the false teachers in the church of our Lord today. We have more than we can account for. Some of them have gone so far that they are assuming false alliances with the denominational churches and look to them for help. Rubel Shelly and Max Lucado are among the most notorious for these practices. The only thing that these two—and a number of others like them—can use is pride, and these numerous synonyms given at the beginning of this article. And remember there are many more such words of application. Pride is the greatest of all sins.

—2244 Mountain View Drive
Hurst, Texas 76054

UNKEPT PROMISES OF THE PROMISE KEEPERS

Monte L. Evans

The National Mall became an enormous outdoor church Saturday as hundreds of thousands of men came together for the largest religious event in U.S. history. They sang, worshiped, laughed, cried, prayed and listened to brief exhortations from about 40 speakers to renew their commitments to God, wives, children, churches and communities.

This quote was taken from the *Tulsa World* newspaper describing the ridiculous gathering in Washington of so-called "Promise Keepers."

It is shamefully sad that close to a million men had to make the pilgrimage to our nation's capitol to learn how to be better fathers and husbands. This journey was made because the word of God is missing in the lives of these men. The average Bible student knows that the word of God gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). It is apparent that these men have not read in holy writ that the inspired word of God is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteous-

ness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Timothy 3:16,17).

On the surface, Promise Keepers (PK) seems to have a worthwhile agenda, but in reality they are antagonistic towards the church of our dear Savior. PK is an interdenominational movement for men founded by Bill McCartney. For a man to be a faithful PK member, he must keep several promises, one being "to be committed to honor Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to God's word through the power of the Holy Spirit."

The promise to be obedient to the word of God is admirable but are PK members faithful in this endeavor?

PROMISES NOT KEPT

Notice what these so-called promise keepers have not promised to keep.

1. They have not promised to worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Since PK is based on denominational doctrines, mechanical instrumental music is promoted and used in singing during PK gatherings.

2. They have not promised to speak the things which become sound doctrine (Titus 2:1). Some of their false doctrines include salvation by faith only, and that one cannot be obedient to God's word except by the Holy Spirit's intervention (Calvinism).

3. They have not promised to teach the truth regarding how one receives salvation. PK teaches that in order for one to be saved one must 1) admit he/she is a sinner, 2) repent [willingness to turn from sin with the help of God], 3) have faith in Christ, 4) pray the sinner's prayer, and 5) tell others of your commitment.

4. They have not promised to teach the necessity of New Testament water baptism for remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21).

5. They have not promised to teach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). This unkept promise is easily recognized since **Max Lucado** has been a keynote speaker on several occasions.

6. They have not promised to keep from having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness or to reprove them (Ephesians 5:11). All men of any religious background or affiliation are welcome to participate.

7. They have not promised to walk in the light as he is in the light (I John 1:7). Due to their false doctrines they walk in spiritual darkness.

8. They have not promised to abide in God (II John 9-11). Departure from Christ's word separates one from God.

9. They have not promised to defend the faith (Jude 3). It is impossible to defend the faith when one is not in the faith.

Promise Keepers? Are they really promise keepers? You be the judge.

—2141 Kingston Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403

WORD STUDIES

Alexander Nesterkin

When we see the imperative mood in the Bible, it is always a command to the hearer to do some action and accomplish some task by the order of the one having authority. **"...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..."** (Matthew 28:18,19). Jesus Christ commanded his Apostles to **"teach all nations,"** or else **"Repent ye, and believe the gospel"** (Mark 1:15). We understand it quite well. It is not a suggestion to perform something. It is a command in the absolute form. It is expressed by the imperative mood in Greek, which corresponds to the English imperative and has the very same meaning. In Titus 3:10 we read one more command, which Paul uttered to Titus: **"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject..."** This command requires a full obedience on the part of reader, and without doubt on our part also. The verb "reject" is in the imperative mood in both the Greek text and English translation.

WHO IS THE HERETIC?

The next verse contains some clarifications. He **"is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."** Nevertheless, it does not give us the meaning of this word. The Greek word "hairesis" is transliterated into the English (transposed almost letter by letter). It is from "haireomai," which means "to choose"; therefore, it carries a sense of one who is choosing, thus belonging to a heresy, or party, or sect. Two persons being in opposite religious groups may call each other a heretic. For example in the Bible we read: **"Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation"** (Acts 5:17). "Sect" here is

"haireisis." The same word is applied to the Pharisees in the following scripture. **"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses"** (Acts 15:5). "Hairesis" is also translated "sect" in the following two passages. **"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes."** (Acts 24:5). **"Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee"** (Acts 26:5). Even the church was labeled a sect. **"But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against"** (Acts 28:22). In most cases the word "heretic" denotes those who divide the church by doctrines contrary to the doctrine of Christ. **"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."** (II Peter 2:1). The Apostle Paul put "heresies" in his list of the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:20). We now understand why Paul in writing to Titus used the strong imperative mood. In the church today we meet heretics who want to divide us with their doctrines and opinions. They have chosen their way, but according to God, we ought to reject them after twice admonishing them for their sins. The faithful will submit to the Lord's will because this way is the way of Jesus Christ (John 14:6)!

—The Electronic Gospel Herald
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"INDIAN" JOE GILMORE COMES TO NORTHWEST TENNESSEE

Harrell Davidson

I do not recall the first time I met Joe Gilmore. Somehow he understood that I was from Northwest Tennessee. He would say, "Harrell, you live near Reelfoot Lake don't you?" and I would answer, "Yes sir, I sure do." "Would you do me a favor some day?" he would ask. "Be glad to, Joe," and so this went on for many years. Once several years ago this same conversation came back front and center again (it usually did at least once each year). "Would you do me a favor?" "Yes, Joe, what is it?" "If I never get to come to Northwest Tennessee, would you take your camera and go and take pictures all around Reelfoot Lake near you because much of our history is there?" Again, I assured Joe that I would be glad to do anything for him. He had never been to this area. It meant so much to him. While all of us in this area know the legend of Reelfoot Lake, Gilmore knew the history from the Native American point of view.

As time passed the elders asked me to contact Joe Gilmore and invite him for a gospel meeting here in Obion, Tennessee. When I called him in San Jose his response was, "Boy, I'll be glad to come—when?" A date in Spring of 1993 was arranged just before the Memphis School of Preaching lectures would start. As time grew near he called and asked that I schedule several speaking engagements at

various schools so he could give the students firsthand information about Native Americans.

I shall never forget that day on March 25, 1993, meeting "Indian Joe" at the airport in Memphis. We settled in to the two hour drive to Obion. The conversation was continuous about various things until he settled upon the appointments that I had arranged for him on Friday. I told him that he would speak at Trimble, Tennessee before noon. Just after noon he would speak at Newbern, Tennessee to the Dyer County Junior High School. After that we would work our way back into Obion County where he would speak at Obion County Central High School in Troy, Tennessee to a student enrollment of more than a thousand. "What will we do after that?" "It will be time to prepare for evening worship," I said. "Where will I speak on Saturday?" "Joe, that is the day that we are going to spend together at Reelfoot Lake." I can still hear him say, "Oh, boy."

He was as thrilled as a child with a new toy on Reelfoot that Saturday. He took all the pictures that he wanted and then it was time for us to eat at Reelfoot. Everywhere we went he would say, "I am Joe Gilmore, a gospel preacher, and a Creek Indian. Come to church tonight to hear me preach." Many did. In fact we had one full-blood Cherokee princess to attend, and she was thrilled to meet "Indian Joe." We had good crowds during the meeting. The last night of the meeting we had announced (upon his insistence) that after the closing prayer he would speak on Indian affairs. The house was packed. They heard a powerful sermon typical of Joe. He spoke for almost two hours on Indian history, his ancestors, and the truth about what happened at Reelfoot Lake. "The Indians were driving the white men back to the ocean. A group of Indians went up to Michigan to get the Saginaws to come and help. The chief told them to keep their ear to the ground and when they heard it rumble, those at Reelfoot would know that the Saginaws were on their way." Of course, the rumble was the great earthquake. He told me that he had never given that much information about the Indians at one time ever in his entire life.

Joe Gilmore came back in 1994 for another meeting. The people had been introduced to a "chief" among gospel preachers. He held the book under his left arm in typical fashion as those of us who knew him came to expect. He was ever more grateful for the opportunity to come to Northwest Tennessee. He never forgot and never will we. His sermon titles for that first gospel meeting were: "The Power of The Gospel," "The Lord's Platform for Unity," "Bringing Back the Bible," "What Will Happen In Soul Winning," and "The Home." No, we will not forget.

[Because we did not receive this article in time to include it with the others about Joe Gilmore in the January issue, we are happy to publish it in this month's paper.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

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Bill Claiborne Dies As Editor Is Leaving For Work In Russia

When his family called me on September 13, 1995, it was to inform that my long-time friend and fellow laborer in the gospel **William (Bill) Claiborne** had died. When they asked me to preach his funeral, ordinarily there should have been no question. I counted it an honor that they should ask me to do so.

Trouble was that I was in a countdown situation—right then—getting ready to leave for Russia for more missionary work. I knew that, under the circumstances, Bill Claiborne would want me to go right on—so I did. But I deeply regretted having to be away just then. I looked upon Bill Claiborne as one of God's true nobility.

Just when Bill Claiborne and I actually met, I am not quite sure. I know that for many years he had led singing for that master preacher/debater **W. L. Totty** at Garfield Heights in Indianapolis. Claiborne had a beautiful tenor voice and he could sight-read and sing a song the first time as if he had known it all his life. He also wrote a number of songs himself.

However, the first time I became conscious of him personally was when, as one of the elders at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, he and his fellow-elders invited me down in the late '60s or early '70s to speak on world evangelism as well as the then-new encroachments of doctrinal liberalism undermining the church. From that point forward, I always was happy to be associated with him whether as a singer, an elder, or a preacher of the gospel.

When Bill Claiborne moved to Hendersonville, Tennessee, some years later, he was the only preacher in the Hendersonville area known to me at that time who still stood foursquare for the gospel as it reads in the New Testament. Again and again he invited me to come there to speak on world evangelism and the encroach-

ments of Liberalism both in Hendersonville and in the Greater Nashville Area. He and the Luna Lane church contributed again and again to the support both of our missionary efforts and also to help us "**contend for the faith as it was once for all delivered**" (via the pages of this paper).

As he grew older, Bill Claiborne continued to preach; however, more and more it had to be through his own self-support as a building contractor. He simply could not understand—nor did I—why brethren who formerly supported his work financially quit doing so in his later years. But he never gave up.

Since I could not come for his funeral, **Wayne Coats, Duke Gregory, Jeff Archey** and others took care of it.

Writing to me later, Jeff Archey said, in part, "I only knew Bill for a little over a year, but may I say that every young preacher should have a Bill Claiborne in his congregation. He helped and encouraged me much, although his health limited him.

"My, could he sing. He knew music so well and traveled many a mile to Friday night singings all over. As a student of the Word, he loved the truth and was always willing to defend it and encouraged many to defend it. His wife, **Elizabeth**, blessed me with many volumes from his library that have been such a blessing to me. He was a whiz in construction and an excellent poet. I have enclosed his favorite..."

Bill Claiborne's poem reads, as follows:

**I had rather be a builder with hammer,
saw and square
And place each board in its own place
and nail with greatest care
Than to tear things down that others
have built
Whether good name or mansion fair.
For if I work on the wrecking crew,**

SWEET WATT LEAVES THIS LIFE WHILE EDITOR IS OVERSEAS

If there was one person on earth whom I had hoped to be available to preach her funeral, it had to be **Sweet Watt**, of San Francisco, California, just as I had her husband **B. Watt's** funeral, when he, too, passed almost a decade earlier.

Yet, when her time came in May, 1996, I was overseas doing missionary work in

Southeast and Southern Asia—not even knowing of her passing until returning to the U.S. the following month!

Sweet Anna Watt was born January 20, 1907, to the union of **William Maddox** and **Martha Ann Blakely Maddox** in Wortham, Texas. Although her father's name was William, everyone called him Will.



**I'm building no home up there.
So, Lord, make me a builder in your
kingdom
strong and true.
I'd rather be on the building gang than
on the wrecking crew.**

Archey's report continued, "I assisted **Wayne Coats** and **Duke Gregory** in the service. **John Brasel**, a dear brother and song-leading friend of Bill's, led the congregational singing that day at Corinth Church of Christ in Portland. Bill was laid to rest in the Corinth community cemetery on September 16, 1995. He passed from this life on September 13, 1995, a short time after you and I visited him. He was 74 years old, born on September 14, 1920...Thanks for recognizing Bill in *Contending for the Faith*."

Even though circumstances prohibited my taking part in brother Claiborne's funeral in person, I am happy to devote this space to his memory, and expect to meet him once again face to face in the home he was building "up there." Who knows, we might even hoist a few tunes together when he and *all the rest* of God's singers get home!—*The Editor*

• • • • •

Sweet Anna attended school in Wortham, Texas, going as far as Wortham High School.

After meeting and marrying **Odell Moore**, their union was blessed with one daughter—**Mary Christine Moore**.

After Sweet and Odell sometime later divorced, she moved first to Grapeline and then to Augustus, Texas, working as a cook; then, in the early '30s to California—first to Fresno, and finally to San Francisco, where she joined the Methodist Church.

Sweet and her daughter Christine sang in the Methodist choir until she met brother B. Watt, of San Francisco. She and her family then converted to the church of Christ; and she and brother Watt were married.

Those who knew Sweet Watt best knew her for her strong, Christian character, her extraordinary accomplishments as a cook, and her ability to sing alto.

When the Downtown San Francisco Church of Christ was founded by your editor in July 1945, Sweet and B. Watt were two of our charter members. While her husband worked in the San Francisco Post Office, she worked as a saleslady in a department store in another part of the city.

Across the years these two always could be counted on to stand for the truth and to see the church through in its many early financial emergencies. (At one time, they made the payments on the church property personally for several months out of their own savings!)

When **Beryl and Pearl Bodenham** and their daughter **Beryldean** obeyed the gospel in Downtown San Francisco in 1949, Beryl wanted to learn to sing and to become a song leader. He was not having much success of either, however, until



Sweet Watt took him under her wing and taught him the way of musical pitch more perfectly. After that, he developed into one of the finest song leaders among churches of Christ—brotherhood-wide.

Had I been Stateside at her passing on May 19, 1996, unquestionably I should have flown out to San Francisco to take part in sister Sweet's funeral service. It began at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, May 24, 1996, at the Bayview Church of Christ at 1239

Revere Avenue, where she was a member the closing years of her life.

With **Michael Vinson**, the local preacher, officiating and delivering the eulogy, congregational songs included some of her favorites—"Farther Along," "Amazing Grace," and "I'll Fly Away." **Henry Hunter** led in prayer. Scripture from the 121st Psalm was read, followed by her obituary. Several other brethren of the congregation made brief remarks. Interment was at Olivet Memorial Park in nearby Colma, California.

Though great numbers of us still miss the smile, alto, and encouragement of this remarkable Christian woman, many pleasant memories are cherished by her daughter, **Mary C. Young**, who nursed her constantly during the several years of her final illness. She also is survived by one son-in-law, a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

No doubt Sweet Anna Watt is singing alto in the heavenly chorus in that great city where God's singers go when this life is over. Who knows but that one day Beryl Bodenham might join her on the lead, with Bill Claiborne on the tenor and me on the bass!—*The Editor*

Jackson P. English Goes Home

It was while being sponsored as a missionary by the Shades Mountain Church of Christ, 1974-78, in Birmingham, Alabama, that I first became aware of *another* brother they were helping support—**Jackson P. English**, of Lumberton, North Carolina. Since both of us then were being supported by the same congregation, even though working in separate states, it would be correct to say we were "**laborers together with God**" (I Corinthians 3:9).

Having transferred sponsorship to Bellview Church of Christ, of Pensacola, Florida, in December, 1978 (which sponsorship still continues), I had been somewhat out of touch with brother English for almost 20 years when I received word from **Billy Campbell**, of Lumberton, that brother English, at around 7:45 a.m., on Thursday, July 10, 1997, after a short illness, had passed from this earthly life. Having been born on May 30, 1917, in Conway, Arkansas, to the late **William** and **Lydia English**, he was 80 years of age at his passing.

Jackson P. English was one of eight children—four of whom preceded him in death. He attended Hickory Hill Elementary School and Hope Well Public

School—also Conway Training School—in Menifee, Arkansas.

During the Great Depression, Jackson English spent some time in the CCC training camp at Batesville, Arkansas, before joining the U.S. Army in February, 1942, a couple of months after Pearl Harbor. He retired from the Army as a Sergeant Major on October 31, 1966, after almost a quarter-century of service.

From that time on, after moving with his family to Lumberton, North Carolina, he undertook full-time service in the "Army of the Lord," establishing the South Lumberton Church of Christ, where he preached for approximately 31 years.

For the first 15 of those years, brother English and his family were supported by the church at Shades Mountain/Birmingham. To help him get started, they also contributed their old church pews and supplied him with a church van.

Although physically strong for most of his working life, it was a couple of strokes which finally felled him. He lasted only five days after his second stroke—then he was gone.



Faithful unto death, he could say with the apostle Paul, "**Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house**" (Acts 20:19-20).

To cherish his memory, Jackson P. English leaves behind his wife of almost 54 years, **Birdie L. English**; one daughter,

Jacquelyn English, of Menifee, Arkansas; two sons, **Wilfred Moore**, of Los Angeles, California, and **Byron English**, of Wilmington, North Carolina; four grandchildren, including **Sonja** and **Annissa Pearson**, of Red Springs, North Carolina; one daughter-in-law, **Sonia Jordan-English**, of Wilmington, North Carolina;

Byron Jackson English of Dallas, Texas; one brother **Clarence English**; one sister, **Alma Byrd**; one sister-in-law, **Joe Willie English**; one brother-in-law, **Harding Byrd**—all of Menifee, Arkansas; many nieces, nephews, cousins and other relatives besides a host of spiritual sons and daughters in the gospel.

How wonderful that this Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army was able to retire and use his highly trained talents in the Lord's army to such effect in the closing years of his life. There is nothing we cannot accomplish through Christ if we try! (Philippians 4:13)—*The Editor*

Margaret E. Spear, Long-time Supporter Of World Missions, Dies in Colorado

We are indebted to the Holt Family Funeral Home, of Canon City, Colorado, for informing us of the passing of **Margaret E. Spear**, a most notable Christian woman of this century.

"It was the request of Ms. Margaret Spear that you would be informed of her death," they wrote to us under date of October 14, 1997. "Ms. Spear passed away October 9, 1997, at a Life Care Nursing facility in Pueblo, Colorado. She had a private family interment October 14, 1997 at Foothills Garden of Memory, Longmont, Colorado."

Born November 9, 1902, in Manchester, South Dakota, to **Bret Harte** and **Hattie Alice (Henthorn) Spear**, she had been a school teacher by occupation and was a member of the church of Christ in Canon City.

A decades-long supporter (\$50.00 a month) of our missionary work—particularly of Four Seas College, in Singapore—she was equally concerned for the truth of the gospel worldwide. In her later years she wrote to us often of the departures from the faith that she observed both at Canon City and other places roundabout—departures which caused her much concern.

Toward the close of her life, Margaret Spear derived great pleasure from reading

and studying her Bible each day. In earlier times she had worked diligently in the church and worshipped with the Canon City congregation.

God's work was not her only interest, however; she enjoyed doing all kinds of art work such as painting, working in silver, enamel, copper and especially ceramics, and she was steeped in art history.

Born in the "Little House on the Prairie" country in eastern South Dakota, she later moved with her family to northwest Wisconsin, then to south Wisconsin where it was not quite so cold. She spent some time there preparing to become a teacher.

Margaret Spear taught school one year in Wisconsin, two years in Iowa, then moved to Fort Morgan, Colorado, where she taught for 16 years. Before moving to Canon City, she spent one year at the Art Institute of Chicago, then received her BA and MA degrees from Denver University, both in art.

After specializing in teaching kindergarten, sister Spear moved to Canon City in 1958 where she taught kindergarten for eight years and two years in first grade before retiring in 1968.

She was preceded in death by three brothers: **Marcus Spear**, **Hugh Spear** and **Wayne Spear**. She is survived by her closest living relative and second cousin, **Sue**



Beaty Marion, of Iowa; a sister-in-law, **Mrs. W. B. Spear**, of College Station, Texas; three nieces, four nephews and cousins; and adopted family **Robert**, **Donna** and **Tiffany Welborn**, of Pueblo.

It was my great pleasure to visit Margaret Spear in her retirement home at Canon City several years before her passing. Though growing old even then, she was alert and her mind was still sharp. She was 94 years old when she died; if she could have held out just one more month, she would have been 95.

Her lifelong concern for things that really matter should be an example to us all.—*The Editor*



LEE GEK ENG, MOTHER OF BABY TAN, IS CALLED HOME FROM SINGAPORE

When our Chinese sister in Christ, **Lee Gek Eng**, finally died at the age of 93, on September 12, 1997, it was but the closing of another chapter in the extraordinary life of her daughter, known worldwide as **Baby Tan**.

Though reared a Buddhist, the beginnings of her conversion to Christ came through her son-in-law, Baby's husband, **Tan Keng Koon**. Well do I remember our

first attempts to introduce Christ to these lovely people.

At first, she and her husband, the late **Ng Cheng Kang**, a Singapore banker, resisted the gospel. When Vada and I would go to their house to present the claims of Christ on their lives, they would not allow us to come inside their house to do so, saying that the spirit of Christianity was stronger than that of Buddhism. They feared that our teaching would cause

Buddha's spirit to leave their home. They did not want that—so we were obliged to do our teaching under a shed outside the house.

Koon, himself, did not obey the gospel until February, 1959, after which he came to the U.S. the following August for a two-year study of Bible at Freed-Hardeman College.

Brother and sister **A. L. Harbin**, of Clyde, Texas, went with Vada, our family and me, when we returned in 1961 for our second long-term gospel effort in Singapore. It was through the further teaching and persuasion of brother Harbin that Koon's wife, Baby Tan, was converted at that time.

For the next nine years, practically on a daily basis, Baby sought diligently to convert her father. He finally obeyed the gospel in 1970. Then, after three or four

months of trying to convert his wife, Lee Gek Eng, he exclaimed, "Why can't she see it?—it's as plain as day!"

That she finally did "see it" and was baptized into Christ is now known by all who knew her. When she decided to become a Christian, it was a deep blow to Buddhism in Singapore.

After brother Koon died in 1979, and Lee Gek Eng was aging, it devolved upon her faithful Christian daughter, Baby Tan, to look after her, which she did across the years to the very last.

I learned from a large advertisement that appeared in the *Straits Times*, Singapore's leading newspaper, that sister Lee's death came on September 12, 1997. Survivors included two sons, **Ng Kek Lim** and **Ng Kek Nghi**; three daughters, **Baby Tan Seok Lan**, **Molly Ng Seok Choo**, **Irene Ng Seok Hong** (Canada); two daughters-

in-law, **Honey Chong** and **Teo Ee Mee**; two sons-in-law, **Lee Ngian Tong** and **P. K. Leung** (Canada); eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

According to Chinese custom, a wake was held at the family home at 28 Jalan Geneng, Singapore. Funeral services were held at 8:00 p.m. that Sunday and Monday, September 14 and 15. The cortege left at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday for the cremation at Hall 3, of Mount Vernon Crematorium, Singapore.

At the family's request, no wreaths were invited; contributions, however, were asked to be donated either 1) to the Movement For the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS), 2) to the Singapore Association for the Deaf, or 3) to the Church of Christ at 20 Lim Ah Pin Road, Singapore.—*The Editor*

DAUGHTER AND WIFE OF PREACHERS, TERESA COTHAM ENTERS HER REWARD

Surrounded by preachers and the church practically all her life, **Teresa Cotham**, daughter of **Coleman Overby** and wife of **Perry B. Cotham** went to meet her Maker on Wednesday morning, January 7, 1998, at Baylor Hospital in Dallas, Texas.

Born **Teresa Naomi Overby** on September 17, 1914, in Henryetta, Oklahoma, while her father was attending **Cordell Christian College** and preaching for the church, the immediate cause of her death was pneumonia. She had been battling a lung problem for many years.

Sister Cotham's early childhood was spent in Murray, Kentucky, later in Tennessee, and then in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She graduated from high school in Muskogee before attending **Abilene Christian College**.

Teresa and Perry Cotham were married on June 25, 1936, at Muskogee, Perry having moved nearby to Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1934, to become the local preacher there. Following work in Shawnee, they moved to Oklahoma City, Wewoka, and Duncan, Oklahoma; to Nashville, Tennessee; and ultimately to Paris, Grand Prairie, and Big Spring, Texas.

Having always wanted to be missionaries, the Cothams moved back to Grand Prairie in 1972 to do worldwide evangelistic work under the oversight of the **Skillman Church of Christ**, in Dallas. During part of this time, Teresa taught pre-school at the Turnpike Church of Christ for several years. She loved little children. More

recently she helped provide free Bible literature by working for **Mission Printing** in Arlington, Texas.

Teresa helped her husband in making mission trips to Sao Paulo, Brazil, the islands of the West Indies, and numbers of places for meetings and lectureships in the United States. She was grateful for the assistance given by the **Skillman church** and by many friends to help fulfill a dream that she and Perry cherished to help spread the gospel to all parts of the world.

At her memorial service, at 2:00 p.m., January 10, 1998, at the **Turnpike Church of Christ**, in Grand Prairie, choruses from both the Turnpike and the **Skillman congregations** were directed by **Larry Mullins**, **Mike Brinkley** and **Brad Steele**. Opening remarks were made by **Preston Cotham**, prayer was led by **Jim Hughes**, and a song was sung: "God's Family." **Perry Coleman Cotham** delivered a eulogy—"Our Mother: A Beautiful Life." Scripture reading was by **Eddie Whitten**, followed by a sermon on "A Godly Woman" by **Gary Colley**. After another song, "I Won't Have to Cross Jordan Alone," **Maxie B. Boren** recalled "Precious Memories." Another song was sung, "Because He Lives," followed by remarks by **Mack Lyon** on "Heaven, Our Home." Then, after a final song, "Beyond the Sunset," **Jerry Perry** led the closing prayer.

Even though the weather was not favorable, a large crowd attended the memorial service. It was not possible for Vada and



me to be present; however, we did make telephone calls to Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and India, where much missionary work by the Cothams had been done across many years.

Sister Teresa was one of the finest Christian women we ever knew.

Preceded in death by her parents, **Coleman** and **Beatrice Overby**, her oldest sister, **Rachel**, and an infant son, **James Harding Cotham**, Teresa is survived, in addition to her husband, by a son, **Perry Coleman Cotham** and daughter-in-law **Glenda**, of Franklin, Tennessee; a daughter, **Nan Elizabeth Macleod** and son-in-law, **Edward**, of Arlington, Texas; and a son, **Harry Don Cotham**, and daughter-in-law, **Kay**, of Houston. She is survived also by eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.—*The Editor*

JESSE AND MAYNE CROW LOSE ALL IN HOUSE FIRE

Paul and Shirley Tuller

[Over the past twenty years or so, the lectureships among faithful brethren have accomplished much for the cause of Christ. They have taught the truth, informed, and warned the churches about false doctrines and brethren. Furthermore, they have provided an excellent and much needed opportunity for fellowship among those of like mind in the battle against those who would change the truth into a lie. Brethren know one another and are aware of each other's love of and stand for the gospel primarily and sometimes solely because of faithful lectureships. Moreover, close friendships have been formed because of the common cause represented in the lectureships.]

Through these lectureships Paul and Shirley Tuller, who wrote and supplied the following article, became friends with Jesse and Mayne Crow. (The Tuller's operate "Tullstar," and travel throughout the country audio and video taping many lectureships. These tapes are available through them.) Moreover, by the same means I, too, met and became friends with the Crows as well as the Tullers. Therefore, when I learned of the Crow's loss I wanted to help make the brotherhood aware of their circumstances. I trust that brethren will do what they can to assist them. Surely, the loss of material things will help all of us to remember the brevity and uncertainty of life in the flesh and motivate us to better follow the teaching of Matthew 6:33 and Galatians 6:9, 10.

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

Jesse B. and Mayne Crow of Burnet, Texas lost their house and everything in it during a fire on Tuesday night, December 23, 1997. The Crows escaped with Mayne's purse and the clothes they were wearing. The Crow's dwelling consisted of a mobile home with upstairs bedrooms, kitchen, dining/living area, and a downstairs utility room built around it.

Around 11:30 p. m. the Crow's granddaughter was awakened by a strange noise coming from the rear of her grandparent's house. Immediately she ran to tell her grandmother about the sound. When Mayne went to investigate the noise she instantly saw the red glow of a fire at the back of the house. Hurriedly, she returned to wake Jesse. Together they rushed back to look at the fire. In the brief time period it took to awaken Jesse, the fire had spread through the back wall

of the garage. Rapidly, the blaze moved through the mobile home and the rest of the house.

They reported the fire to the Burnet Volunteer Fire Department. Of course, it took time for the members to be contacted and assembled at the Fire Station before they could make the twenty minute trip to the scene of the fire. By that time the fire had engulfed the whole house. The firemen did what they could; however, they ran out of water. While going to refill their water tanks, the fire picked up again and destroyed everything. It is believed the fire started by an electrical short in a motor in the pump room which was attached to the back of the house. The Crow family had no insurance coverage.

The Crows are faithful members of the Lord's church. When the tide of liberalism could not be stemmed in the congregation where they were members, they were the driving force behind the effort to start a new faithful congregation in Burnet. The new congregation started in December of 1995 with thirteen people present. Sunday, February 1, 1998, the congregation met for the first time in their new building on Highway 281, just south of downtown Burnet. Attendance has been running in the high fifties. The church started the Annual Burnet Lectureship in July of 1996 and it continues to this day. The Crows are active in helping to support

young men going through preacher training schools and giving to others who are in need. They attend many of our lectureships throughout the state of Texas and across the United States.

They have survived two tornadoes, a flood, and this fire. Mayne has also survived cancer and a massive heart attack. They have a wonderful outlook on life, knowing that God will provide their needs and heal their wounds. They are truly sweet people, full of love for God and care for their fellowman. They have recently been called brother and sister Job, which they took laughingly.

Any financial help you can provide would surely be appreciated. It will be a great blessing to you and the Crow's. Checks should be marked for **Jesse B. Crow, special Account # 908352** and mailed to:

**First State Bank
P. O. Box 10
Burnet, TX 78611-0010**

—504 Cosgrove
San Antonio, Texas 78210



"THREE KEY WORDS FOR ANSWERED PRAYER"

Jason R. Roberts

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Persistence is the key to unlocking the throne room of the Almighty. Our Heavenly Father, whose "eyes are over the righteous" (I Peter 5:7; Psalms 34:15), who requests our cares and burdens to be cast upon him (I Peter 5:7; Psalms 55:22), who desires to be glorified when the righteous suffer (I Peter 4:16), who attends the funeral of every sparrow that falls to the ground (Matthew 10:29), is extremely interested in our well-being as well as our ability to pray correctly; so much that the Holy Spirit moved James to pen "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16b). We will note specifically three key words in this given text: (1) Effectual (2) Fervent and (3) Righteous, with an analysis of each one.

The word "effectual" *energeo*, (verb here) although not in the original text, means "to be operative, to be at work, to put forth power" (Strong's). It literally means the "in working supplication, suggesting a supplication consistent with inward conformity to God" (Vine's). There is power in prayer as suggested from the word "effectual" in this text. Too often, Christians underestimate the power of prayer. We live during a time when we need things immediately, without any delay whatsoever. In Luke 18 there is the parable of the unjust judge. The widow persistently pleaded with the evil judge to avenge her adversary until finally he granted her request. The point is, that if this caloused, unjust judge will grant one's petition, how much more then would an almighty, sovereign, just, judge answer one's prayer. Her persistence led to her petition being answered. This brings us to the second key word to effective prayer.

The word "fervent" (another verb) means "exhibited or marked by great intensity of feeling, to boil over with zeal" (Webster's). Do we feel this way when we pray? The word denotes a process, that is, it is going to take some persistence on our part. And right along with this persistence and the power comes our patience. In fact no less than seven times in the book of James the word patience is mentioned.

Patient is found twice (5:7,8) and patience is found five times (1:3, 4, 5:7,10,11). Can we honestly say that we are effectively praying when we only approach the throne of God's grace in rushed hurry? Paul admonished us to "pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17), but there is no indication of hurrying one's request to God. The words "pray without ceasing" mean that the child of God is to be in the attitude of prayer and thanksgiving on a continual (effectual fervent) basis. The late Gus Nichols, I am told, would begin a prayer in the morning, and then he would say Amen that evening before pillowing his head for the night. That is praying without ceasing. Effective prayer is often going to take some time and effort on our part. This brings us to the third key word for effective prayer.

The word "righteous," *dikaios* (adjective here) means "one who is upright, virtuous, observing divine laws, keeping the commands of God" (Strong's). In fact, the apostle John in referring to the righteous man stated "he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (I John 3:7, 2:29). The man who lives a life of righteousness will have his requests answered by God. On the contrary, the man who lives a life of unrighteousness, will not be heard. "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31). Sometimes we hear people say that "God never answers my prayers." This reveals a lack of faith in God. His answer may not be the one we were requesting, but nevertheless he is faithful and just to his promises (Hebrews 10:23), and if he says he will answer prayer then he will.

The man who has power (effectual) behind his prayer, who is persistent (fervent) yet patient, and who is righteous will be answered. What's the promise for a man like this? His prayer "availeth much" (v.16b). "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

AN ACU STUDENT SPEAKS OUT

[This article is from the February, 1998 special edition of "The Pawn of Truth." It is edited and published by Chuck Pearson. It was written to be distributed at the 1998 ACU Lectures. We appreciate Chuck's love for truth and his willingness to stand for it. He is a relatively recent convert from the Presbyterian Church and upon his graduation from ACU plans to attend the Memphis School of Preaching.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

This "Special Edition" of *The Pawn of Truth* was printed for the purpose of distribution at the ACU Bible Lectureship (pending approval from the director of the lectureship). [Approval was not granted. DPB—Associate Editor] It is addressed to those who would be present at the lectureship, and intended to inform them about some things concerning ACU and its impact on the students who attend.

What makes this issue somewhat unique is that 1) it is aimed at a *very specific audience* (namely, those who may be in a position to influence ACU's policy), and 2) it presents a firsthand, student perspective of some great concerns regarding ACU, concerns which faithful brethren have realized for some time now and have tried to make known to the public so that appropriate changes can be made. It is our hope that this issue may influence some brethren, help them to see the problems, and provoke a response.

It is important that this information be publicized (especially since this editor may not get the distribution of this paper at lectureship approved). Please make copies and pass it on to friends, family, and other faithful brotherhood journals.

To you who have been faithful to the cause of Christ, and have supported *The Pawn of Truth* in its work, we bid you God speed in your endeavors.

Men and brethren, I bid you welcome to the ACU Bible Lectureship in 1998. I wish that I could say this with a cheerful heart, assured that one could expect a week of edifying lessons and words of exhortation according to the

oracles which God has given us (the Bible). My purpose, however, is one like John the Baptist, a "**voice... that crieth in the wilderness**" (Isaiah 40:3), and the message is one of concern, rebuke, and warning for those who will hearken.

Many of you, for certain, are alumni of ACU (or ACC as it once was). You have fond memories of this place, and rightly so, for Abilene Christian was once that city set on a hill (Matthew 5:14). A beacon for the gospel of Christ, a place where young people could be encouraged in their faith, and where young men could be adequately trained to go and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15). It was a place where students (and their parents) could be assured that a strong, faithful, Christian example was being set that would equip those who left this school to be Christian leaders and servants wherever they went afterward, "**set for the defence of the gospel**" (Philippians 1:17).

My concern, men and brethren, speaking as a current student at ACU, is that what used to be is no longer taking place here! Am I saying this because I am opposed to Christian education? No. Am I saying it because I perceive ACU to be a lousy liberal arts school? Again, no. I am saying it because I am first and foremost concerned about the example which is being shown to students who come here, and the direction in which they are being encouraged spiritually. It used to be that students who came here were encouraged to remain faithful to Christ and his church (if they were Christians when they came), and if they were not, they were challenged with the truth of the gospel so that they might come to faith. This is no longer evident.

Jesus said, "**wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them**" (Matthew 7:20). What are the fruits being shown by ACU's administration, through its Bible department, in its endorsements of various activities and events? What I see is not the faithful fruit of obedience to the Lord and love for his church. No, ACU is not the church! It is, however, in fellowship with, yoked in recognition with, and supported by members and the churches of Christ. This obligates

(Continued on page 6)

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Editorial...

ARE NASHVILLE AREA CHURCHES TURNING INTO "DUKE'S MIXTURE" OF SO-CALLED "CHRISTIANITY"?

Toward the end of the 1800s as well as earlier in this century American industrialist and philanthropist **James Buchanan Duke** together with his brother **Benjamin Newton Duke** established what became known as the American Tobacco Company. We do not hear much of them any more; however, in their prime, out of many kinds of tobacco they concocted a conglomeration of smoking tobacco which became widely known as "Duke's Mixture."

As I was editing brother **J. E. Choate's** extraordinary article for this edition of *Contending for the Faith*, I thought how fittingly the words "Duke's Mixture" describe the conglomeration of so-called "Christianity" traveling under the name "Church of Christ" in the overall area of Nashville, Tennessee. Whereas once the Nashville churches truthfully could say, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent," such no longer is the case.

"CHANGE AGENTS" ARE RESPONSIBLE

When **David Lipscomb** (the man) influenced Christianity around Nashville, things were different then. Now, however, even the University which bears his name is following "change agents" contrary in almost every way to many of the things he himself taught and for which he stood.

When the Madison elders and **Rubel Shelly** concocted something they call "Jubilee," they were misappropriating an Old Testament concept mixing it with New Testament "Christianity," changing those who went along with it into something contrary to the New Testament itself.

NOW HENDERSONVILLE'S "COMMUNITY CHURCH" GOES ONE STEP FARTHER

Well, if Shelly, et al. could misapply the Old Testament concept of "Jubilee" to a spurious celebration of something today, what was to prevent the so-called Hendersonville "Community" church from stealing *Yom Kippur* from the Jews and celebrating it entirely contrary to its original intent and design?

After all, if **Ken Dye** had no qualms about splitting the Hendersonville Church of Christ, walking off with 250 of their members and setting up a "Community" church modeled after **Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church** (and just calling it a "Church of Christ"), what was to inhibit them from

purling "Yom Kippur" from the Jews and calling it, too, "Church of Christ," which it is not!

Are the Nashville churches becoming a religious "Duke's Mixture" contrary to the New Testament? Yea, verily. Instead of setting themselves up as an example for

the rest of us to follow, most of them need to look to themselves and turn back around lest they all likewise perish (Luke 13:1-5).

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Associate Editorial...

THE "SPIRIT" MOVES IN MADISONVILLE, TEXAS

In the March 1998 issue of this paper, pages 6-8, I printed an article that I wrote entitled, "North Madison Church of Christ, Madisonville, Texas." In that article I quoted Lanier Stevens, the North Madison preacher and Dale Underwood, the "Music/Youth and Education" person. Toward the end of the article I quoted (unedited) from Underwood. The quotation reads:

For those concerned with which way this Church is headed, my answer must be, "wherever the Lord takes us next." It's not an easy answer, but it is an honest one. I would much rather be unsure and in the Lord's hands than know exactly what I wanted to do and not have the Lord guiding me (North Madison Church of Christ bulletin, "What Are You?", August 3, 1997).

In my article following the Underwood quote I wrote, "If one cannot absolutely know from a study of his New Testament where the Lord is leading him, just how will he ever know anything about from where he came, what he is doing here, and where he is going?"

It took a few months, but in the February 1, 1998, North Madison Church bulletin, page 2, Underwood finally revealed how he thinks the Lord leads and guides him. Please consider what he wrote. The entire unedited article is herein reproduced.

Giving Glory to God....

It is at once an exhilarating and humbling reminder of His power when God works through one of His servants. Your comments Sunday were gratifying and heartening, because I know that you understood and applied the message God allowed me to preach. It has made me ponder how best to give God the glory.

You see, I fully believe that the Spirit gave me the subject of "Drawing Water From Empty Wells." I had not planned on my thoughts going in that direction, nor had I intended in addressing such issues. Yet, as I prayed for God's blessing and leading, the subject came to and then would not leave my mind. So, again...It is at once exhilarating to watch as God works. Yet, humbling, because you were moved as a family...but not by me.

In the past, I didn't think this way, but I do now. While I may desire and work toward mutual knowledge and understanding, I will not expend my energy on getting others to agree with me. If there are those who feel differently on issues such as these as Paul put it, "God will make it clear to that person." A spirit of dissension is easily seen by its fruits, just as a spirit of love and submission is easily seen by the fruit it bears.

May we ever know (and not be afraid to feel) God's anointing in our worship.

**Love,
Dale**

When members of the Lord's church begin to think that the Holy Spirit is directly influencing their thoughts, there is no end to the fantastic claims they will make. Denominational preachers in general and so-called Pentecostals in particular have long declared that God has anointed them with his Spirit and thereby given them their sermons and directly guided them in other ways. However, they know nothing about "rightly dividing" "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (II Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 6:17). Furthermore, they have little or no respect for the authority of God's word or how to ascertain it (Colossians 3:17). One would think that if the Holy Spirit were going to directly manipulate Underwood's mind he would stop him from going beyond the things that are written (I Corinthians 4:6, ASV, 1901). However, Underwood and others of his stripe are routinely involved in fellowshipping denominational churches as well as all manner of other error.

From the following quotation Underwood reveals that he has joined the ranks of the biblically deluded.

You see, I fully believe that the Spirit gave me the subject of 'Drawing Water From Empty Wells.' I had not planned on my thoughts going in that direction, nor had I intended in addressing such issues. Yet, as I prayed for God's blessing and leading, the subject came to and then would not leave my mind."

There is not a denominational pastor from TBN (Trinity Broadcasting Network) to Oral Roberts University that has not made such a claim. Whatever "ghost" got after Underwood, it is not difficult to determine that it was not holy. The following list of sermon topics make it clear that the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with Underwood's decision to change sermon topics. You will never hear of Underwood's familiar spirit leading him to preach on the following subjects and others like them.

1. "The Scriptural Builder of the Church"
2. "The Scriptural Foundation of the Church"
3. "The Church was Founded at the Scriptural Place - Jerusalem."
4. "The Church was Founded at the Scriptural Time - the First Pentecost Following the Resurrection of Christ."
5. "Jesus Christ Founded Only One Church - His Church."

6. "The Scriptural Name of the Church"
7. "The Scriptural Organization of the Church"
8. "The Bible is the Church's Only Rule of Faith and Practice."
9. "The Church of Christ is Undenominational."
10. "The Church and Kingdom of Christ are One and the Same Institution."
11. "The New Testament is God's Divine 'Pattern' or 'Blueprint' for Building the Lord's Church."
12. "The Church of Christ Contains Christians Only and the Only Christians."
13. "The Lord's Supper is to be Observed Only on the First Day of Every Week."
14. "The Scriptures Teach that Today it is a Sin to Use Mechanical Instruments in Worship to God."
15. "Denominations such as the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches are Condemned by the New Testament."
16. "Miraculous Manifestations of the Holy Spirit Have Ceased."
17. "Baptism For or Unto the Remission of Sin is a Burial in Water."
18. "One Must Know the Scriptural Purpose of Baptism in order for his Baptism to be Scriptural."
19. "The Only Spouse Involved in a Divorce Who May Scripturally Remarry is the Spouse Who is Innocent of Fornication and Who Has Put Away (divorced) His or Her Spouse because Said Spouse is Guilty of Fornication."
20. "God's Grace and Law are not Mutually Exclusive."
21. "One's Love of God Will Always Lead Him to Obey God."

Underwood can pretend that he does not know which

way the North Madison Church is going, but he, Stevens, and the leaders of the church know exactly what they are doing. It does not take an inspired man to know that he and Stevens have sold out to denominational subjectivism. What is happening at the North Madison Church is exactly what the change agents in the Lord's church (of which Stevens and Underwood are two) are working to accomplish.

The North Madison church is an example of the influence of the Nashville Jubilee, Tulsa Workshop, Gulf Coast Workshop, and various universities, their Bible departments and lectures. Such efforts are designed to put the church through the metamorphosis that will finally result in a full-fledged human sectarian denomination. This is what is happening throughout churches of Christ and many people love to have it so. Nevertheless, and in spite of Underwood's hatred of the "Old Paths" I will make my stand on the inspired words of faithful Isaiah (Jeremiah 6:16). The great prophet wrote, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

Because most of them do not know enough of the Bible to fill a gnat's thimble, shade tree sectarian preachers have always sought to magnify themselves in the eyes of their pitiful pastorates by declaring that the Holy Spirit is responsible for their efforts. It is amazing what they will blame on the Holy Spirit. However, it is obvious that Underwood, Stevens, and their fellow travelers are on a par with their denominational mentors in every respect. I know exactly where they are headed. Indeed, "by good words and fair speeches [they] deceive the hearts of the simple (innocent, ASV - 1901)" (Romans 16:18).

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

HENDERSONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CHRIST CELEBRATES YOM KIPPUR

J.E. Choate

We do not have in mind the highest and holiest ritual of the Jewish people, *Yom Kippur*, celebrated annually on Tisri 10. The purpose of this article is to focus on the silly and bizarre stuff going on in the worship practices of the Hendersonville Community Church in Christ in the Nashville area. A comparison between the Willow Creek Community Church and the Hendersonville Community Church of Christ shares much in common. The difference is between the "copy cat" and the real "McCoy."

We are familiar to some extent with the contemporary "church growth" models which are finding their way into postmodern Churches of Christ in Nashville. They are the number one choice Willow Creek Community Church; the "Third Wave" Pentecostal theology of C. Peter Wagner [see the weird Toronto Blessing where "giggling for God" erupted as a new Pentecostal phenomenon]; and the Kansas City Prophets [see Paul Cain and the talking Cadillac] that were incorporated into John Wimber's Vineyard Fellowship sect.

Only the Hendersonville *Community Church of Christ* elects to fly aloft the "Community Church" banner first lofted by Bill Hybels. However, the worship and practices of the Woodmont Hills *Family of God* more closely imitate the worship spectaculars of the Willow Creek. Other Nashville churches in their contemporary worship services also drink at the trough of Bill Hybels' Willow Creek.

The Hendersonville Community flies proudly and publicly the "Community Church" banner. This church was started by Ken Dye who led 250 members out of the Hendersonville church of Christ after his covert plans to seize control of the Hendersonville church of Christ were defeated. The Hendersonville Community church is thriving due, in part, to the support it had received from the former superintendent of the Goodpasture Christian School. This brother served as an elder (shepherd) of the Hendersonville Community Church until he learned this would be a black mark against the school named after B. C. Goodpasture.

However, the major impetus which guaranteed that the church would succeed came from the campus of Lipscomb University when **Harold Hazelip** and **Carl McKelvey** preached from the pulpit of this apostate church.

The readers will be interested to know that Lipscomb's most popular Bible teacher, **Doug Varnado**, is the "pulpit minister" of the Hendersonville church. He has been recently joined by **Dan Dozier** from the Madison church. One of the church elders (shepherds) chairs an academic department in Lipscomb University.

We were not really surprised that the newly DLU elected president would speak alongside **Rubel Shelly** during the 1997 Hendersonville church "Hot Summer Night Series" of lectures. We have been waiting a year now for **Steve** to begin turning things around at Lipscomb. It is beginning to look a lot like waiting for the Second Coming, or more like "waiting for Godot." **Steve** could assure his critics of which I am not such (I prefer to read **Steve** like an open book) by ordering his Bible faculty to get off the '98 Jubilee roster of speakers. Will he do this?

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT SERVICE ACCORDING TO TORAH LAW

The *Yom Kippur* service held at the Hendersonville Community Church awhile back falls into two categories—that of an entertaining religious dramatic presentation, and presumed to teach a lesson on God's forgiveness of the sins of the Hebrews.

The best way to understand what goes on in the "contemporary worship" services in postmodern Churches of Christ is to look again toward Willow Creek. Whatever the popular evangelical theology of the Chicago based Willow Creek church is, a major emphasis is on *entertainment*.

The singing, dancing, and dramatic skits performed at Willow Creek have all the color and pizzazz of a Broadway show. **Rubel Shelly's** church has recently employed a minister responsible for planning and presenting dramatic skits for the worship services of the Woodmont Family of God. **Rubel's** church is a "bootleg" version of the Chicago denomination. His insufferable ego drives him to leave the impression that he is the "genius" who has created this new model (paradigm).

Willow Creek oriented Churches of Christ in Nashville are playing the entertainment dramatic angle by acting out rituals set forth in the law of Moses, e.g., the *Day of Atonement* and the *Passover*. The funniest of all such exhibitions must be the simulated Day of Atonement ritual performed in 1996 in the Hendersonville Community Church of Christ.

The Hendersonville Community Church of Christ carried in its September 10, 1996 bulletin that the Shepherds have given their blessings for us to "celebrate the Day of Atonement *again* [*italics mine*]." The telling of this odd story has been on hold for a while. And the time now seems especially right to tell it.

The purpose of this article is to show just how far some postmodern Churches of Christ have gone in accepting the new "church growth" models and gimmicks. The Hendersonville Community Church of Christ provides the best look on the local scene on what is happening in Churches of Christ around Nashville.

YOM KIPPUR ACCORDING TO THE TORAH CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

The first order of business is the chronological tracking of the *biblical* Yom Kippur dating from the Tabernacle in the wilderness to the practices of the Jews in the first and second centuries A. D.

The Law of Moses [Torah] contains the exact count of 613 laws. Whatever follows thereafter by way of the various commandments in the Old Testament outside the Torah most know these were not binding laws on the Jews. The Day of Atonement was the Sabbath of preeminent sanctity. The Torah sets up the procedures for this highest and holiest day on the Jewish calendar. The Day of Atonement always falls on the 10th day of the 7th month of Tisri, and always on a Sabbath.

The sins of the people were confessed over the scapegoat which was then led out into an uninhabitable wilderness to perish. The blood of the sacrificed sin goat was taken by the high priest only into the Holy Place who sprinkled around and upon the Mercy Seat to absolve the sins of the people. This part of the ritual ended with the destruction of the last temple in 70 A. D.

FIRST AND SECOND CENTURY SYNAGOGUE PRACTICES

The easiest search and most readily available documentation for the information in this article is in Moore's three-volume set, titled, *Judaism*. To repeat, the laws in the Torah (*Pentateuch*) were the only laws absolutely enjoined by God and only on the Israelites (*Jews*), the people of the book.

Services in the synagogue began on the Sabbath after twilight. [This day on the Roman calendar, our calendar, comes on Friday evening after sundown. It was a 24-hour fast (not a drop of water or crumb of bread) which lasted from one evening in the ensuing time until 24 hours later at sunset.]

This "cockeyed" Hendersonville *Yom Kippur* service began at the start of the Jewish first day of the week (Sunday). A knowledge of the Jewish calendar is needed to understand its comparison with the Roman calendar. Only then does the silliness of the celebration of the Hendersonville "Yom Kippur" service become apparent. The very idea of eating a catered meal on the most holy of all fast days among the Jewish people goes to show the total "blackout" of the ignorance of the "shepherds" about simple Torah law.

The Day of Atonement not only was a fast day, but a high festival. There was no more happy and joyous day than the Tisri 10 for it was a day of propitiation and pardon for the Jewish people. It was believed by the Jews that this was the annual day of Judgment on all mankind. A rabbinic saying sums up the meaning: "On New Year Day all who come into the world pass before him like sheep, as it is said, 'He who fashions the heart of all, scrutinizes their doings.'"

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) is kept by all Jews with the exception of the rogue Jew. A supreme part of Yom Kippur practice was the strict fast, which was enjoined from even to even, on this holy Sabbath day. The

Torah sternly warned that "whosoever would not afflict himself shall be cut off from his people." The statute would be forever. **The only fast prescribed in the law of Moses was on the Day of Atonement.** All others were voluntary. Want to challenge on this one?

YOM KIPPUR SERVICE AT THE HENDERSONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

What they did at Hendersonville could have been made into a big Yom Kippur joke in the synagogues by our Nashville Jewish friends. The church bulletin sets up procedures for the bizarre Hendersonville Day of Atonement

To prepare our hearts and minds for this occasion, we will have the *Lamb's Book of Life* for everyone to sign by two of our shepherds on the night of the service. The two shepherds would then take this Book of Life, after it had been signed into the Most Holy Place.

Is there an Ark of the Covenant in some sacred nook in the church building?

Were we to have an annual "boob prize" for the most ridiculous act done in any contemporary worship, this would

be entering the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur to make a blood offering for the sins of the people once a year.

POSTSCRIPT

For the meaning of the Day of Atonement to the Christian today, Paul says it all in Romans 5:11: "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom now we have received the atonement." There is no special lesson to glean from this article other than to tell what happened in the Hendersonville church.

What is strangest of all is that the head *administrators* and *faculty* of Lipscomb University *endorse and promote* these strange doings in local churches of Christ. When the history of David Lipscomb's Nashville School is written, it is my contemplated opinion that the names of **Carl McKelvey** and **Harold Hazelip** will lead the list of the final wrecking crew who began turning this Christian school into just one more liberal arts institution of higher learning.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

ACU STUDENT SPEAKS

(continued from page 1)

ACU to be faithful to its calling as a representative of the group (in this case, the Lord's church) which endorses and supports it. As the Lord's church is faithful (or should be) to the gospel of Christ as revealed in the scriptures, so should ACU, its administration, faculty, and positions which it takes, be faithful.

The fruits being shown, however, are not consistent with faithfulness. This does not mean that every man, woman, and child affiliated with ACU in some way is a condemned apostate. It does mean, however, that ACU is no longer bringing forth good fruits in its corporate nature. What is being shown are fruits of denominationalism, compromise, ecumenicity, "rubbing elbows" with the culture, and desiring to gain the approval of men (scholars and "accreditation societies") rather than God. Perhaps you might think these ideas are harmless. Perhaps you might think that since the church as a whole (I am speaking about the *only* church as a whole, the one which Christ died for, not some denominational concept of the church, nor a fragmented, sectarian concept of the church—*i.e.*, the church "spread out" among many denominations.) is experiencing these fruits, that ACU should embrace the trend as well, and follow suit. This, men and brethren, is unacceptable, and has *direct, detrimental* effects upon students (those both in Christ, and those who are not) who come to ACU.

Let us examine some of these digressive fruits now. Remember, these are not mentioned out of hostility, but out of a desire to inform you, the reader (from a student's "inside" perspective), what teaching and example is being set forth at ACU which contradicts what the school has *traditionally* stood for, and what *any* institution loyal to the cause of Christ and his church *should* stand for. *A side note: In every case where these examples deal directly with individuals*

and their actions, I have taken the time and liberty to discuss the issue with them either in person, on the phone, or through correspondence.

DR. ROYCE MONEY, PRESIDENT OF ACU:

In the Fall 1997 issue of *ACU Today*, **Dr. Royce Money** wrote an article entitled "A Letter To Parents From President Money: What Every Parent Should Know About Christian Education." In this article, he writes:

ACU was founded in 1906 to serve primarily students affiliated with the churches of Christ. We still hold to that founding principle as a distinguishing point of our existence as a university. But ACU always has welcomed students of other Christian faiths, as well as some who were not sure if they were believers at all. We have learned to be inclusive without forfeiting our distinctive heritage (p.2).

What does Dr. Money mean by "other Christian faiths?" Does not the Bible say there is only "one faith" (Ephesians 4:5)? Is this a way of saying that the denominations (who *profess* to be Christian) are indeed Christian, just "other Christian(s)?" What does it mean that ACU has "learned to be inclusive?" Does this mean that ACU recognizes this erroneous doctrine that people in denominations are merely Christians of another stripe, and that they should be integrated into and fellowshiped with the body of Christ without having to come out of their denominational error? What are the implications for the student body? Does this mean that students who come to ACU out of denominational backgrounds (and there are many such here) will not be challenged by the gospel, for they are believed to be already Christians? This is what I see happening, and the example given to students at ACU who indeed *are* members of Christ's church is "we need to accept everyone as brothers and sisters in Christ, even if they haven't obeyed the gospel." This, folks, is unscriptural.

I think that it is wonderful that students from denominational backgrounds are encouraged to come to ACU. It is a great opportunity for them to be challenged with the truth,

and accept Christ. I myself came to ACU from a Presbyterian background. I had spent 23 years growing up in a denominational church. When I came to ACU, I had an opportunity to study the Bible, and learn what I must do to be saved (because I was *not* saved before I became a Christian). I obeyed the gospel in September 1995 and was added to the Lord's church. However, *I do not see that happening to most students who come here!* Instead they are told that they are acceptable to God in their denominational error. Dr. Money's letter (both to students AND their parents.) is an indication of this.

THE OPTIMIST—ACU'S NEWSPAPER:

In the September 19, 1997 issue of *The Optimist* (vol. 86, No. 10), there appeared a front-page article entitled "Devotional Links Campuses." This article was focusing on GRACE, a tri-collegiate (ACU, HSU, and McMurry) devotional intended to "break down walls between students of the three colleges." GRACE is held on Thursday nights at the University Baptist Church in Abilene for "a time of singing, prayer, and Bible study." This would be a wonderful opportunity for ACU students to reach their fellow students at the other colleges with the gospel of Christ. But, this does not happen. I have been to GRACE (in order to give it a first-hand appraisal), and it is a denominational worship-service. They have a "praise band" (mechanical instrumental music), women leaders, they often take communion (remember, this is in the middle of the week), and I have heard people stand up and apparently give "testimonies" and claim to speak in tongues (and others claim that they could interpret the gibberish).

The problem is that ACU students participate in this event. They do not go to teach others and encourage them in the truth, rather to have fellowship with error and worship in vain. Young men and women who apparently are members of the church of Christ are yoking themselves with this kind of unbelief (II Corinthians 6:14-17). *And ACU promotes and encourages this through their student paper.* Now, there was mentioned in this article that events such as this (not affiliated with the church of Christ) were "not advertised on campus because of a school policy of not endorsing spiritual activities outside of the Church of Christ." It was also mentioned, however, that "there is not a written policy." that "the administrative counsel discussed the issue a few years ago, deciding to let tri-college devotionals such as GRACE stand alone from the university." Well, that is good. But if that is the case, then what is an article praising and endorsing GRACE doing on the front page of *The Optimist*? Hundreds of students read this paper every week. What example is being set for ACU students? Is this in any way edifying to members of the church, and encouraging to unbelievers to come out of their unbelief?

MAX LUCADO—ACU CAMPUS REVIVAL:

On October 6-8, 1997, ACU hosted a "campus revival" as a part of the "Spiritual Emphasis Week." The guest speaker was **Max Lucado**. Max is an ACU alumnus, and has been decorated by ACU as "Alumnus of the Year." He is also the writer of many books, has spoken at many events

(including the "Stand In The Gap" rally of *Promise Keepers* in Washington D.C., also in October 1997), and is well-known both among brethren and throughout the denominations. He was well-received at ACU last Fall, and a lot of publicity was given to him by the college.

But Max Lucado is a known, and marked, false teacher. He has shown his true colors time and time again in his speeches and through his interactions with denominations. He fellowships those who are outside of Christ, calling them brethren. He advocates the "sinner's prayer" in asking Jesus into your heart in order to be saved, rather than obeying the gospel. He has spoken (favorably) on lectures which are digressive in nature and which are used to support liberal propaganda (such as *Jubilee* in Nashville). Yet, ACU invites him to speak on campus. What example is being set for students (and for the community at large)? Nobody is warned that Lucado's teachings are false and need to be examined. Instead, he is put up on a pedestal and honored. His books occupy plenty of space in the ACU bookstore. Why aren't books by faithful brethren given space and advertisement? Why aren't faithful brethren invited to speak at ACU and encourage the students in the truth? The bottom line: *By what are students influenced?*

BIBLE CLASSES — MATERIALS USED; EMPHASIS GIVEN:

Students at ACU have been fortunate for years to be able to take Bible classes. So many public and state schools deny students this privilege. However, what is taking place in these classrooms today? I have been a student in the College of Biblical Studies at ACU for three years now, so I believe that I am qualified to ascertain the content and emphasis in these classes.

Students in ACU Bible classes are, for the most part, encouraged and required to read books written by denominational scholars. These range throughout the ecumenical world. For example, I have had to read texts by Roman Catholics, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Existentialists, Unitarians, New Reformed-ists, Calvinists, and even recently, a Quaker. The doctrines presented in these texts are as diverse as the backgrounds of the authors themselves. Some of them speak some truth (which is not surprising, even Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses have *some* concept of biblical truth). However, none of these authors (or the traditions which they come out of) are Christian. It's like trying to study bricklaying from a man who is a carpenter. What purpose does it serve for students who are trying to learn how to be preachers and servants in the Lord's church to study works by men and women *who are not even believers themselves?* The only works by Christians that I have read while attending ACU (which were required for my Bible classes) are *Navigating the Winds of Change* and *In Search of Wonder*, both by **Lynn Anderson**, and *Discovering Our Roots* by **Leonard Allen** and **Richard Hughes**. These works, though written by men who are associated with the Lord's church, contain some serious doctrinal problems.

Again, what kind of teaching are students receiving in the Bible classes at ACU? Through all the reading of these non-Christian texts, very seldom has any professor offered criticism, saying that these authors are not Christians, or

that their doctrines need to be examined. What emphasis is being given? Are Bible students being trained to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3), or to accept the false doctrines of denominational “scholars?” Why are books written by brethren not used (in conjunction with the scriptures) in teaching these classes? If ACU needs a list of texts produced by our brethren, I can easily provide one. Are there no “Christian scholars” among those who have obeyed the gospel?

Another thing: I have taken Bible classes for three years here at ACU, and *only once* have I heard a professor (in class) defend the biblical doctrine that alien sinners must be baptized for the remission of sins in order to be saved (it was in order to refute a student who was arguing that it was not truly necessary—this professor is **Dr. Ed Mathews** in the Missions department). I will not comment further on this fact. I believe that the fruits (or lack thereof) speak for themselves.

DAILY ASSEMBLY, DEVOTIONALS, ETC. — IS THIS WORSHIP?

Daily Assembly, or “Chapel,” has been a tradition at ACU since day one. This is good. Students *should* be encouraged to participate in worship to almighty God on a regular basis. However, we are also told that we must worship God “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Chapel and other “devotional” activities on campus need to be examined in this light.

In the past three years that I have attended ACU, I have been required to attend “Daily Assembly” on a regular basis for two of those years. During this time, I have seen just about every type of theatric done under the sun (or under the dome of Moody, as the case may be). It is typical for women to speak (and yes, they DO preach), for there to be disruptive behavior during singing and praying (and during the speaker’s time as well), for there to be “special programs,” and band music. Folks, this probably doesn’t happen during lectureship. I realize that there is still “Daily Assembly” during this time. It is altered somewhat as not to offend or be “controversial.” But during the rest of the year, this does indeed go on.

Is this worship? Is this the kind of pattern seen in the New Testament, when Paul instructed the church in Corinth, saying, “**Let all things be done decently and in order**” (I Corinthians 14:40)? Does this line up with the biblical teaching concerning women in I Timothy 2:11-12? Why would ACU try to incorporate “special programs” and band music during a time which is supposedly set aside for worship? Yes, I’ve heard the argument that the “devotional” is the first part of the assembly, then afterwards they are free to do other things. But folks, this is just a loophole. I dare anyone to try that on a Sunday morning at any of the congregations of the Lord’s church here in Abilene and see if you can get away with it (with the exception of Highland; you can probably do it there).

What kind of example is being set for students during this “Daily Assembly?” Apparently, most students do not consider this worship. If they did, there would not be the disruptive behavior going on (hopefully). As I mentioned earlier, this probably would not happen on a Sunday morning. What is being taught here? That women can preach to

a mixed assembly, that you can incorporate silly entertainment into a time for worshipping God, and that you can use legalistic loopholes for justifying your actions? Do not think for one minute that this does not influence students at ACU. IT DOES! When young men (and women as it now seems.) leave ACU and begin working for congregations or on the mission field, what are they going to think appropriate? Hey, they did it at ACU, why not anywhere else? What’s going to happen to the distinct, biblical nature of the worship of the New Testament church if this kind of example is followed and put to use (we are seeing the fruits of it in congregations even today)? How different will our assemblies be from the denominational churches?

This does not end simply with “Daily Assembly”. A 9:00 p.m. “devo” at University Church of Christ for students on Sunday nights contributes to this poor example. Again, we see here the disorder, the dimmed lights (to create an “emotional” effect, I suppose), the casual way in which students may take the Lord’s Supper (small tables are set up throughout the auditorium, with the bread and cup on them; during spontaneous singing, students are encouraged to go up singly or in small groups, take the elements, then perhaps have little prayer circles and private “sharing times” together). How is this authorized in scripture? I know for a fact that many students use this “devo” as an excuse to skip Sunday morning and evening worship services at local congregations, then go to University at 9:00 to take communion and “punch their clock” for the week, so to speak. Yet, ACU (and apparently the University elders!) encourage this “devo.” *What example is being set?*

During the week, at various times, students get together on campus to hold their own devotionals and Bible studies (such as Tuesday night at the amphitheater). The way these “devos” are handled are similar in style and digression to the ones mentioned above. Why not? Look from where their example is coming. No one seems to say anything to the contrary, or try to encourage students differently. I ask again, what kind of example is being set?

Now, some application: Does all this material mentioned previously actually influence students in a tangible way? Last semester, I did a research project for a class. The purpose was to find out student attitudes toward the church of Christ and those people who are in denominations. My discoveries were quite interesting. I interviewed a representative sample of ACU students. I asked several questions. The conclusion was that *the vast majority of students simply regard the church of Christ to be another denomination, that there are Christians in all the denominations, and that people in denominations have no need to accept the gospel, for they are already saved*. This is not my opinion, nor fabricated evidence. I have solid data from research (which, by the way, was submitted for a grade here at ACU and accepted as bonafide), and can be empirically examined. Anyone reading this paper can contact me (my address, phone number, and e-mail are listed at the end) and ask to see a copy of my research. I’ll be happy to share it with you.

I could mention a lot more. The bottom line is, what is being done at ACU, and what is being encouraged and endorsed *corporately* by the college, affects the students’

faith, their practices, and other areas of their spiritual lives? Are these "fruits" which are being produced, and which directly influence the student body, beneficial to young people who are trying to grow in the Lord and who are being trained for "Christian service and leadership" which ACU apparently claims? It can be argued that what is being done is compatible with the growing ecumenical movement, and that ACU is simply embracing that in order to be recognized as "contemporary" and "relevant." Well, if ACU wants to reject its affiliation with the church of Christ, and its support and heritage which it so fondly cherishes, then so be it. In that case, embrace it all. But if ACU wants to hold on to its distinct identity as being yoked with, supported by, and affiliated with congregations and individuals of Christ's body (the church, NOT a bunch of denominations), then the school needs to reevaluate the example that it is showing to students, their parents, and the community at large. At present, the fruits being brought forth are not acceptable to anyone (including an institution) who wishes to be faithful to Christ and his church. **"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance"** (Matthew 3:8).

The positive thing about all this is that it *can* change. You are in a position to help. Perhaps you are an alumnus, or have some influence at ACU. Maybe you help contribute to the school in some way. If so, contact the Board of Trustees. Talk to Dr. Money, or someone else in a position of authority. Tell them about these concerns. Pass this paper on to friends and family. Help people realize what it is that they are really supporting, and how students are being influenced here. Gripping about something is really quite unproductive if one is not willing to try to make a positive difference. That's what this paper is about: trying to make a positive difference, and bring ACU back to the purpose which it was originally meant to do.

—ACU Box 28193
Abilene, TX 79699
(915) 674-5327
cjp95s@timon.acu.edu

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.

—California—

Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist. (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, Evangelist, 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 Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—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, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist.

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Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, Evangelist, (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, Evangelist, 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.

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Portland—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Evangelist.

—Wyoming—

Cheyenne—High Plains Church of Christ, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Loran Gearhart, tel. (307) 634-3040.

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THE LORD'S CHURCH IS NOT A DENOMINATION

Curtis Cates

Tertullus, a Jewish orator, erroneously termed the Lord's church a sect, or heresy, or denomination; he accused Paul of being "a ringleader of the sect (heresies) of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5), a pest. Countless others, even in the present age, have brought this charge against the body, or church of Christ.

Paul answered the charge; "after the way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our Fathers" (Acts 24:14). He was "set for the defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:7); he did not allow such error to go unchallenged. The church of the New Testament is sometimes still accused of being a denomination.

Inasmuch as all denominations possess and are built around certain peculiar false doctrines ("commandments of men," Matthew 15:9,13), they are thus "plants which my heavenly Father planted not" but "shall be rooted up" come judgment day. If indeed the Lord's church is a heresy, or denomination, as charged, then it must be based upon, teach, and practice certain errors which identify it as a denomination, sect, or party.

Is the church of Christ a denomination because of its foundation? It is founded upon the fact of Christ's being the only begotten son of God (Matthew 16:15,18). He is

the prophesied "sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16; I Peter 2:6-8) and the stone which the builders rejected (Acts 4:11). Sects are founded upon human beings.

Is the church a denomination because of its builder? The branch would build the temple of the Lord (Zechariah 6:12; Isaiah 11:1,2; Jeremiah 23:5). The temple is the church of Christ (I Corinthians 1:2, 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16). Christ built his church (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:25), and he built only one (I Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 4:3-6; I Corinthians 12:20). Christ is the only head. Sects are built by men, not by Christ.

Is the church a denomination because of its time and place of establishment? It was not built during Christ's personal ministry or during the time of John, for after John died (Matthew 14:10), Christ promised to build his church/kingdom (Matthew 16:18,19). It was built on Pentecost of Acts 2 (cf., Mark 9:1, Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,47). People were in the kingdom during the time of the apostles (Acts 20:28; Colossians 1:13; I Timothy 3:14,15; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9). And, it was established in Jerusalem, as prophesied (Isaiah 2:1-4; Zechariah 1:16; I Timothy 3:15). The foundation was laid in Jerusalem (Isaiah 28:16). Sects are established at other times and in other places.

Is the church a denomination because of its designations? The church in the general sense (inclusive of all Christians) is called the church, kingdom, body of Christ, kingdom of God's dear son, house of God, church of God, kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18,19; John 18:36; Colossians 1:13; I Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:22; et al.). Mentioned in the local sense (individual congregations), it is called the church of God, churches of Christ, churches of God, churches (I Corinthians 1:2; 11:16; 16:19; Romans 16:16; Galatians 1:2; Acts 9:31; 16:5; et al.). Sects most often wear designations unauthorized by the Bible.

Is the church a denomination because of the name of her members? Saints wear the new name, the everlasting name given in God's house (Isaiah 56:5; 62:2; 65:15). Given by God, it is the name Christian (Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16) Sects wear names which honor various creeds, acts of obedience, human beings, and such like.

Is the church a denomination because of its doctrine? Her evangelists and members speak as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11; II Timothy 3:16,17; I Corinthians 14:37). Thus, they speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent. They do Bible things in Bible ways, and call Bible things by Bible names. They take great care not to deviate from the divine pattern (II Timothy 1:13; II John 9:11; Revelation 22:18,19). Sects "teach for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

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KEEP YOUR EYES BETWEEN THE EARS

Eddie Whitten

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62).

Many years ago a friend of mine related a story to me that every farmer of that day knew. He said that to plow a straight furrow, he would pick out an object at the other end of the field, line up the mule so that the object showed between the mule's ears and then keep his eyes between the ears. This is another way to express the need to set a goal in any endeavor we undertake and never waver even the slightest from that goal. Keep your eyes between the ears.

The power of the gospel of Christ converts one from the ways of the world to the way of Christ. Conversion is the transition from a life of self-gratification to that of service to others through our service to God. It is the transformation from selfishness to selflessness. It is the regeneration of the soul from sin-stained condemnation to blood-cleansed righteousness. It is a redirection of one's life from aimless wandering to hope-filled expectation. It is a changing of the course of our eternal destiny from hopeless destruction in an everlasting hell to blissful peace in the bosom of the Lord.

The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). There is only one body (Ephesians 4:4). Jesus is the head of the body, the church (Colossians 1:18). Therefore, to be under the favor of Jesus, *i.e.*, to be a part of the body of Christ, one must be in the church (Acts 2:47). Is it too much to ask for one to acknowledge the necessity of doing what the savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23) requires to be a part of his body? We think that way in every other thing we do. To be a part of any organization, we must agree to abide by the rules of that organization. Everyone understands that basic premise except when it involves the church. Jesus is the founder (Matthew 16:18), head (Ephesians 1:23), mediator (I Timothy 2:5), judge (John 12:48) and savior of the church (Ephesians 5:23). It would seem logical, if Jesus is the savior of his body, the church, that one would hasten to be subject to the requirements to be a part of his body. Since every organization has requirements for admission, it would not be unexpected for the church also to have certain requirements to honor. It does. God revealed through the inspired writers (II Timothy 3:16-17) everything one has to do to get into the church, the body of Christ. One must believe that he (Jesus) is the son of God (John 8:24). He must also, upon that belief, repent of his sins (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30). As a consequence of his belief and repentance, he must, with his mouth, confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10). Then Jesus says one must, on his belief, be baptized (Mark 16:16) for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38). That baptism is a burial (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12) from which one arises to walk a new life, a new course. He has now a goal to gain and he must set his eyes on that goal and

never waver. He must focus on Calvary's cross and keep his eyes between the ears.

Becoming a Christian does not insure religious or moral purity within itself. There are many dangers awaiting the new child of God. Satan never sleeps. Temptations of every stripe abound in the world. For those who wish to keep one foot on the path of righteousness and the other in worldliness, Satan will overcome and the battle is soon over. For those who keep their focus on the goal of salvation, Satan cannot overcome even though the battle rages until we die (II Timothy 4:6-8; Revelation 2:10).

All of the preceding is a beautiful picture of the conversion of one from the ravages of the world to the bliss of eternal safety. However, there are distractions even within the church. Both John and Paul forewarn the Christian of the presence of false teachers. Paul told the Ephesian elders, **“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them”** (Acts 20:29-30). He also exhorted Timothy to **“preach the word...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). John cautioned his readers, **“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”** (I John 4:1).

Those who would change the face of the church to conform to the image of the world are working hard to divert the faithful. Just as there are objects in the field that will cause the plowman to waver from his course, there is the urgent need to keep our eyes on the goal Jesus has set for the faithful and keep on keeping on. Paul describes the Christian armor (Ephesians 6:11-18). He gives us the means by which we can ward off the false teaching of the change agents. He says, **“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”** (Ephesians 6:16) as the means by which we can accomplish our task. If we keep our eyes between the ears; on the goal we have set when we submitted our souls to the gospel of Christ; on the promise we have of salvation to those who **“fought a good fight, [who].. have finished. ..[the] course, [who]...have kept the faith”** (II Timothy 4:7), then heaven will be our eternal home. Otherwise, we will be guilty of following the wisdom (?) of men. Jesus condemns this course: **“in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”** (Matthew 15:9).

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SIX WAYS PENTECOSTALISM IS WRONG

Mark K. Lewis

It is no secret, to those who are familiar with current religious thought, that various phenomena are frequently being ascribed to God's Holy Spirit. Tongue speaking, healings, modern revelations, salvation, direct inspiration, and happenings from alpha to omega in denominations A through Z would lead us to believe that the Holy Spirit is indeed alive and well on planet earth today. This "Pentecostal" marvel is of great import to many; it is sad that there is so much confusion regarding it. We shall attempt to explain, in this brief essay, why we do not endorse "Pentecostalism," indeed insist that it is far contrary to the word of God.

Pentecostalism means many things to many people, thus needs some defining and limiting for our purposes in this article. When I speak of "Pentecostalism," I am referring to any direct action of the Holy Spirit *upon* or *within* us, separate from the word of God. I am affirming that the Holy Spirit *never* leads or directs us today, or speaks to us or guides us directly—does ABSOLUTELY NOTHING upon or within man apart from the word of God. Thus, all the happenings mentioned above in paragraph one come within the purview of our reasonings. Whatever is going on in the minds, hearts, and lives of so many, regardless of how sincere they are, it is not of God. Let me give six brief reasons for so stating.

1. *Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies that in conversion the spirit operates only through the word of God.* That the spirit *does* operate in conversion, we would never be so ignorant as to deny it. John 3:5, for one example, clearly teaches such. The question is not—and, incidentally, never has been—*does* the Spirit operate in conversion? The question is, *HOW* does he operate? Does he do it directly, God's spirit coming directly into contact with man's spirit, or does he operate through a *means*, a *medium*, that medium being the Bible? It is the latter we affirm.

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While John 3:5 tells us we are born of the Spirit, I Peter 1:23, James 1:18, and I Corinthians 4:15 inform us that we are born of the word. A contradiction? No, but only if we understand that the word of God is "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) the tool which the Holy Spirit *always* uses in conversion. The reader is also referred to John 5:24, Romans 1:16, John 17:17, I Peter 1:22, Psalm 19:7, and other scriptures which teach that the word saves us. To look at the matter practically, study the following verses in Acts: 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 8:12, 11:14, 18:8, and 19:20. They will show that, in the cases of conversion, the *word of God was ALWAYS, 100% of the time, preached and believed before salvation!* There is no exception. Yea, the spirit operates in conversion, but always and only through his word, the Bible. Pentecostalism errs by denying such.

2. *Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies the all-sufficiency of the scriptures.* This is probably the most important point of all, because if this principle, the all-sufficiency of the Bible, were truly understood, then people would realize that there is no need for the direct action of the Spirit. The Bible is complete and does meet man's every need. Again, for brevity's sake, we will only refer to the passages which prove such conclusively: Psalm 19:7, II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:3 John 6:63, I Thessalonians 2:13, Jude 3. These are representative of a host of verses which substantiate the fact that the Bible is enough, we do not need the direct action of the Spirit upon us. Indeed, an appropriate question would be, what can the Spirit do for us that the word cannot? Every effect or influence that it could be said the Holy Spirit could exert upon or within man is affirmed already of the word of God. Pentecostalism strikes at a crucial Bible doctrine, the all-sufficiency of the word of God. It says, in effect the word is not enough, we must have something else. We must oppose this teaching with all our being.

3. *Who really has the Holy Spirit?* To demonstrate the confusion of the Pentecostal philosophy, all we need to do is ask the above question. The Mormons claim to have it, and teach Mormon doctrine. The Seventh-Day Adventist founder, **Ellen G. White**, claimed she "got" the Holy Spirit, and founded that religion. Other modern Pentecostals "get the Holy Ghost," and they can heal, and the Christian Scientist gets it and says you are not sick in the first place! Is all this from the Holy Spirit? I want to know *who really has the Holy Spirit?* You see, they all make the same claim, and they all prove it the same way—by personal testimony, feelings, and experiences. Now who is right? Who really has the Holy Spirit? I do not believe that God would leave his ordained religion on such an untrustworthy foundation as the feelings of man. Our fourth point is like unto our third...

4. *What is to prevent other religions from making the same claim?* Here is a **Mohammedan**. He claims that he is a “born again Muslim.” He had an “encounter with Allah,” and the spirit of Allah has told him that the hottest place in hell is reserved for Christians. How does he prove it? He says, “I had an experience. I feel it in my heart. I *know* I’m right because Allah has revealed it to me in my heart.” He makes the exact same claim as the Pentecostal, and *proves it the exact same way!* Indeed, every religion in the world could make the same claim as Pentecostalism and have the identical supporting proof. If Christianity must rely on this kind of testimony to sustain its veracity, why is it any better, or more provable, than Buddhism, Shintoism, and Islam? Have we no surer foundation for our religion than this? Indeed we do.

5. *Pentecostalism emphasizes the Spirit; Christianity emphasizes Christ.* Indeed, I am somewhat perplexed at all this “Holy Ghost” religion; it reminds me somewhat of Old MacDonald’s farm: here the Holy Ghost, there the Holy Ghost, everywhere the Holy Ghost. *Whatever happened to Christ and the cross?* (Read Colossians 1:27; 2:10; II Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; 6:14; Philippians 2:5; Colossians 1:20). The appeal of Christianity is Jesus Christ and what he did on Calvary, and to him we must appeal, and not to “Holy Spirit” religion. There is far too much emphasis on the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism. The cross and forgiveness are the true source of Christian experience, which leads to our final point.

6. *Pentecostalism confuses the Biblical doctrines of faith, feelings, experience.* Biblical faith is based upon testimony (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1). Because I know I have met the conditions of salvation, therefore I rejoice. Pentecostals have this philosophy exactly backwards. They say, “I feel, therefore I know.” The Bible doctrine is “I know, therefore I feel.” Salvation is the *cause*, feelings (*i.e.*, rejoicing, peace, and such like) are the *effects*. Pentecostalism would have feelings to be a cause: “I feel”—the cause— “therefore, I know I am saved”—the effect. Such is not biblical, nor is it even reasonable. Feelings are always effects, even in the natural world. I feel a pain in my leg—an effect; I reach down and pull out a thorn—the cause. God simply has given us greater assurance than our

feelings, because our feelings can be wrong (Acts 23:1). If we are unknowingly fed erroneous information, then our feelings will react as though it were true. If I am wrongly told my mother has passed away, I will grieve, my feelings will be sad, even though she may be alive and well. And this is precisely the problem with Pentecostalism. As Z.T. Sweeney so well wrote, when the Pentecostal says, “I am conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit within me,” what he means is “I am conscious of a feeling within me which I have been taught is caused by the Holy Spirit.” But given the deceptions of the evil one (II Corinthians 11:13-14), such is a mighty dangerous theology. We should trust the word of God, yea, even more than our own feelings and experiences (II Peter 1:19).

We have a sure thing—the word of God. We need nothing else. Indeed, it is not as easy to deeply and tiringly study the Bible to learn what it says as it is to simply have some happy experience which convinces us we have been saved by the Spirit directly; but if we are going to be true to God, we have no other option. The Spirit does not work directly today; he is not doing the things so frequently claimed of him. Let us hold fast the word of God, which will lead us to glory (Psalms 73:24).

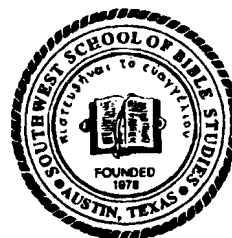
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IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST A SECT?

Tom Wacaster

The word "sect" is used nine times in the New Testament. It is translated four times with the English word "sect," and five times with the word "heresies." W.E. Vine tells us that the word means "a predilection either for a particular truth, or for a perversion of one, generally with the expectation of personal advantage; hence, a division and the formation of a party or sect in contrast to the uniting power of 'the truth,' held in *toto* ; a sect is a division developed and brought to an issue."

When Paul arrived in Rome those who were "the chief of the Jews" met with him and said, "We neither received letters from Judaea concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm to thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts 28:21-22). It is important to note that Paul did not regard the church as a sect. When he stood before Felix, having been charged by the Jews as a troublemaker, Paul said, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers" (Acts 24:14).

The change agents among us would have us believe that the church is a sect, nothing more than a heretical, pompous group of dogmatic knuckleheads incapable of understanding God's love and mercy. One brother has written, "We are crusading against the tyranny of ecclesiastical professionals within the Christian commonwealth, for we believe the system they espouse is cancerous to the one body of believers." Another has written, "'Church' is not found in the oldest of Greek manuscripts. Why did the

translators fail to delete 'church'? Because it became clergy's sacred cow. This sacred cow gave birth to many calves, some of which are Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran. History confirms that subsequent deliveries were named **Church of Christ** (emphasis mine, TW), *Church of God*, and *Assembly of God*." Still another writes, "It is true that Churches of Christ, like other sects, have reduced the Christian system to mere professional employment and sectarian ecclesiasticalism."

It is manifest by their writings that these brethren "went out from us... that they might be made manifest that they are not of us" (1 John 2:19). One of the charges laid at the feet of those who seek a "thus saith the Lord" is the accusation that churches of Christ have been too judgmental in their refusal to fellowship denominations. This, according to some, makes us "sectarian." Loyalty to the truth of God's word does not make someone sectarian. If the Bible forbids fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11), then compliance to that God-given command is not heretical, nor is it a manifestation of a "sectarian spirit," as some are claiming. Another charge laid at our feet is that the churches of Christ are too arrogant in their claims of being the one true church. If the Bible plainly says there is one body (and it does, Ephesians 4:4-5), am I sectarian because I preach that message? If the Bible plainly says that all spiritual blessings are in that one body (and it does, Ephesians 1:3), am I sectarian because I practice and teach that truth? If the Bible plainly says that one must be baptized in order to enter into that one body (and it does, 1 Corinthians 12:13), am I sectarian because I obey and preach that truth? May I go on record: If it is "sectarian" to believe there is one body, that the body is the church, that one must conform to God's will in order to be pleasing in his sight, that God authorizes only singing in worship music, and that men and women who promote denominationalism will be lost, then I PLEAD GUILTY AS CHARGED. But before one frowns on this self-admitted declaration, let him examine the scriptures and see that the Holy Spirit has clearly revealed that each of the aforementioned "sectarian" beliefs are in compliance with God's will. Sectarianism is the result of departure from those things, not compliance with them. Hence, those who maintain loyalty to the truth are not sectarian.

Brother Darrell Conley wrote, "The church for which Jesus died is not a sect. It is the original. It is the whole of God's saved people. Simply because men have invented counterfeit churches does not make the church of Christ a counterfeit. The counterfeits are the sects."

The present push by some of our once faithful brethren to align the church with the "Christian community" at large is a tragic mistake. In the final analysis it will actually turn the church into the very thing which some of our accusers now say we are, a sect.

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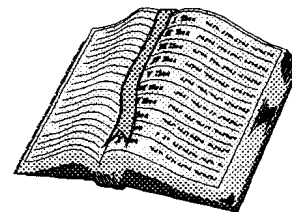
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 10:30 A.M. "Calvinism and the Foreknowledge of God" David P. Brown
 4:00 P.M. "The Second Working of Grace and the Illumination of the Holy Spirit" Lynn Parker
 5:00 P.M. "Calvinism and the Providence of God" Bob Berard
 6:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Converts One to Christ by the Word of God" Michael Hatcher

Monday, June 22

- 9:00 A.M. "Calvinism and the Will of Man" Tommy Moore
 10:00 A.M. "Are Grace and Works Mutually Exclusive?" Kerry Clark
 11:00 A.M. "Total Hereditary Depravity" B.J. Clarke
 1:30 P.M. "Regeneration" Tommy Hicks
 2:30 P.M. "Unconditional Election" Marvin Weir
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 8:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Convicts One of Sin by the Word of God" Tyler Young

Tuesday, June 23

- 9:00 A.M. "Foreordination and Predestination" Lynn Blair
 10:00 A.M. "Redemption" Tom Wacaster
 11:00 A.M. "Sonship" Eddie Whitten
 1:30 P.M. "The Last State is Worse than the First" Don Walker
 2:30 P.M. "Perseverance of the Saints" Wayne Coats
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 3:30 P.M. "Calvinism and the Holy Spirit" Noah Hackworth
 7:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Sanctifies the Christian by the Word of God" Michael Light
 8:00 P.M. "Are Love and Law Mutually Exclusive?" Roddy Covington

Wednesday, June 24

- 9:00 A.M. "Salvation by Faith Only" David Baker
 10:00 A.M. "The Sovereignty of God" Gary Summers
 11:00 A.M. "One Can Lose His Faith and Deny the Gospel" Curtis Cates
 1:30 P.M. "Prayer" Pat McIntosh
 2:30 P.M. "Are Grace and Law Mutually Exclusive" Lindell Mitchell
 3:30 P.M. "Limited Atonement" Keith Mosher
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WHO'S BEING DIVISIVE?

Pat McIntosh

One would be naive to deny that there is a growing concern for division in the Lord's church today. There are change agents clamoring for a newer, fresher, and more culturally relevant approach to the church, worship and Christian living. These would have us to believe that the doctrinal positions which have separated us from the religious community for hundreds of years now fall into the realm of opinion and traditional positions which are to be discarded as archaic and culturally irrelevant.

A major point of attack by these clamoring for change lies in the realm of authority. The "Old Way" of insisting on book, chapter, and verse preaching and for insuring that a practice be authorized by direct statement, example, or implication are seen as outdated. Change agents among us insist that these approaches are in need of being discarded for a "new hermeneutic" (new way of interpreting scripture).

There are many who have not fallen prey to such a liberal agenda. Elders, preachers, and members across the country manifest a great concern for the truth and the souls of those who insist upon such a change. With great love and concern they continually search the scriptures ascertaining that what is believed and practiced is authorized (Acts 17:11). Let us hold up their hands as they continue their quest to ascertain truth in every issue.

The changes being promoted today cannot stand up to the scrutiny of searching scripture for their authoritative-ness. Emotion, the quest for entertainment, and self gratification seem to have supplanted the need to ensure that a practice is authorized. Those who challenge these new doctrinal positions are being labeled as "divisive" and accused of sowing discord among brethren.

We must not "bow down" to such false accusations and methodology. Division is seen in departing from that which is authorized. Those condemned in scripture of being divisive were attacking that which would not stand up under investigation of truth. The prescribed method of dealing with such change agents has always been seen as an insistence on holding to revealed truth, regardless of the cost (Galatians 1:6-10; II Timothy 4).

Let us not be swayed by such tactics. Let us not fall prey to the methodology and emotionalism of those advocating change today. Let us continue to "seek the old paths" (Jeremiah 6:16) of ascertaining authority and countering false teaching with the proper attitude and concern for souls (Ephesians 4:15). May we always manifest a love for God, people, and truth in our efforts for the kingdom.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

IF WE WON'T—WHO WILL?

Wayne Coats

I doubt not that some will receive with great gusto and approbation the announcement of a forthcoming seminar to be held at the Granny White church building in Nashville, Tennessee. To me the affair poses as one of the most disgusting, sickening, and reprehensible fiascoes of the century. And just what is the event as advertised?

The material which has been sent out advertises the event as, **"We believe: A Seminar Addressing Issues Facing Today's Church."** **"The program is needed now."** **"We want to help build the church for which Jesus died and present the pure gospel without change."** **"The elders at Granny White Church of Christ believe the time has come to launch a renewal spiritual revival for Christ and the church."** **"Two special themes of extreme church concern will be discussed: Music in worship and the "Necessity of Baptism."** **"I have told the elders if we don't speak up now for Christ and the gospel, who will?"** (signed) **Willard Collins. Four preachers will speak at the seminar in order to "launch a spiritual revival," "present the pure gospel without change" and "build the church for which Jesus died."**

To accomplish such worthy goals, the Granny White elders have invited **Steve Flatt, Mack Lyon, Jeff Jenkins and Hardeman Nichols.** I have the right to ask the Granny White elders why they have procrastinated, lo, these many years, before addressing issues which face today's church? How long have these troublesome issues been prevalent? If a deadly, devilish plague develops, the medical specialists do not dilly-dally around for years before they tackle the issues. Are the Granny White elders just now realizing that these are some deadly issues facing the church? Have they been asleep? Have they been too fearful? Why start at this late, late, late, date? Oh, no, the Johnnies-come-lately do not have to give my questions a brief glance. I am not alone in raising such questions.

It is downright disgusting, sickening, and nauseating to

think how many Nashville elders have played shut-mouth while hurricane winds of destruction have been blowing from liberal mouths.

The church at Thyatira was condemned because it suffered, **"...that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols"** (Revelation 2:20). There have been more false teachers, seducing spirits and doctrines of devils parading at the Nashville Jubilee over the last decade while elders sit silently and suffer, and suffer, and keep the lockjaw. Who will dare deny this statement? It is the truth before God.

"The program is needed now." Such vision! There are many who have known for years that liberalism, modernism, neopentecostalism, denominationalism, and digression was rampant in Nashville and we have spoken out, challenged the liberals, condemned their heretical views and made enemies by the bushel, while timid brethren have played hide-and-seek with the devil's crowd. I had as soon be a Jezebel as to suffer a Jezebel to seduce and not open my mouth; but I am not a politician. In all candor, I ask, how do you feel about elders who purportedly, *"... want to help build the church for which Jesus died and present the pure gospel without change"* yet will have Steve Flatt as a speaker! Do these elders have a conscience? No man has done more to seduce the church in Nashville, Tennessee, during this generation than Steve Flatt. It is Flatt, (who will be speaking about—"Issues Facing Today's Church") who designed and structured the notorious Jubilee, which is as unscriptural as anything which depraved minds can concoct. It was Flatt who helped bring a horde of heretics to Nashville as Jubilee speakers. Listen to tapes as I have done and know how Flatt's cronies have sought to change the church into a denomination. Only some sort of moronic mentality would dispute this charge. I speak the truth and lie not. Expecting Steve Flatt to present the pure gospel

(Continued on Page 7)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Associate Editorial

ARE YOU WILLINGLY IGNORANT?

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines "naïve" to be "(1) marked by unaffected simplicity... (2) deficient in worldly wisdom or informed judgment" (page 786). To say that one is naïve about certain matters is, therefore, to actually declare that one is uninformed. Some persons, by nature, are naïve and are always functioning apart from the obvious reality of a given situation or persons. They simply do not give proper attention before they get involved. While the naïve person, through uninformed blunders, may cause all sorts of problems, usually folks recognize the nature of such persons and try to act accordingly. On the other hand, when persons are *willingly ignorant*, they have determined that they just do not want to be informed and do all they can to keep themselves away from information that could thwart their desires and plans.

On the pages of *Contending for the Faith* we strive to emphasize that "to be forewarned is to be forearmed." Hence, to do what is necessary to be informed is the first step in becoming forearmed. There are two basic parts involved in that first step toward becoming forearmed. **First** of all, we must know the Bible and with it evaluate all things (John 8:31, 32; Colossians 3:17; II Timothy 2:15; 3:16, 17; James 1:22-25). Our conduct will be judged by the word of Christ (John 12:48; Romans 14:10). **Second**, we need to be aware of current events in and out of the church (Ephesians 5:15; Titus 1:12, 13). Especially, do we need to know what is going on among the brethren that is detrimental to the cause of Christ. It is the responsibility of every child of God to warn others of false teachers and their doctrines (Acts 20:31). This cannot be done if one is ignorant of the Bible and what is going on around them in or out of the church (willingly ignorant or otherwise).

When brethren declare that they love God, the gospel, and the church but will not do what is necessary to stay informed they are deceiving themselves. Elders and preachers in particular cannot do the work God demands of them if they are willingly ignorant (II Peter 3:5). Love demands that we be informed about that which will destroy us (I Corinthians 13:6).

Paul wrote that "**we are not ignorant of his (Satan's) devices**" (II Corinthians 2:11). We, too, must learn how Satan, through lying men, leads other persons away from the truth to eternal destruction. Con-

cerning the Lord's Second Coming, Peter said of some during his day that they were "willingly ignorant." Thus, the information was available but they chose not to be aware of it. Men have not changed on this matter as well as many others.

I have often told my students and others that if they would be faithful gospel preachers, they should drink deeply of the work of the Old Testament prophets (Romans 15:4). The prophets are excellent examples of **how** to inform and warn the brethren. Their examples will help the preacher to obey Paul when he commanded: "**But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry**" (II Timothy 4:5).

Our time in history has been referred to as the "information age." We have all manner of opportunities to be made aware of about anything. How strange it is when certain brethren either choose to be ignorant of persons and events or they just do not care with whom they associate and fellowship.

A Case in Point

The Granny White Church of Christ elders, Nashville, Tennessee, have decided "that the time has come" to have a "seminar" addressing "difficult issues locally and nationally" to "launch a renewed spiritual revival for Christ and the church." There is nothing like getting in earnest about slamming the barn door after the cow ran off years ago. I am sorry to say it but this is typical of how many elders function on a number of things. Moreover, music in worship and the necessity of baptism do not begin to deal with the problems among the churches of Christ throughout the nation, the world, and especially in Nashville, Tennessee.

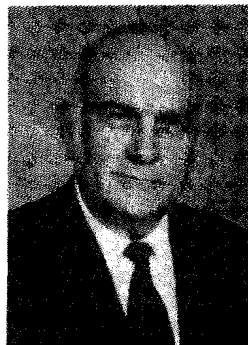
But to show how unaware these shepherds are of who is believing and doing whatever, they have included **Steve Flatt** in their line-up of speakers. Indeed, Flatt's assignment is to speak on the subject of "Necessity of Baptism." If you do not get Rubel Shelly to speak, you had just as well get his clone. Flatt is no stranger to our readers. He is the president of David Lipscomb University, former preacher for the Madison Church of Christ, and one of the great Jubilee speakers. He is anyone's dog that will run with him and he loves to have it so (Romans 16:17, 18; II Peter 2:20-22). One might as well invite Lenin to speak on the evils of communism as to invite Flatt to deal with any genuine problem in the Lord's church.

What is even sadder is that **Hardeman Nichols** and **Mack Lyon** are also speakers in this "revival." Are these men naïve, willingly ignorant, or is it that they just do not care with whom they associate?

As is documented following this editorial, **Neil Anderson** of the *Gospel Advocate* (the former "Old Reliable") spoke at the 15th Annual SEARCH Luncheon during the 1998 Oklahoma Christian University Lectureship. Will Nichols and Lyon expose the errors of Steve Flatt or will they smile, extend to him the right hand of fellowship, and declare that all is well? Faithful brethren will not support men when they join hands with such apostates as Steve Flatt and Neil Anderson.

Beginning on the front page of this issue, **Wayne Coats** exposes this farce labeled "a revival." For many years Wayne Coats has lived and labored in the Nashville area. He, **J. E. Choate**, *Contending for the Faith*, and others have labored to enlighten brethren in the Nashville area regarding false doctrine and teachers, but as our editor, **Ira Rice**, has so often said, "Some brethren just cannot be warned." Moreover, gospel preacher, **Gary L. Grizzell** has written to brethren **Charles Chumley** (the recently retired preacher for the Granny White Church) and the elders of the Granny White congregation seeking to call their attention to the fact of Steve Flatt's apostasy (see Grizzell's letters on page four). Obviously, Hardeman Nichols, Mack Lyon and the Granny White Church are "willingly ignorant" or they think they can do as they please and continue to have the support of faithful brethren.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*



Neil Anderson, Publisher of the *Gospel Advocate* Magazine, will be the speaker at the 15th Annual SEARCH Luncheon during the Oklahoma Christian University Lectureship on January 19, 1998. The *Gospel Advocate* is a familiar name among members of churches of Christ. It may be the magazine of longest standing among us, now in its 139th year. **Furman Kearley** is editor. Neil Anderson's speech will be both informative and inspirational.

You are invited to attend the luncheon in Gaylord Student Center at 11:45 a.m. On Monday of the lectureship. Tickets will be available at the door for less than you can eat a comparable meal anywhere in the city. And, you will have the added advantage of meeting and hearing Neil Anderson. [From *In SEARCH of the Lord's Way*, January 1998]

May 14, 1998

Dear brother Chumley and elders of Granny White Pike,

My name is **Gary Grizzell** and I am a member of the Church of Christ and a gospel preacher. I preach for the Alexandria Church of Christ, which is not too very far from Nashville, Tennessee, where you are.

I saw a flyer recently, which had come in the church mail, advertising a seminar in early June at Granny White Pike Church of Christ building. I noted from the ad that the theme had to do with dealing with problems the church faces (I apologize that I do not have the ad before me and can't remember the exact wording). However, I was amazed that wayward brother **Steve Flatt** was listed as one of the speakers since he himself is one of the problems the church is facing. Honestly, in view of brother Flatt's association with Jubilee and **Rubel Shelly** (who is a false teacher; II John 10-11), may I ask what rationale justifies fellowshiping and honoring brother Flatt in this manner?

Has brother Flatt repented of his bidding godspeed to Rubel Shelly? Does he no longer uphold and endorse Jubilee (a haven for liberals, false teachers, change agents)?

Please do not take this in any way but in the spirit in which it was intended. I'm simply concerned for the condition of the church in a day of apostacy. I do not need to remind you, or do I, that the church is just one generation away from apostacy. You would be my best friend to correct me if I am in error in my thinking about this matter.

Sincerely,
In the Cause of Christ,
Gary L. Grizzell

Monday, May 18, 1998

To whom it may concern:

Recently I Emailed the following note and now since there has been no reply I wonder if I Emailed it to the correct Email address. In the church mail I saw yesterday (Sunday) a post card advertising your seminar and your Email address. Could you please pass this message on the elders for me? It is about your upcoming seminar entitled, "WE BELIEVE—A Seminar Addressing Issues Facing Today's Church" with brother Steve Flatt, Mack Lyon and others (scheduled for June 6, 98). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely
contending for the faith,
Gary Grizzell

[Gary Grizzell's May 18 letter included a copy of the May 14 letter.—DPB, Associate Editor]

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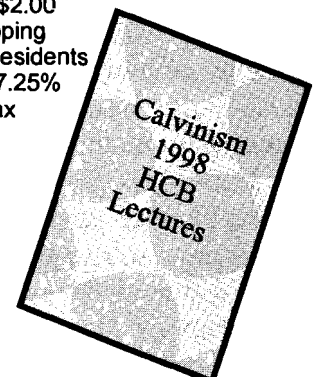
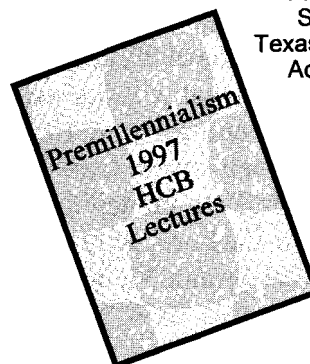
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“Am I Therefore Become Your Enemy, Because I Tell You The Truth?”

Danny L. Box

Truth as defined by Webster is; “that which is true; that which accords with fact or reality; an established or verified fact, or principle.” Truth as defined by the Bible is the word of God (John 17:17).

Paul, in his entreaty in Galatians 4, is making the brethren aware that **“now after ye have known God,”** some were turning from following God and were turning back to the world. He went on to say **“I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.”** Paul was letting them know of his concern for those who were once so close to him. Then he asks this question in Galatians 4:16, **“Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?”** Paul was simply asking them if he had made an enemy out of them by pointing out, based on the truth of God’s word, what they were doing wrong. No longer were they following the truth, but they were turning again to **“the weak and beggarly elements”**

So many times today, we see brethren who are doing as did the Galatians: they are turning from the truth of God, and to keep from upsetting them, or hurting their feelings, we do not tell them the truth of their condition. Brethren, we are commanded in Galatians 6:1 that if we see a brother **“overtaken in a fault,”** or in other words, straying from the truth, we are to try our best to restore him. Let us look at some areas that we are commanded to tell the truth.

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the Truth” on what it takes to be saved? From the word of God, we find by example, a direct statement and implication, that for a person to be saved, he **MUST hear** the truth of God’s word (Romans 10:17); **believe** that word (Hebrews 11:6); **repent** of his sins (Luke 13:3); **confess** Christ as the son of God (Matthew 10:32); and be **baptized** in the name of Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21). Many want to try and be saved by other means and ways, but this is the truth on what it takes to be saved and nothing else is acceptable.

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the Truth” on how you should live? As a child of God, we cannot live as we please. God has given us instructions on Christian living. We are to live faithfully unto death (Revelation 2:10); we are to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12); we are to put the kingdom of God and his righteousness first in our lives (Matthew 6:33); we are to abstain from the very appearance of evil (I Thessalonians 5:22); we are to avoid the works of the flesh, and put on the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:19-26); we are to add to our faith the Christian graces (II Peter 1:5-10); we are to pray without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17); we are to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (I Corinthians 15:58); and we are not to forsake the assembly (Hebrews 10:25). Brethren, this is the way we are to live to be pleasing to God, and nothing else is acceptable to him.

“Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the Truth” that there is only one church? Ephesians 4:4 states, **“There is one body,”** and Colossians 1:18 lets us know that the body is the church. This church is the one that was prophesied by Isaiah and Daniel, and it is the one that the Lord promised to build (Matthew 16:16-18). It is that one that came into existence on Pentecost, in Jerusalem, A. D. 33. It is to the church that the Lord added to those **“as should be saved,”** and only those who are in this church will be saved. Many would have you to believe that there are good **“Christians”** in the denominational bodies, but unless you are a part of the body of Christ, you will not be saved based on the truth found in God’s word.

“Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the Truth” that a child of God can be lost? Contrary to popular belief, **“once saved, always saved”** is not in the Bible. In fact, we have numerous scriptures which teach otherwise. One in particular is found in I Corinthians 10:12 **“Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”** Peter, encouraged us to **“give diligence to make our calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall”** (II Peter 1:11). The Bible over and over again encourages us to examine ourselves to be sure that we are remaining steadfast in the faith.

And finally, **“Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the Truth” on where we will be for all eternity?** There are only two places prepared as a dwelling place for the souls of men after judgment. All that have ever lived will be in one of these two places. There is no middle ground, and there is no probation period of 1,000 years as some may teach. When we die, and the judgment comes, we will either be allowed to enter heaven, that place of beautiful rest, ready for the **“good and faithful servant”** of the Lord, or we will be condemned to hell, that place of torment **“where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.”** One is a place of eternal reward, while the other is a place of eternal punishment. There are many that think they have a spot reserved in heaven just waiting for them, but what did our Lord say? **“Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”** (Matthew 7:21). Where we live for all eternity is conditional, based on whether or not we have done God’s will in this life—and that is the truth.

Brethren and friends, to the best of my ability, using God’s word as my guide I have told you the truth. Now let me ask you, **“Am I therefore become your enemy?”**

—10982 Country Haven
Cottondale, Alabama 35453

I WANT INSTANT GROWTH!

Bob Patterson

Due to the “progressive” and “enlightened” age in which we live, one can immediately acquire, get, or receive just about anything that one might desire. We have everything at our disposal: microwave ovens, bank cards, satellite television, the Internet, home TV shopping, and all of the host of fast foods that are readily available—all of which make for instantaneous fulfillment and gratification! With all of this now considered as being commonplace, is it any wonder some want to carry over this same type of thing when it comes to the area of spiritual growth?

Usually it involves those who have not made good use of their time (Ephesians 5:15); have not been sincere students of God’s word (II Timothy 2:15); have not applied themselves in the area of daily Christian living (Romans 12:1-2); and usually it is one who has not been actively involved in the work of the kingdom (I Corinthians 15:58). In spite of their lack of personal initiative in applying themselves in all of these areas which make for spiritual growth, they just cannot understand why they have not grown spiritually even though they may have been obedient to the gospel years ago. On the other hand, there is the new convert who cannot grow fast enough as far as he is concerned!

But, notice the contrast between the two. On the one hand, spiritual growth is not there because of a failure to apply one’s self to the things which make for growth. And, on the other hand, one cannot see growth and development rapidly enough simply because there has not been sufficient time allowed. Thus, here are two situations where

spiritual growth is questioned on the part of some: (1) One not willing to apply himself, and (2) another who does not exercise enough patience for the growth process to occur.

No doubt, the solution to the problem can be easily stated, but spiritual growth will only occur when the needed things are applied over a period of time. Yes, the solution simply stated would be for one to:

1. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33).
2. Be a “daily” student of the word of God (Acts 17:11).
3. Live faithfully in all “manner of life” (Revelation 2:10; Philippians 1:27).
4. Then, one will see true “spiritual growth!”

There is no immediate, instantaneous, quick, all-of-a-sudden, short-step method one can apply whereby spiritual growth will have been attained! We recognize that an individual does not deteriorate in his faith overnight (immediately), nor does one become mature and full-grown spiritually overnight. In I Peter 2:2, the instruction is, “As newborn babes, desire (long for) the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” Thus, in order for proper spiritual growth to occur, we must have proper desire and be willing to use our time wisely in applying ourselves to the study and practice of the word of God.

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...the same commit thou to faithful men,
who shall be able to teach others also—II Timothy 2:2

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IF HE WON'T...

(Continued from Page 1)

without change is to be naive beyond description. It was due to Steve's liberalism that a great number of the Madison members left and now go to worship elsewhere.

Michael Willey approached the Granny White elders a year ago and tried to get them to permit a *Firm Foundation Lectureship* in the church building. They would not hear of such, but they did have Steve Flatt to come over and speak. Needless to say, brother Willey and his wife refused to stay at Granny White. Brother Fred Stroop was taken to Granny White as a baby and has attended there for well over one-half century. He begged the elders not to have Steve Flatt, the Jubilee heretic, to speak at Granny White. They refused to listen. Brother Stroop and his family left. I do not believe Christians can suffer false teachers without having to give account in the Judgment. Brethren and sisters do not need to give money on the Lord's Day to support false teachers at Granny White.

Why would two special themes such as "Music in Worship" and "The Necessity of Baptism," be issues for discussion? Was it not at Flatt's Jubilee where speakers have appeared and publicly disparaged the necessity of Baptism and vocal music in worship? Did Steve utter one word of opposition to those false teachers? Did he try to convict the gainsayers? How could he when he is very much one of them in teaching error? Talk about a reed shaking in the wind! No wonder the church is in such a horrible mess in Nashville.

Why deal with, "Music in Worship" and the "Necessity of Baptism" at this point in time when the underlying basic problem is Modernism and Liberalism? If the elders at Granny White are so dense as to not be aware of this fact, they need a lot of help. They need to tackle the real problem, but Steve Flatt would hardly be the one to speak out against liberalism. Was it not at the Flatt Jubilee where Max Lucado discredited baptism for the remission of sins? Did Steve and the Madison church not support Lucado at the Jubilee? Will he wear his Jubilee color or will he change to another color like a chameleon? Some preachers are at their best in changing colors. Which chameleon color will Steve present when he meets with all his Jubilee cronies who reject baptism? Over at the Jubilee the magic word is "grace only"; but at Granny White the word has changed and now it is baptism. Not just baptism, mind you, but the essentiality of baptism. It is now time to deal with baptism.

Steve Flatt and Rubel Shelly are the very closest of friends. In fact, they are so close that Steve preaches Shelly's sermons using the same words, phrases, sentences, and thought contents. Steve's mentor Shelly denies that baptism saves a sinner. Listen to tapes of Shelly's foolishness where he deprecates baptism for the remission of sins. Will Steve quote Rubel on the subject of baptism at Granny White? I have never been more serious in my life. Steve

copies Rubel freely at Madison so we are in order when we ask if Rubel will be quoted at Granny White? Steve has copied Rubel's words on the law, the kingdom, the Holy Spirit, et. al., so I have the right to ask if he will copy Rubel on baptism or church music at Granny White. What would be the difference in having Rubel to *speak* at the seminar and having one who *quotes* Rubel to speak? I know several of the members of the church at Granny White and I do not believe for one moment that the sound and faithful brethren will give one dime to support the likes of Steve Flatt or his liberal brethren. If brethren need help in this matter, I will be glad to give free advice. When elders do not care for the flock and invite wolves in, they are not worthy of respect or support. The brotherhood can chalk Granny White up as another congregation in Nashville whose elders have sold out to the devil, despite the pleas of faithful brethren. You better believe I will not write this article and run. There will be no use to run for no one has seen a compromising, spineless, elder who will come forth and make an effort to defend the pure word of God. Do not forget, when old Judas sold out to Satan, he hung himself. None thought enough of the reprobate to bury him. That is how much I admire cowardly compromisers who would persist in destroying the unity for which my Lord died.

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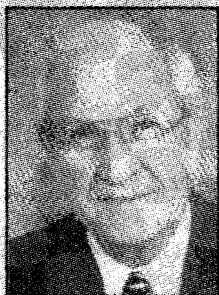
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9 a.m. — 3:15 p.m.

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A Seminar Addressing Issues Facing Today's Church

April 10, 1998

Dear Brethren:

Here is a special greeting and an urgent invitation from the elders and members of the congregation, which meets on Granny White Pike in Nashville, Tennessee.

In view of these times the church is facing locally and nationally, the elders believe the time has come to launch a renewed spiritual revival for Christ and the church. They will hold a one-day "We Believe Seminar" on Saturday, June 6, 1998, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.

Two special themes of extreme church concern will be discussed: *Music in Worship* and the *Necessity of Baptism* in accepting the gospel. Four able gospel preachers will speak - Hardeman Nichols, Mack Lyon, Steve Flatt and Jeff Jenkins.

Help us build a capacity crowd. This program is needed now. The elders want to help build the church for which Jesus died and present the pure gospel without change.

The ladies at Granny White will provide a free lunch. Come and enjoy a day in June with brethren and friends. The church building is located only a few feet from the Lipscomb farm (now David Lipscomb University Campus), a few yards from Avalon (home of David and Margaret Lipscomb), and about two blocks from the home of the esteemed H. Leo Boles.

As a member of Granny White, I have told the elders if we don't speak up now for Christ and the gospel, who will? Let's begin with this day in June and pray that other congregations may have special efforts at a later time. The elders here at Granny White have responded in humility and love. Let's encourage them the first Saturday in June.

Your friend,



Willard Collins

Hope you can come!

Call if you need more materials.

Granny White Church of Christ • 3805 Granny White Pike • Nashville TN 37204
(615) 292-6679 • E-Mail: dale@edge.net

IS OR IS NOT GOD EXCLUSIONARY?

Marvin L. Weir

It is amazing to consider ideas attributed to the word of God, when in reality, they come from the mind of men. It is this simple but important truth that many will not accept. Oftentimes people disagree with articles I write, sermons I preach, or classes I teach. One individual became quite upset with me because I taught that the Bible condemned denominationalism. He charged me with teaching "without regard to the true basis for a Christian belief." He also considered my conclusion that denominations are not mentioned in the scriptures, thus, are not authorized and have nothing to do with godliness, to be without merit or basis. He considered my teaching to be "without scriptural basis and careless and unkind." This person even stated that he will "pray for me that I might see the truth, that God is not exclusionary; that God welcomes all who seek him no matter what denomination. These are the true seeds that God sows"

When you carefully consider the above statements from my critic, you will not be surprised at the conclusion he has reached. He says, "God's power through the salvation of Jesus Christ is what makes us Christians, not the name of a church or denomination. It does not matter if you are Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, or whatever, as long as you accept Jesus as the one and only son of God. God's love transcends all denominational boundaries, and he welcomes all who accept this salvation through Jesus Christ."

Let us examine the false assumptions and wishful thinking of this one who desires to uphold denominationalism as being sanctioned by God. First, let me say that this person's belief implies that we cannot all understand the Bible alike! The denominations he listed are not in agreement in their beliefs and teaching; this is why they exist. The Bible informs us that God's truth can be known (John 8:32). Paul admonished the Ephesians, "**Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is**" (Ephesians 5:17). It is the gospel that "**is the power of God unto salvation**" (Romans 1:16), and only submissive obedience to the gospel will make one a Christian. There is only one gospel (Galatians 1:6-9), and God does welcome all who seek to obey the gospel. Obedience to the gospel

does not make one a member of a denomination, and it is vain to claim to have accepted Christ without doing his will (*cf.*, Matthew 7:21-23).

Second, what is "the true basis for a Christian belief?" It is certainly not what I think or feel! God's word is that basis. It is truth (John 17:17). To please God one must hold in high esteem the sacred scriptures and their authority. Thus, what is not authorized becomes only wishful thinking! Denominations are man-made and one day will be "**rooted up**" by the Lord (Matthew 15:13).

Third, my evaluator considers my teaching to be "without scriptural basis and careless and unkind." Am I without scriptural basis when I teach that you can search the New Testament from cover to cover and not find a single denomination mentioned? Am I without scriptural basis when I teach that no denomination had its beginning on Pentecost? Am I without scriptural basis when I teach that division, thus denominationalism, is condemned (1 Corinthians 1:10-13)? Jesus did pray that they all might be one, not many (John 17:20-21).

Fourth, contrary to the opinion of my critic, God *is* exclusionary! The word *exclude* according to Webster's Dictionary means: "To refuse to admit, consider, include, etc.; shut out; keep from entering; reject; bar." Are those who practice such sins as those listed in Galatians 5:19-21 excluded from heaven? Are those who enter the wide gate and travel the broad way excluded from heaven (Matthew 7:13-14)? Will those who do not "worship in spirit and in truth" be excluded from heaven (John 4:24)? Will those who reject Christ and his sayings be excluded from heaven (John 12:48)? An emphatic "Yes" is the answer to all the above questions.

Fifth, the root of the problem is to be found in one not studying and accepting the word of God. Quite revealing is the statement that refers to God welcoming all who seek him no matter what denomination—and concluding: "These are the true seeds that God sows." Man makes it "seeds" (plural) to accommodate the various denominations. In Luke 8:11 Jesus states clearly that "**the seed (singular) is the word of God.**" Any farmer understands the principle involved in sowing a particular seed—a cotton seed never produces a corn stalk or a tomato plant.

Jesus promised to build his church (Matthew 16:18). He purchased it with his blood (Acts 20:28). He has promised to save only his body (Ephesians 5:23). Paul said there was only "**one body**" (Ephesians 4:4), and all who obey the gospel are baptized into the one body (1 Corinthians 12:13), and the Lord then adds them to his church (Acts 2:47). Those who love God will keep his commandments (John 14:15).

—5810 Liberty Grove Road
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REMINDER

If your address label has the date
05/01/1998

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

Send your renewal to
Contending for the Faith
P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357

DEAR ANONYMOUS PERSON

Wayland Melton

*[EDITORIAL NOTE: At least some members of the Tomball, Texas Church of Christ receive **Contending for the Faith** because they are on our "special mailings" list. We received the following note from a "courageous" member, I suppose, of that church. That person was offended by the articles that I wrote exposing the unscriptural activities of the North Madison Church of Christ, Madisonville, Texas. Especially did this person not like the exposure of the biblical errors of Lanier Stevens and his associate Dale Underwood. Why the person chose this approach is beyond me. But since when have those who love error been open and aboveboard in their activities. Please notice that the person condemns judging and, then, in just a few words, practices it. Liberals will do it every time.*

*I am including the **unedited** note below. The response following it is from **Wayland Melton**, a deacon in the Spring, Texas Church of Christ. Having read the crudely-written note, it will be obvious why Wayland desired to answer it. —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]*

Take all of the Tomball names off your mailing list. Wayland Melton grandfather started this church over 60 years ago. We are growing some one places membership or Baptism.

God is judge not you. Lanier S. is O. K. When the roll is called yonder. You may not be there.

I had no idea whether my grandfather started the church in Tomball, Texas or not. Both of my grandfathers died prior to my being adopted by **Grady and Eva Melton**. Though the letter to which I am responding was not clear, I assume it was in reference to my mother's father. This would be true due to the **Bogs'** family involvement with the church in Tomball. In fact, the statement in the letter was the first time I had ever heard that my grandfather was the person who started the church in Tomball. I was never told whether he was a member of the church or not. It is confusing to me why anyone would think that using a reference to my grandfather or me would have any bearing on the terrible apostasy taking place in the church today. All of that aside, I ask the writer or anyone willing to respond, **What difference does it make who helped start a particular congregation of the Lord's people? Is the establishment of a congregation by a particular individual more important than its faithfulness to the word?** If my grandfather was instrumental in helping to start the Tomball congregation, that is a great thing. Surely it was estab-

lished to be a faithful church. This means that it would be standing separate from the world and denominationalism. Is it separate today and can it be distinguished from denominations today? Does the Tomball church do only what is authorized in the New Testament (Colossians 3:17)? Or, does it associate with congregations or individuals (such as Lanier Stevens) that have deviated from following God's word. I stand amazed at anyone who would write such a letter using another person's name as this mystery writer in this letter has done. I am also amazed that anyone would speak for an entire congregation and not have enough courage to sign his name and allow a personal response. I wonder, was our mystery writer authorized to speak for the entire church? If the writer truly was concerned for the souls of those whom he or she said were so wrong, then why wouldn't he or she confront those individuals and help them get their lives right with God instead of using an ambush approach. Christ always stood for the truth and did not mind his name being connected with his actions. Stephen stood face to face with wrongdoers and told them of their wrong ways. It cost him his life, but he was faithful unto death as we are all to be (Revelation 2:10). Paul stood strong against his fellow apostle and brother in the Lord, Peter. He did not do it anonymously. Paul did it for the cause of Christ and the soul of his erring brother in Christ, not because of someone's grandfather. I urge you, whoever you are, if you are truly a loving Christian, please come forward and let us study the word of God together with honest and good hearts (II Timothy 2:15; Luke 8:15). As we study the Bible and if we thereby find errors in our lives we may correct them by conforming to the word of God.

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Render Unto Caesar.....

MUST CHURCHES ISSUE W-2'S, 1099'S AND FILE PAYROLL TAX RETURNS?

Kenneth D. Cohn, CPA

Federal law (and many states) requires churches to comply with several payroll tax reporting obligations. Almost every church will be subject to at least some of these rules. The penalties for noncompliance can be quite severe. Church leaders (elders or other responsible persons) may be personally liable for a penalty equal to the amount of payroll taxes that were not withheld or deposited. The courts have consistently rejected the argument that application of payroll tax reporting rules to churches violates the constitutional guaranty of religious freedom. What then are the rules? As is usual with tax regulations, the rules can be quite complex.

For income tax purposes, preachers are almost always employees of the church for which they preach. They are always self-employed for social security tax purposes. A church is not obligated to withhold any taxes from a preacher's pay, but they may mutually agree to have the church withhold taxes in lieu of his making quarterly estimated tax payments. A church would be obligated to issue the preacher-employee a Form W-2 on which would be reported wages, but no social security or medicare wages or taxes, and, unless there has been voluntary tax withholding, no income taxes withheld.

Non-preacher employees are subject to income tax withholding and social security tax deductions. Under certain circumstances, a church may elect a limited one-time exemption from social security tax coverage for its non-preacher employees. A non-preacher employee's pay, however, is always subject to income tax withholding.

If any taxes are withheld during the year or if there are any non-preacher employees, the church has the further obligation of filing quarterly a Form 941 payroll tax return. A further reporting obligation of a church is the issuance of Form 1099-MISC. Generally, a church must issue a Form 1099-MISC if it pays a person compensation of \$600 or more a year and such person is self-employed (as some preachers claim to be).

A church has an obligation to timely deposit withheld income and social security taxes plus its share, if any, of social security taxes. The depositing requirement is generally determined by the amount of taxes withheld during a specified four quarter "lookback" period.

Why do churches fail to comply with these reporting obligations? For three reasons. First, the rules are too complex. Second, unique rules apply to churches, preachers, and employees. Third, in many cases, uncompensated volunteers unfamiliar with tax law are responsible for tax compliance. Unfortunately, the IRS provides no exemptions.

*—4015 Evening Trail
Spring, Texas 77388*

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.

—California—

Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423. *Publishers 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, Evangelist, 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 Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—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, Evangelist.

—Michigan—

Garden City—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m.

—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, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist.

• • • • •

Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, Evangelist, (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, Evangelist, 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.

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Portland—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Evangelist.

—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.

White Mountain Church of Christ

Post Office Box 3157
Show Low, Arizona 85902-3157

Beloved in Christ,

Greetings from White Mountain church of Christ in Show Low, Arizona. Our earnest desire and prayer to God is that all might be well with you. (Please read our Bulletin.)

Our prayers were answered in locating suitable property for a building site for the Lord's church. We were offered this property at half what it is worth. We give God the praise for this.

We went forth in faith several weeks ago to secure the necessary down payment and were able to succeed with the help of faithful Christians in the brotherhood and our own members. The property is now in escrow.

The need was great for a sound congregation in this area and we know we are now meeting those needs with God's help and the devoted members we already have. We are small in number, thirty at present, eight of those being very faithful teenagers. We thank God daily for these young people.

We will continue to work with every ounce of energy and put forth every effort always to preach, teach, and hold fast to the "old paths." The growth potential is great here, and in time we will be self supporting, however, at present brethren, we need your help.

We pray our plea will reach receptive hearts of individuals and congregations that will be able to help us.

We are faced with an ongoing need we are presently unable to meet, that being land payments and support for our new evangelist, **Mark Lance**, who will move here to help with the work in November. (Read Mark's letter.)

If you are able to make a commitment, either on a one time basis or on a monthly basis, whatever it might be, it would be deeply appreciated by us and a blessing from God.

We earnestly pray you might give this your immediate consideration.

May our loving God continue to bless you in all you do in His service.

In Christian Love and In His Service,

[Signed]

Harold Heath

Dale W. Zuna

A WORD FROM GARLAND ELKINS

Dear brethren:

Please allow me to inform you of an **urgent** need for the cause of the pure gospel in a very rapidly growing area in Arizona. I am speaking of the White Mountain Church of

Christ in Show Low, Arizona. I know both splendid, faithful members of the congregation and of the need in that part of Arizona because I have held meetings both in the Phoenix area and in Show Low back in November, 1997.

Arizona is a mission field. And the Show Low area has several churches that are **either anti or liberal**. The faithful brethren **could not** worship and work in such an environment. Thus, a faithful church was begun in August, 1997, with four members. Would you believe that they are already numbering a total of twenty-nine (29) members strong? They have eight teenagers that attend Bible classes and worship regularly. One of them (whose family are not members of the church) was baptized recently.

The congregation has a **tremendous potential**. Show Low is a recreational community, at 6,300 feet in elevation. The scenery is spectacular. Its population of 2,800 in winter doubles in the summer. The community of Pine-top\Lakeside adjoins Show Low. Its winter population of 5,000 swells to 30,000 in the summer. And amazingly, the communities are expected to triple in population in the next three and one-half years.

The brethren at White Mountain have hired brother **Mark Lance**, who will graduate from the Memphis School of Preaching in November, 1998; he has a very supportive wife and lovely family. They are to move to Arizona to work full-time with the congregation upon graduation. Brother and Sister Lance will do a great work with these brethren.

AN URGENT NEED

Our Lord has commanded His children to take the gospel into all the world (Matthew 28:19,20. Mark 16:15,16; II Timothy 2:2). It has been said that when the Lord said "Go ye" that means "Go me."

Some Christians are privileged to go overseas to take the gospel, some have great opportunities to teach the gospel in their local communities, and others have the privilege of taking the gospel to distant states. Due to ill health some members are physically unable to take the gospel to others, but through their prayers and financial assistance they play a vital part in the conversion of the lost.

WHITE MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Some six months ago a new congregation with four members was started in Show Low, Arizona. The congregation has now grown to thirty members. The name of the new congregation is the White Mountain Church of Christ. It was my pleasure to preach in a short gospel meeting for the White Mountain congregation February 21-22, 1998. Interest was good with numerous visitors in attendance.

A FINAL APPEAL

If you are looking for an opportunity to assist in the planting and growing of a sound congregation I recommend that you help the White Mountain congregation to purchase their own building. Presently they must meet in rented quarters, and those facilities are not always available.

[Signed]

Garland Elkins

CURTIS CATES URGES HELP

How can you help? The brethren are meeting in the Senior Citizen's building in Show Low, under very crowded conditions. The building is full to capacity in the regular services; the teenage class meets in the small kitchen area. There is only a small cutting board between the teenage class and the adult class. And, there is no classroom for younger children. They are trying to figure a way to acquire a building, which is critically needed.

Can you help the White Mountain congregation? These brethren need to find a congregation who is interested in making this one of their major thrusts. Here is a real opportunity to make a difference in a real mission field. Is there a strong established congregation who will make it their goal to see that these brethren have their own meeting house? Are there other congregations who will assist to that end? Are there still other churches who will assist monthly in supporting brother and sister Lance till the brethren get on their feet?

It is my prediction that these brethren have a bright future. I have been privileged to see first-hand their great zeal in reaching the lost with the pure gospel and in maintaining unswerving loyalty to the Old Paths. I would be most appreciative if you would allow these brethren to present their special, urgent need and their tremendous challenge in Arizona to spread the gospel to you folks.

Please contact them soon. If you have any questions of me, please do not hesitate to call or write. God bless you, brethren.

Affectionately in Christ,

[Signed]

Curtis A. Cates, Director

Memphis School of Preaching

MINISTER WANTED

Minister wanted for established congregation of approximately 200. The Carlisle church of Christ, Pennsylvania is seeking a full-time assistant to work with present minister preaching and teaching. Must be biblically and evangelistic minded with a strong desire for church growth. Position tentatively available in August 1998. Please send resume and videotape or audiotape of a recent sermon (video tape preferred) to Dave Jester, 2nd Man Selection Committee Chairman, 1011 Harriet Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17011.

A MESSAGE FROM MARK LANCE

My name is Mark Lance. I am a student at the Memphis School of Preaching and will be graduating in October of 1998. My wife's name is Tina and we have two daughters, Jessica and Katelyn. We are originally from McMinnville, Tennessee, which is 75 miles past Nashville.

I will begin working with the congregation at the White Mountain Church of Christ in Arizona in November of 1998. I believe this will be a mission work that will show growth faster than most. The area is growing extremely fast as far as population is concerned.

The people in this area have not had the opportunity for many years to attend a sound congregation. Several have met in their homes. We have a golden opportunity to convert souls to the gospel of Christ (John 4:35).

This is a small congregation, but it is a congregation where the people have a mind to work (Nehemiah 4:6).

There is no reason the White Mountain congregation can not become self supporting, but it will take some time.

We need your help in raising funds for land and to build a meeting house. We are not asking anyone to take our word for the potential, but would encourage you to take the opportunity to come and see first hand what is happening with the congregation.

All mission work is not overseas, and this is one of those works that is not. We hope you can help with fund raising for land/building.

Feel free to contact me if I can answer any questions (901) 755 -7436.

For the cause of Christ,

[Signed]

Mark Lance

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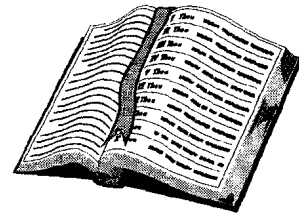
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Houston College of the Bible Lectures



"Calvinism"

June 21 - 24, 1998
David P. Brown, Director



Sunday, June 21

- 9:30 A.M. "Calvinism and the Bible"Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
10:30 A.M. "Calvinism and the Foreknowledge of God"David P. Brown
4:00 P.M. "The Second Working of Grace and the Illumination of the Holy Spirit"Lynn Parker
5:00 P.M. "Calvinism and the Providence of God"Bob Berard
6:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Converts One to Christ by the Word of God"Michael Hatcher

Monday, June 22

- 9:00 A.M. "Calvinism and the Will of Man"Tommy Moore
10:00 A.M. "Are Grace and Works Mutually Exclusive?"Kerry Clark
11:00 A.M. "Total Hereditary Depravity"B.J. Clarke
1:30 P.M. "Regeneration"Tommy Hicks
2:30 P.M. "Unconditional Election"Marvin Weir
*2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class "Things God Wants Us To Remember" Part 1Janice Garner
3:30 P.M. "Irresistible Grace"Daniel Denham
7:00 P.M. "Reconciliation"Darrell Conley
8:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Convicts One of Sin by the Word of God"Tyler Young

Tuesday, June 23

- 9:00 A.M. "Foreordination and Predestination"Lynn Blair
10:00 A.M. "Redemption"Tom Wacaster
11:00 A.M. "Sonship"Eddie Whitten
1:30 P.M. "The Last State is Worse than the First"Don Walker
2:30 P.M. "Perseverance of the Saints"Wayne Coats
*2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class "Things God Wants Us To Remember" Part 2Janice Garner
3:30 P.M. "Calvinism and the Holy Spirit"Noah Hackworth
7:00 P.M. "The Holy Spirit Sanctifies the Christian by the Word of God"Michael Light
8:00 P.M. "Are Love and Law Mutually Exclusive?"Lindell Mitchell

Wednesday, June 24

- 9:00 A.M. "Salvation by Faith Only"David Baker
10:00 A.M. "The Sovereignty of God"Gary Summers
11:00 A.M. "One Can Lose His Faith and Deny the Gospel"Carl Garner
1:30 P.M. "Prayer"Pat McIntosh
2:30 P.M. "Are Grace and Law Mutually Exclusive?"Roddy Covington
3:30 P.M. "Limited Atonement"Keith Mosher
7:00 P.M. "When Does the Christian Possess Eternal Life?"Jim Boyd
8:00 P.M. "The Man to Whom God Will Not Reckon Sin"Dub McClish

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June 13 - 17, 1998

Saturday, June 13

7:00 P.M. What is Fellowship? Noah Hackworth
8:00 P.M. Fellowship and the Corinthian Church Curtis Cates

Sunday, June 14

9:00 A.M. Fellowship and Mission Work Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
10:00 A.M. Obligations of Christian Fellowship Stanley Ryan
11:00 A.M. *Lunch Break*
2:00 P.M. Fellowship and the Lord's Supper Garry Barnes
3:00 P.M. Fellowship and the World Joel Wheeler
4:00 P.M. How to treat the Withdrawn Michael Hatcher
5:00 P.M. *Dinner Break*
7:00 P.M. Guilt By Association Lester Kamp
8:00 P.M. Fellowship and the Restoration Movement Randy Mabe

Monday, June 15

9:00 A.M. Fellowship and Giving Gary Grizzell
10:00 A.M. Unity Movements and Their Lessons For Today Wayne Coats
11:00 A.M. The Holy Spirit and Fellowship Keith Mosher
12:00 P.M. *Lunch Break*
1:30 P.M. Fellowship and Preaching Mark Mosher
2:30 P.M. Fellowship and Error David Brown
3:15 P.M. Open Forum: Fellowship and Error
4:00 P.M. *Dinner Break*
7:00 P.M. Fellowship and Ephesians 4:1-6 Clifford Newell
8:00 P.M. The Future and the Fellowship of the Church Bobby Liddell

Tuesday, June 16

9:00 A.M. Fellowship and 2 John 9-11 Tim Nichols
10:00 A.M. Unity Movements and Their Lessons For Today Wayne Coats
11:00 A.M. Fellowship and Mark 9:38-41 Toney Smith

12:00 P.M. *Lunch Break*

1:30 P.M. Fellowship and Singing Guss Eoff
2:30 P.M. Fellowship and Preachers Bob Berard
3:15 P.M. Open Forum: Fellowship and Preachers
4:00 P.M. *Dinner Break*
7:00 P.M. The Sermon on the Mount and Fellowship Harrell Davidson
8:00 P.M. Withdrawal and Fellowship Ken Willis

Wednesday, June 17

9:00 A.M. Fellowship and 1 John 1 Paul Vaughn
10:00 A.M. Unity Movements and Their Lessons For Today Wayne Coats
11:00 A.M. Fellowship and Prayer Howell Bigham
12:00 P.M. *Lunch Break*
1:30 P.M. The Value of Fellowship Buster Dobbs
2:30 P.M. May One Congregation Withdraw From Another? Dub McClish
3:15 P.M. Open Forum: May One Congregation Withdraw From Another?
4:00 P.M. *Dinner Break*
7:00 P.M. Fellowship and Ephesians 5:11 Eddie Whitten
8:00 P.M. Why We Cannot Fellowship Denominations Ronnie Hayes

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

AN EAST TEXAS "RESURRECTION SUNDAY"

Lynn Parker

With increasing regularity we hear of brethren who have drifted from a solid Bible foundation of a **"thus saith the Lord,"** for the cesspools of denominational doctrines. How our hearts ache for our brethren with whom we once shared a "like precious faith" (II Peter 1:1) but now have **blindly followed blind leaders into a ditch** (Matthew 15:14) that concludes in perdition. Just yesterday the front walls were manned by multitudes of brethren from many congregations and they stood shoulder-to-shoulder in the fight against sectarianism and every false way. Now, there are gaps in the battle lines caused by defectors, detractors, compromisers, and conspirators, the unconcerned and the unlearned, the weak and the willfully ignorant, the untaught and those who will not be taught. Paul charged Timothy to preach the Word **"in season, out of season"** (II Timothy 4:2). With almost the same stroke of the pen the venerable soldier of Christ warned:

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

Do many brethren refuse to see what is happening? The answer is obvious, and the ostrich has lots of cranial company in the sand. The apostle of love cautioned, **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** Peter also sounded the alarm: **"...as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies...And many shall follow their lascivious doings"** (II Peter 2:1-2). Though heartbreaking and embarrassing, it did not come as a sur-

prise to see the following advertisement in the local paper. (See page five for advertisement).

Reports concerning the Frazier Street or "Conroe Church of Christ" have come in slowly but steadily over the past few months since I began work with the Shiloh congregation near Conroe. Two brethren, both members at Frazier Street, lamented on separate occasions that things were going downhill, doctrinally, and that while they were hoping for change, in reality they were seeing error infiltrating the classes and worship assembly. Things like an ecumenical movement and statements expressing a desire to extend fellowship to denominations were becoming more frequent and public. The leadership seemed to condone rather than rebuke a move to unite with those outside the Lord's church. A couple traveling through stated that they had visited Frazier Street and heard, in a Bible class, unrefuted, the idea that all who believed in Christ as God's son were Christians. Then the April 10, 1998 newspaper article appeared showing that apparently the "Conroe Church of Christ" would be counted among the digressives who opted to ape the denominations in the unauthorized practice of setting aside special worship services and days in recognition of a man-made "holy day" (or religious holiday).

On Sunday, April 12, 1998, I was accompanied by **Wayne Blake**, a student at Houston College of the Bible, and his wife. Early on this crisp, cold morning we drove to Lake Conroe and set up our folding chairs on a grassy knoll at the rear of the 300+ people who had gathered at a park pavilion for **"RESURRECTION SUNDAY...hosted by your friends from the Conroe Church of Christ."** Some appeared to be campers while most were dressed in nice

(Continued on Page 5)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXIX, No. 6

June/1998

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

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Associate Editorial...

Where Have All the Universities Gone, Long Time Passing?

Today, if one compares and contrasts the universities operated by the brethren some are found to be doctrinally better than others. However, if one contrasts where they stood doctrinally half a century ago with where they stand now there is a chasm as wide as the Grand Canyon separating them. At present, I know of no better place to send a child in order to get him or her to accept denominationalism and all its attendant errors than one of "our universities." If there are still faculty members and others who are upset over the apostasy shenanigans of their academic associates, let them find the courage of their convictions and publicly oppose them.

"Our universities" of the twentieth century are stepping in the footprints of apostasy made by their 19th century ancestors. Please notice the following bit of history:

...L.F. Bittle pointed out as early as 1873 in his letters to Jacob Creath, it had...been the tendency of colleges to fall in line behind the popular sides of issues in the brotherhood. Colleges, as a general rule, will as a matter of policy pursue for a time a midway "safe" course until it is known which side will be the most popular, and then will jump with full force on that side...Consciously or unconsciously, this has been the tendency. The reason is clear: colleges must have money to operate, and if they get too unpopular, they will not have enough funds to run! (As quoted by Earl Irvin West, *The Search For the Ancient Order*, Vol. 2 (Ann Arbor: Cushing Malloy, Inc., 1950), p. 461).

In this century, some brethren not only "dropped the ball" regarding keeping academia under the sway of Christ's scepter, but they threw away the orb and thought it the thing to do. Some knew it could happen and said so, but they have gone unheeded. Listen to the following words of yesteryear.

As I stand here and apprehend the thousands of elders and preachers that have been here in previous years, and have come or would like to be here during the coming week; and I think of the thousands of churches from which they came, I am thankful...May we be humble and not proud; but resolute in our purpose of standing by the word of God by which Christ exercises his authority. Others before us have been unwilling to let the fires go out; now the matter is in our hands. Let us be careful that the fires of our fathers do not go out (James Baird, "Authority in Religion," *Abilene Christian College Lectures*, 1952, pp. 166-167).

In view of the way things have turned out with "our universities," it seems that as soon as the previous words were finished someone called the fire department.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

A Presentation Paper of Particulars From Our Universities

J. E. Choate

Turning a full circle means moving 360 degrees around a fixed point. That churches of Christ/Church of Christ are now facing division has come full circle since the 1960s. The primary source and primary blame is traced to a unique liberal coterie of administrators and tenured professors in our schools.

Restoration history generously documents the fact that the schools started by Campbell, Lipscomb, et al., were built on two cornerstones. The first cornerstone is to contend **“earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”**

The second cornerstone addressed the need to provide an education in the higher context of the Christian. The purpose of the first school, Buffalo Seminary (1819), established by Alexander Campbell was the education of preachers. The purpose of the College of the Bible (1865) was to train Christian ministers, not just preachers.

Other schools like Bethany College (1841) and the Nashville Bible School (1892) had the dual purpose to provide a classical and professional education for young people in a Christian environment where the Bible would be taught on a daily basis.

The divisions are deeply rooted in a hundred years of liberal theology—the “old modernism” was rooted first in the theology of the Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch (1885), and Form and Source Criticism of the New Testament. The layers of evolution and the Social Gospel were in place soon after 1900.

Modern theology would undergo a second major metamorphosis between 1919 and 1950. This was the new theology bearing the label “Made in Germany.” **This was the age of neoorthodoxy. The names of Barth, Bultmann, and Tillich became synonymous with neoorthodoxy.** The Yale and Harvard divinity schools were bastions of the new orthodoxy.

[I was in the Vanderbilt Divinity School in the middle 1950s when neoorthodoxy was the talking rage of the liberals. Little did we realize that even then we were hearing the “swan song” of a dying theological legacy.]

The third age of liberal theology has broken out of the narrow mold of neoorthodoxy in less than a generation. There is no fixed defining title for the new **postmodern theology.**

The exponents of postmodern theology are now “out of the woodwork.” We clearly understand their words. The art of the evolution of postmodern theology has been long. Such can be explained in one seminar in the span of one short day.

The churches of Christ were first contaminated with the influences of modern theology in the 1960s. The first stage of this is understood in the fact that young men trained in liberal seminaries introduced the new theology when they returned to teach in their alma maters.

However, the collapse of neoorthodoxy in the 1970s was final, dramatic and sudden. This was reflected in the sensational headlines of the time—“God is Dead.” **Soren Kierkegaard** had provided the phrase a century before in *Gay Science* wherein he has a madman coming into the market place saying that “God is dead, and you have killed him.” Tillich pictured God as the “ultimate ground of Being.” Bultmann reduced the historical Jesus to a mythical figment.

The big battle to win the hearts and souls of the churches of Christ was joined in the middle 1960s. This was the period of **Don Finto** and the charismatic **Pat Boone**. This was the period when **Athens Clay Pullias** and **George S. Benson** were telling tenured Bible professors to seek employment elsewhere. They did! Will it happen again? Most unlikely!

I wrote two series of articles published in the *Firm Foundation* especially researched in order to bring into sharp focus the new breed of postmodern theology and “church growth” practices now being adopted in many churches.

The first series addressed postmodern theologies in such areas as the Jesus Seminar, liberation theologies, Derridean “Deconstructionism” semiotics, and others. This is hardly the usual reading fare for readers in brotherhood papers. Our liberal brethren know precisely what is in mind.

The second series of papers listed and defined the primary “church growth” paradigms which have already infiltrated and corrupted the worship in a growing number of churches of Christ. These popular “church growth” paradigms are of recent vintage—the Willow Creek Community Church seekers of the unchurched; the “Third Wave” Pentecostal movement created by **C. Peter Wager** and adopted in **John Wimber’s** Vineyard churches; and the Kansas City Prophets, The weird spin-off of the Third Wave took place in a Toronto Vineyard revival where “giggles for God” erupted.

The “Third Wave” exponents say miracles are performed today as in the apostolic age, *e.g.*, the dead climbing out of their coffins. However, to **Joe Beam** must be awarded the prize for the weirdest and most bizarre tale to come out of the “Third Wave” fantasy. He told about a baby being born without internal organs. After 24 hours of intense praying for a miracle to happen, the lady went the next day for an ultra sound and the organs of the baby were there. Fie on you, brother Beam! And would you have us to be so stupid and naive?

Perhaps the leading “expert” among our postmodern liberal brethren on the “Third Wave” Pentecostal influence is **Randy Harris**, popular Lipscomb Bible teacher and protégé of **Harold Hazelip**. He has written an article, titled, “Come Holy Spirit,” in recent months in *Wineskins* inspired by the “Third Wave” and **Jack Deere**.

What is distressing me is that while the "Goliaths" of postmodern liberalism are stalking, belittling, and ridiculing churches of Christ, that some of our brethren are off down in the market place quarreling about the direct operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. These are mysteries which not even God has divulged. Why trouble the churches? Fame is one thing. Notoriety is another.

Wrap your minds around this one: The theme of the 51st (?) Annual Willard Collins Summer Lectures is "A Covenant People." Joe Beam is a featured speaker. And keep in mind this lectureship starts under the new watch of **Steve Flatt**. Obviously brother Flatt is now running with some of the most "theater-of-the-absurd" liberals today, **Max Lucado, Joe Beam, Rubel Shelly, and Jeff Walling**. There is a price to be paid here if Steve has the "iron" in his will to honor the covenant he has made with David Lipscomb and James A. Harding.

DEGREES OF DIGRESSIONS

Some judgmental calls can now be made to rank our leading universities in the order of their endorsement and commitment to postmodern theological influences. In my personal judgment I would rank them in order of the history of their liberal inclinations—Pepperdine University, ACU, DLU, OCU, and MU. Pepperdine holds undisputed first place in this ranking.

A singular irony is that Abilene Christian College was the second to throw open the flood gate to postmodern theology during the presidency of **John Stevens**. There are reasons to believe that the Abilene CEO had failed to read the signs of the times.

There are two faces to the Abilene picture. The first is that this is the university where such brethren as **Doug Foster** and **Bill Humble** hold forth the thesis which was presented by **Richard Hughes** during the Reed Lectures that Churches of Christ have now metamorphosed into a postmodern denomination. Warm applause greeted the addresses of Pepperdine's Richard Hughes who described in sharp details the distinguishing marks of this big [sick] denomination.

The second is the Highland Church of Christ where **Mike Cope** preaches his sermons to the delight of his parishioners. This is the church shepherded by "sound" gospel preachers, namely **Randy Becton** and **John Willis**. I have in memory of just yesterday when they were regarded as pillars of orthodoxy in Nashville churches of Christ.

David Lipscomb College went on the auction block to the high-bidding liberals at the very moment that Harold Hazelip was installed as Lipscomb president. This soon came to light when moves were made to abandon daily chapel and daily Bible classes and to tone down the "purpose" statement of DLC handwritten by David Lipscomb. The moves failed.

There is little question but that FHU would already be swimming in the mainstream of postmodern liberalism had **Milton Sewell** prevailed with such endorsements as Jubilee until a board vote instructed him to keep the FHU exhibit off the 1997 Jubilee floor.

There are two factors which hinder the FHU CEO from moving FHU into the mainstream of postmodern liberal-

ism—a conservative faculty and board majority. There seems to be just one solution to this problem if FHU would maintain its historic commitment to the integrity of divine of scripture.

The prevailing theological climate in Oklahoma Christian University is not clearly discerned at the present time. There have been hopeful signs. Not so *The Christian Chronicle* which runs on a double track. The liberal bias of the *Chronicle* is too obvious for comment.

[I have not had a single book reviewed in the *Chronicle*, but have enjoyed seeing my books reviewed in the Digestive publications—*Christian Standard*, and *Discipliana*, and the book review section of the *New York Times*. Sour grapes? You tell me.]

The administration of Harding University is seemingly keeping the best balance at the present amidst the rising storms of postmodern societal and theological forces.

BUT THERE IS GOOD NEWS

This article is not designed to paint a picture of "gloom and doom." It is not too late though the day is far advanced to turn things around. In less than 20 years, the Southern Baptist Convention and its supporting churches at the "grass roots" level are driving the liberals (moderates) from seats of power in their schools and organizations.

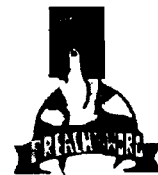
Churches of Christ-connected schools operate under self-perpetuating boards. One loyal DLU or one FHU board of directors committed to the traditions of their schools and New Testament could do this in one board sitting provided there is the will to do so.

Our colleges and universities overall are doing a great academic job. Some of the finest and most loyal of all Christians teach in our schools. The postmodern liberals do not yet have a firm stranglehold on the schools—but they are closer than a very large number of concerned brethren are inclined to believe.

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“RESURRECTION SUNDAY”

(Continued from Page one)

suits and dresses. A lady handed out a program which displayed a white lily on its cover and was emblazoned with the word, “Alleluia!” With this, we received a bulletin, registration card, and informal paperback songbook which carried the message, “Welcome To Our Sunrise Service.” (Before going further, I hasten to say that **we did not participate in this worship service in any way**: we did not sing with them, pray with them, partake of “communion” with them, or do anything to give the impression that we were a part of this unholy mess—L.P.) The services began with a welcome by **Steve Yates**, and then it was downhill. A special quartet, “Soul Union,” performed several contemporary religious songs (I had never heard any of them) throughout the course of the service. Applause for the unauthorized performance rang through the crowd as they completed each song. Two song leaders—local folks, I assume—were designated as “Praise Leaders” and they led the services in several other religious songs. In the course of these songs, it was not unusual to hear clapping to the rhythm. One man a few rows in front of us clapped, rocked his head, raised his arms, and eventually began swaying. Throughout the serving of the “communion,” songs (plural) were sung. I thought to myself, “Now either these folks must be extra-spiritual and have multi-faceted minds to en-

able them to concentrate on the words of a song and discern the body and blood of the Lord at the same time or, they are not worshipping in spirit and truth.” It was the latter.

Steve Yates delivered a “sermon” entitled, “Do You Recognize The Risen Lord?” Its four points exhorted listeners to “see” and recognize Jesus (as did the ancients after his resurrection) and the last point emphasized that one can see and recognize Jesus “In The Vibrant Fellowship Of Believers.” Yates did not explicitly state in the sermon just who is among the number of believers he has in mind but their bulletin, *Conroe Family News*, implicitly tells us by advertising an activity of a nearby denomination. Here is the exact quote:

Disciple Conference—Thursday, April 16—The Living Branch Church is hosting a conference for teens. The focus will be discipleship. There will be a guest speaker and a praise concert. It will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Due to time constraints, we left at 8:15 a.m. as they were closing their service. The occasion left us both sad and challenged. Sad that our brethren could digress so far from the truth, but challenged to oppose such error with every ounce of energy and in every godly way.

On April 16, 1998, I called Steve Yates at his office and talked with him about 30 minutes. The conversation was as cordial as one could expect under these circumstances. I mentioned to Yates that he and the Frazier Street congregation had sinned against heaven and faithful brethren, and that this Easter service of theirs, as well as their fellowship of denominations, would be a hindrance to evangelism in the community since it was obviously public. I asked Yates to correct me if I misunderstood but it plainly appeared (by their bulletin) that the Frazier Street congregation was in fellowship with denominations. He did not correct but confirmed what I read in the bulletin. Yates was insistent that there would always be divergent views and opinions in the body of Christ as to these types of practices. He also stated, in answer to my question concerning authority and mechanical instrumental music in worship, that while he personally would never work in an “instrumental” congregation, he had visited them before and did not think that the instrument “would keep them out of heaven.”

I let Steve Yates know that since this teaching was done publicly, we were under biblical obligation to oppose it. Yates continually offered that we can have unity in spite of differing opinions on these matters. I asked him to consider a public discussion with me—one where brethren from both congregations could bring their Bibles and study these matters so as to achieve unity. He declined. I asked him not to be too hasty, and to reconsider. Propositions for Yates to consider are being mailed as I prepare this article.

While **I love my erring brothers and sisters** at the Frazier Street congregation, I hate what they did. I hate it because it confirmed that damnable error has gripped a congregation and is drawing them closer

Join Us As We Celebrate The Empty Tomb
“He is not here; he has risen”... (Matthew 28:6)

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

APRIL 12, 1998

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~ ~ Schedule For The Day ~ ~

7:00 - 8:15 A.M. - Annual Sunrise Worship Assembly
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8:45 - 9:45 A.M. - Brunch Fellowship
at Fry Fellowship Center
1500 N. Frazier in Conroe
Special Music by “Soul Union”

10:00 A.M. - 11:15 A.M. Second Worship Assembly
Conroe Church Of Christ - 1500 N. Frazier

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and closer to an eternal hell. I hate it because it shows Satan successfully at work. I hate it because it undermines efforts to teach the truth of God to the alien sinners in this community, and because it provides ammunition for proponents of denominationalism. I hate it! Too strong you think? God does not think so. Read on...

“Ye that love the LORD, hate evil...” (Psalms 97:10).

“...I hate the work of them that turn aside...” (Psalms 101:3).

“Through thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore I hate every false way” (Psalms 119:104).

“And some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 23).

Efforts are underway now to refute the error and stop, if possible, the damage done by the “Conroe Church of Christ.” We harbor nothing but love for the souls caught up in the bold error at the Frazier Street congregation. Already phones have been ringing with some members from Frazier Street who are upset that we would accuse them of error. We will not be deterred by unlearned brethren who do not want to rock the boat. This “boat” is error, it is an enemy of God’s truth and everything wholesome and right. No, we will not rock this boat—with God our helper, **we intend to sink it!**

This past Sunday, an elderly sister in Christ came in and sat on the back row of the church building. She has attended the “Conroe Church of Christ” for years. We introduced ourselves and she quietly asked me to stay and talk with her a moment. She could not stand to attend the Frazier Street church that morning because of what they had done in having an “Easter Service.” In the course of the conversation she stated, “I came out of the Baptist Church...I don’t want to go back to a denomination.” Her words struck me like a hammer. I exhorted her to be courageous, and if the Frazier Street congregation would not change, **then leave it!**

We must quit ignoring denominationalism and the trends toward it! Do not let liberalism and its attendant errors have tacit approval by your silence. Do not let precious souls of brethren go to hell without a fight to rescue them. Pick up the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) and mightily wield it to the destruction of every false way and the salvation of souls. Get righteously angry about false doctrine. **God help us!**

—Houston College of the Bible
Post Office Box 39
Spring, Texas 77383

AN OPEN LETTER TO STEVE YATES

April 20, 1998
Steve Yates
c/o Conroe Church of Christ
1500 N. Frazier Street
Conroe, Texas 77301

Dear brother Steve:

It is with a heavy heart for the Lord’s cause that I write this letter as a follow-up to our conversation last Thursday. While I love my brethren in Christ and harbor absolutely no animosity at all toward any, faithful brethren cannot silently ignore the public teaching, contrary to the scriptures, implicitly done by both your newspaper advertisement of “Resurrection Sunday,” and your bulletin in which you advertise a “Disciple Conference,” and thus endorse, the work of a denomination (The Living Branch Church). Love for souls and God’s word compels me to take issue with you over these unauthorized and sinful practices.

The Bible teaches that we must have authority for all that we do in religion (Colossians 3:17). From our conversation, it appears that the most fundamental difference between us is ascertaining Bible authority. For example, you believe that instrumental music “will not keep them out of heaven” while the Bible teaches that unauthorized religious acts do indeed incur God’s condemnation, even His wrath.

Brother, the Bible commands unity in doctrine (I Corinthians 1:10). Jesus prayed for unity of believers

(John 17:20f). With a desire to see brethren unified—not divided over doctrine—I propose that we invite brethren to bring their Bibles and hear two opposing views set forth in an organized forum. Perhaps we could discuss the following proposition at both the Frazier Street and Shiloh church buildings over the course of 2 nights:

“The scriptures teach that in Christian work and worship, we must do only that which is authorized by the Bible.”

Affirm: Lynn Parker

Deny: Steve Yates

I know that such a discussion would be conducted with only Christian behavior, and that it would be profitable for everyone present. Truth has nothing to fear from examination and open study, and I’m sure you are in agreement with me on that. We could work out details for such a discussion including dates, times, and exact wording of propositions. Think about the possibility for unity that could result from a frank Bible study where both views are set forth and explained, all in Christian love.

For the cause of Christ,

[Signed]

Lynn Parker

cc: Shiloh congregation
Elders, Spring Church of Christ

THE LIBERAL MINDSET

Gary W. Summers

If one studies through some of today's liberal ideology, the following points cannot be missed.

1. Conservatives are arrogant because they claim to know everything.
2. Conservatives should be like liberals, who are tolerant, loving, kind, and unsectarian. Furthermore, liberals understand grace, but conservatives do not.
3. Doctrine does not matter.
4. It is all right to be sarcastic and insulting towards conservatives, so long as it is subtly done (it must be the subtlety which does not negate kindness).

Cecil Hook typifies these attitudes in his Internet publication, *Freedom's Ring*. Consider some of his statements, which appeared in his article "The Quest for an Unidentified Unity" (No.26, Week 1 of 5).

For too many years I thought I had the simple picture of unity. Just join in my segment of the Church of Christ. It was such a simple picture of five steps of conversion, five acts of worship, a scriptural name—you know, all those marks of the nondenominational church (which made us a distinct denomination). Why couldn't the whole Christian world accept this way of unity so dearly taught in the Scriptures? Of course, we could not accept those who did not accept our concept, for they were not true Christians! (1).

Notice how Hook phrases everything he says (which reeks of sarcasm) to make it look as though conservatives (which he implies that he once was) are arrogant fools. Perhaps *he was*, but none of those preaching restoration concepts ever couched their messages in terms like these. Undoubtedly, he lacks documentation of this point for just that reason. Although there are abundant debate books yet in print, as well as collections of sermons, nevertheless he could not cite even one individual (besides himself) who ever looked at matters in the way he expresses them.

Who has ever preached that the key to unity is to "join in my segment of the Church of Christ?" Such is a perversion of the facts, calculated to prejudice the reader. Our plea has always been to restore the one gospel and true worship, which is a valid biblical principle. Hezekiah thought it

was; so did Josiah. When they each became king, they tried to restore things to the way God had authorized them to be in the law of Moses.

Hezekiah, for example, returned the Levites to the temple (II Chronicles 29); he destroyed the high places and the altars (II Chronicles 31); and he determined to observe the Passover, which had been neglected. When messengers invited all the tribes to participate, however, certain Israelites "**laughed them to scorn and mocked them**" (II Chronicles 30:10). There will always be former Israelites like Hook, **Rubel Shelly**, and others, who take great pleasure in mocking those dedicated to restoring things to the New Testament pattern. But what is the alternative? Liberals must think either that restoration is impossible or that God gave no pattern in the first place (thus, there is nothing to restore). Would not such ideas negate the concept of true worship (John 4:23-24)?

SALVATION

Hook does not explain how the teaching of the five steps to salvation and the five acts of worship is simplistic. Is it anymore simple than saying we are saved by faith only? That would be only one step on the part of man, eliminating any need to repent whatsoever. Then some neo-Calvinist brethren want to insist on grace only, which makes a total of ZERO responses for man to make. Talk about simplistic!

But what difference does it make how many steps there are? If God gave them, then they are requirements. Consider Noah, for example. He had to have faith that God was going to bring a flood upon the world; he also had to have faith that God would save him in the ark. Then he had to build the ark according to God's specifications. Could he have been saved by faith only? No, it was a matter of faith and works. Should we laugh and mock this two-step plan?

How many steps did Naaman need to cleanse himself of his leprosy? He had to have faith (which he lacked at first) that Elisha's solution would work. Then he had to respond to the message by going to the Jordan River and dipping in it seven times.

Essentially, we are saved from our sins in the same way: faith, plus the correct response to God's grace, which (in our case) includes repenting of sins, confessing that Jesus is the son of God, and being buried with him in baptism. Is there something here that the scriptures do not teach? Even liberals know better than to challenge the Bible on these points.

If these points are biblical (and they are), then why would anyone want to belittle the essentials for salvation that God has revealed (whether one or fifty steps)? Furthermore, if God has required them, which ones may man safely leave out? Can we discard repentance? Changing our lives is the most difficult thing there is to do anyway (it

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is simpler to ignore what the scriptures teach and then call it a matter of “interpretation”).

If it be admitted that nothing of what God requires can be dispensed with, the next question is, “If we must ourselves obey what God has said in order to have salvation, then how can we have unity with others who have disregarded various steps?” How can one who has neglected to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38), for example, be a brother? If he does not need to do these things to become a Christian, then neither did we. Furthermore, we now have two gospels; one which includes repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, and one which does not (Galatians 1:6-9). Is God the author of confusion? No. Only liberals who want to make everybody a “brother” regardless of God’s plan of salvation are confused. Truth and error cannot be combined to produce unity.

WORSHIP

Hook seems to find fault with “five acts of worship.” Are there some he wants to dispense with? Would he like to add a few more not given in the New Testament? Again, if God required these expressions of worship, then why would we want in any way to diminish them?

Or is he implying that we are at fault for, say, refusing to unite with those who use mechanical instrumental music? Since nearly everyone in our culture does it, we should relent and count these people as brethren; is that his thinking? Should we ignore the fact that neither Jesus nor the apostles ever sang with mechanical musical accompaniment? Should we dismiss the fact that no New Testament church ever used mechanical musical instruments in their worship? The use of mechanical musical instruments in worship to God is clearly not authorized in the New Testament (Colossians 3:17). Would Hook be happy if we worshipped the golden calves at Dan or Bethel?

We cannot be united with those who worship falsely. Again, the kind of unity some are advocating can only be achieved through sacrificing Bible teaching. We can reach a state of unity if only we have no principles.

MARKS

Hook insults all those who ever conscientiously tried to please God by doing his will (Matthew 7:21-23) by saying that our attempts to restore New Testament Christianity have made us a denomination. What else can we conclude from such a statement that Hook believes restoration is impossible? He mocks the very concept.

Consider a painting by a great artist—perhaps done in his earlier years. Someone else paints over it, and several centuries elapse. Someone discovers there is a painting underneath the visible one and begins the restoration process. Obviously, he must believe that there was an original and that with painstaking work it can be restored.

Over the centuries men “painted over” God’s original teaching in the New Testament; we believe that there is an original and that it can be restored. Why is such a concept worthy of scorn? When the painting was restored, did someone find it necessary to accuse the restorer of being prejudiced or just painting the picture the way he wanted to? If the Bible teaches A, B, and C, and we uncover these

teachings and begin to teach A, B, and C, why does that make us a denomination? The only way we could become a sect is by saying, “We do not like B; so we are only going to teach A and C” (which is what others have done). Or if it became known that the Bible also taught D or E, and we refused to accept those teachings (“We’ve always just done A, B, and C”), then the accusation would stand.

CHRISTIAN UNITY

Unity is clearly taught in the scriptures (John 17:20-21; Ephesians 4:4-6). The way to achieve unity is also clearly taught (I Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 1:27; 3:16). Liberals have concluded that doctrine is the problem; therefore, if doctrine can be minimized, unity can exist.

What they refuse to comprehend, however, is that it is not doctrine that divides; it is error. The church in Jerusalem continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42), and they remained united (Acts 3:46-47; 4:32). It was not until error was injected amidst the truth that problems arose. What should Paul and others have said concerning the Judaizing teachers? “Oh, these doctrines are so confusing; some say that Gentiles must be circumcised; others say they do not need to be circumcised. Listen, brethren, these doctrines are dividing us. We all believe that Jesus died for our sins. Let’s just forget about doctrine and be united.” Apparently this idea never occurred to the inspired apostle; he thought that people needed to know the truth on this subject. In fact, most of the New Testament letters were written so that brethren would know correct doctrine and abide in the truth.

It is not “our concept” that people need to accept; it is God’s concept. We have tried to be certain that “our concept” matches Biblical teaching. If we have failed, it would be helpful for someone to point out what has been overlooked or what we have added that is not there. To say of the biblical attitudes and teachings we have attempted to restore that they are “our concept” is to presume that we are wrong or that there is no true concept. If the Bible, for example, teaches that we must have a love of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:10), and we have a love of the truth, how then, is that “our concept?”

If we seek to abide by the teaching of salvation taught in the first century, why is that called “our concept” instead of God’s concept? If God had a plan for people to become Christians in the first century (and he did), then why is it called “our” plan if we teach the same gospel? Certainly, men have devised other schemes of redemption, but the fact that there are counterfeits does not disprove that the genuine article exists. The fact that liberals are willing to accept any bogus currency does not prove that God will honor it. Those who have never repented of their sins and been baptized for their forgiveness may be pious, religiously-oriented, conscientious, good parents, moral individuals, and good citizens, but they are not saved. God’s standards must always take precedence over man’s notions.

—312 Pearl Street
Denton, Texas 76201-8610

What Does It Mean To Be “Issue-Oriented?”

Tom Wacaster

Occasionally I will hear someone make the comment that those who are adamant regarding issues that face the Lord's church are issue-oriented. Funk and Wagnalls defines "issue" as "a matter of importance to be resolved." Webster says it is "the point or matter pending in a suit on which two parties join and put their cause to trial." Oriented means "the determining of one's position with reference to circumstances, ideals, etc." (Funk and Wagnalls). Hence, to be "issue-oriented" is to "determine one's position and put that cause to trial or to the test." Since the Christian has the obligation to "**prove all things; hold fast that which is good**" (I Thessalonians 5 :21), it stands to reason that there will always be "issues" facing the Lord's church. And, since we have the obligation to "**sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you**" (I Peter 3:15), that we are therefore "oriented" in giving a defense of the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). While it is possible to become so imbalanced that we are cynical about the Lord's church and its future, we must face the fact that so long as the church exists we are going to have to face the issues that come our way. To do otherwise is to abdicate our responsibility. A negative connotation has been attached to the words "issue-oriented." This "label" is used by critics to hush the mouths of those who still love the truth while

making the unsuspecting believe that there is something inherently evil in dealing with issues. None would be so bold as to suggest that all issues should be ignored, since even the most liberal "change agent" will take us to task on the issue of being issue-oriented. The question arises, then, as to when our dealing with issues becomes imbalanced. I suggest to you that any issue that comes down the pike is an issue that cannot be ignored and must be dealt with forthrightly. If the truth is at stake we cannot and will not remain silent. The only alternative is to ignore the issues and allow the church to be swept into apostasy. It is my studied conviction that at least one reason why the Lord's church is so troubled today is that too many brethren have simply grown weary of fighting the battle. Consequently false teachers have crossed the threshold, and are in the midst of the flock having a heyday. Meanwhile, too many elderships and preachers sit back and do nothing for fear that they might be perceived as being "issue-oriented." Yes, it is possible to become so consumed with the issues that face the Lord's church that we become cynical and never hold out any hope to God's people. But the desire to provide hope and peace cannot drive us to ignore the issues that would in fact rob us of that hope and peace by leading us into error.

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The 6th Annual POWER Lectureship

THE GODHEAD: A STUDY OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Sunday, August 9th

- 9:30 a.m. The Existence of God Paul Meacham, Jr.
10:30 a.m. Three Vital Questions About Knowing God B.J. Clarke
6:00 p.m. The Nature of God Garland Elkins
7:00 p.m. The Sovereignty of God James Meadows

Monday, August 10th

- 9:00 a.m. The Work of the Godhead In Creation Barry Grider
10:00 a.m. The Work of the Godhead in Redemption Barry Gilreath, Jr.
11:00 a.m. The Triune Nature of God Mike Vestal
1:00 p.m. The Omniscience of God Daniel Denham
2:00 p.m. The Foreknowledge of God Dub McClish
3:00 p.m. **Panel Discussion—Questions About God:**
7:00 p.m. The Titles of Christ Glenn Colley
8:00 p.m. The Great I Am Gary Colley

Tuesday, August 11th

- 9:00 a.m. The Holiness of God Michael McDaniel
10:00 a.m. The Immutability of God Bill Bryant
11:00 a.m. Sins Against the Holy Spirit Bobby Liddell
1:00 p.m. The Omnipotence of God Keith Cozort
2:00 p.m. The Godhead and the Problem of Evil Ted J. Clarke
3:00 p.m. **Panel Discussion—Questions About God:**
7:00 p.m. The Operator of the Holy Spirit in Conviction and Conversion Rod Rutherford
8:00 p.m. The Operator of the Holy Spirit in the Life of a Christian David Brown

Wednesday, August 12

- 9:00 a.m. The Jealousy of God Kevin Beard
10:00 a.m. The Names of God Jim Laws
11:00 a.m. Who Is the Angle of Jehovah in the Old Testament? Gary Summers
1:00 p.m. How to Answer the Arguments of "Oneness" Pentecostals Billy Bland
2:00 p.m. How the Godhead Dwells in Man Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
3:00 p.m. **Panel Discussion—Questions About God:**
4:00 p.m. False Ideas About God Wayne Cox
8:00 p.m. The Love, Grace, and Mercy of God Curtis Cates

Thursday, August 13

- 9:00 a.m. The Patience of God Lennie Reagan
10:00 a.m. The Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit Michael Hatcher
11:00 a.m. The Pre-Existence of Jesus Christ Keith Mosher
1:00 p.m. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ Harrell Davidson
2:00 p.m. The Deity of Jesus Christ David Jones
3:00 p.m. **Panel Discussion—Questions About God:**
7:00 p.m. The Goodness of God Jim Dearman
8:00 p.m. The Severity of God Paul Sain

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Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

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IS OBEDIENCE NEGATIVE?

Bob Patterson

It is truly amazing when the topic of man's obedience to God is stressed that some respond by saying, "That's so negative!" Yet, in all of the history of God's dealings with man, what we have is actually a history of God providing divine instruction, which if followed, will result in man being blessed. In Ecclesiastes 12:13, we are told, **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."**

Consider the record in Genesis 6: **"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth"** (Genesis 6:5-7). In spite of this warning, some people scoffed, but Noah, **"being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of righteousness which is by faith"** (Hebrews 11:7). Notice in the former case that God spoke, Noah believed, and Noah obeyed! Again, notice the simplicity: God spoke, Noah was moved with fear, was obedient to God's commands and was blessed! In Noah's obedience there was no change, alteration, or modification. Observe:

When God said, **"Make thee an ark of gopher wood"** there was no substitute utilized by Noah in the constructing of the ark.

When God said make the ark **"300 cubits"** long, **"50 cubits"** wide, and **"30 cubits"** in height, Noah did not seek to alter the dimensions in any way.

When God said, **"A window,"** Noah did not put more or less than God instructed.

When God said, **"the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side,"** Noah did not place it on the top, bottom, front, or back!

When God said make it with **"lower, second, and third stories,"** Noah did not make it with more than three stories or less than three stories!

The point is this: *Noah understood that God's instructions cannot be improved upon!* Therefore, the sum statement relating to Noah pertaining to God's instruction concerning the ark is stated in this manner: **"Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, so did he"** (Genesis 6:22).

In order for one to be pleasing in the sight of God, it must be on God's terms. Simply put, this means that we must do what God wants, and it is to be done the way he wants it done! One way is not as good as another as far as God is concerned. We must remember, **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"** (Proverbs 14:12), and we must acknowledge, **"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"** (Jeremiah 10:23).

When we speak of man's need to be obedient, we are instructed that we are to **"receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls"** (James 1:21). Souls are purified **"in obeying the truth"** (I Peter 1:22). Jesus is **"the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"** (Hebrews 5:9). In studying God's Book from "cover to cover" one will always find that God's blessings are based upon obedience, and never will you find a single spiritual blessing bestowed upon the disobedient!

In Hebrews 11:6 we are told, **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."** Notice in this great chapter that it was by faith that **"Abel offered"** (vs. 4), **"Enoch was translated"** (vs. 5), Noah **"prepared an ark"** (vs. 7), Abraham **"obeyed. . . went out, not knowing whither he went"** (vs. 8), Sara herself **"received strength to conceive"** (vs. 11), Abraham **"offered up Isaac"** (vs. 17), Isaac **"blessed Jacob and Esau"** (vs. 20), Jacob **"blessed both the sons of Joseph"** (vs. 21), Joseph **"gave commandment concerning his bones"** (vs. 22), Moses **"was hid three months of his parents"** (vs. 23), Moses **"refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter"** (vs. 4), **"they passed through the Red Sea as by dry ground"** (vs. 29), **"the walls of Jericho fell down"** (vs. 30), **Rahab**

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(The Gift of the Holy Spirit) Robert R. Taylor Jr.
11:00 a.m. The Works of the Holy Spirit in Conversion
Garland Elkins
12:00 noon Lunch provided by the congregation.
1:00 p.m. The Works of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the
Christian Robert R. Taylor Jr.
2:00 p.m. The Holy Spirit and Providence Garland Elkins
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“perished not” (vs. 31), as well as listing a host of others who **“obtained a good report through faith”** (vs. 32-39)! What a marvelous chapter providing us with great men and women of obedient faith!

We must all learn the lesson that God will only reward those who are obedient to him, and he will punish those who refuse to obey! In II Thessalonians 1:6-9, speaking of God’s righteous judgment we are told,

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

We do not doubt God’s love and his desire for our obedience (John 3:16; Matthew 7:21), and the fact that he is **“longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”** (II Peter 3:9). Even though these things are true, God has also **“appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness”** (Acts 17:31), and his wrath will be **“revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”** (Romans 1:18). Obedience to God is not “negative,” but disobedience is “negative!”

We should remember the question that Paul asked concerning us all, **“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to**

whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” So, the question is really this: **“Who are we going to obey?”** In obeying God, Paul continues by saying, **“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”** (Romans 6:17-18). Based on what we have presented in these verses, do you get the impression that it is “negative” for one to stress the necessity of one rendering obedience unto God? What could be more “positive” than for one to no longer be “the servant of sin” because of his “obedience unto righteousness?”

Since all spiritual blessings are predicated upon one’s obedience to the will of God (Matthew 7:21; Ephesians 1:3; I Peter 1:3-9), why would anyone not want to be obedient? In a lesson that was taught on this same topic, our Lord asked, **“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say”** (Luke 6:46)? When it comes to God (and the things of God), we must make it our business to be his obedient children. If you are only a **“hearer of the word”** and not **“a doer,”** then all you are doing is **“deceiving your own selves”** (James 1:22). Remember, it was our Lord who said, **“If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments”** (John 14:15). In I John 5:3 we are told, **“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”** How do we view obedience? Is our view of obedience “positive” or “negative”?

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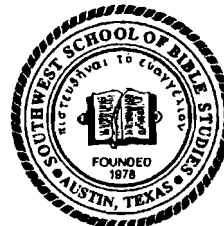
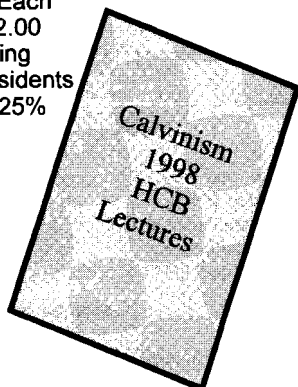
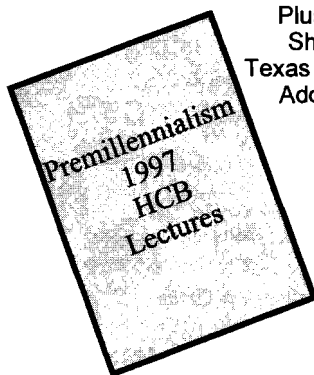
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NOTES AND QUOTES...

Nehemiah Gootam, Kakinada School of Preaching, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, India: "We are now getting the feedback from the people who attended the lectureship and the seminar through their letters. The response is wonderful and overwhelming. It appears everybody enjoyed it to the maximum. The letters say it was great teaching, singing and fellowship. The Telugu Christians have enjoyed the American singing very much and it was a great excitement and thrilling experience. Many of them had never seen or heard so many Americans and they all singing together..."

"I and all Asia owe you a lot. Had you not championed the cause by prevailing upon brother J. C. Bailey, we still might be sitting in darkness..."

[NOTE: "It is most encouraging that the feedback you are getting from those who came is all positive," I replied, in part. "If the Indian brethren never saw anything quite like it, the same could be said for those of us coming from afar. It seemed to me that the preaching, on the whole, could hardly have been better, and some of that singing, as the saying goes, was 'out of this world'..."

"I am grateful for what you said in your closing paragraph. As little as I do, thank you for viewing me and my work in such glowing terms. As I see things, the largest contribution of all was that of the J. C. Baileys' coming to India; and what you and Joshua have done and are doing comes right behind. Much has been accomplished already, but our best days are yet to come..." IYR Jr.]

Sher Bhadur Karkee, Jhapa, Nepal: "We read your tracts and booklets, newsletters, sermons, cassettes, and sermon books and we thank the Lord for your great efforts and work. It is no doubt a very important and effective booklet for Nepal."

"We would firstly like to let you know something about the social, cultural and geographical background of our country. Nepal is divided into 14 Zones and further sub-divided into 75 districts. There are the Himalayan (mountainous) region, the plains, and the Tari (semi-plains). Jhapa lies in the plains of East Nepal and is very close to the Indian border. It is roughly 600 kilometers from Kath-

mandu, the capital of Nepal. 99% of the population of our country are idol worshippers. Most of the population are Hindus and some are Buddhist and denominational Christians.

"We, in the Basic Bible Training Center of the church of Christ, most humbly request to please send us tracts and booklets from time to time. For us that will be effective for Hindus and denominational Christians. We request you for books because in Nepal there is very little Christian literature, and even if we do find any they are from denominations and therefore useless."

"We have full confidence in the Lord that He will provide us with these books which are most necessary for us. Please do pray for us that we may be able to teach the truth to the people here in Nepal."

We would like to ask if it is all right for us to translate your tracts into Nepal. Do write let us know for we believe that through your books many Nepalis will be saved..."

[NOTE: "Thank you for what you said of the various things we sent," I replied, in part. "I do not remember if I sent you a set of my English language Basic Bible Course or not. If not, please find a full set of it enclosed. It now has been translated into at least 16 languages, including three Indian languages—Telugu, Oriya and Tamil. It now is being widely used both in the States of Andhra Pradesh as well as Orissa. Should you wish to translate it into your own language for use there in Nepal, go right ahead. I trust you can make use of it to the winning of many precious souls to the Master. Also you are welcome to translate any other tracts and Bible literature that we send from time to time. The object in all this is to save as many for Christ as we can."

"I first tried to go to Nepal in 1961; however, at that time, Christian missionaries were not welcome there and I could not get a visa. I had planned going there in 1996 together with Joshua Gootam, of Kakinada. Once again things did not work out. I still hope to come there one of these days."

"The background information you sent me, regarding Nepal, is appreciated. While in Kakinada, I discussed your

needs in Nepal not only with brother Joshua Gootam, but also with brethren Swamidas, of Calcutta, and Shyam Salam, of extreme northeast India, both of whom, I think, you may know. I am encouraging them and others to help spread the saving gospel in your country..."

Nepal is as far away from the U.S. as one can get without starting back on the other side of the world. Postage from here to there is extremely costly—however, compared with the worth of precious souls, it is nothing. Those desiring to send gospel tracts, pamphlets, books or other materials for use in the work there, please address them to the attention of Sher Bhadur Karkee, % Church of Christ, Basic Bible Training Center, Post Office Box 3, Jhapa, Nepal. IYR Jr.]

Steven D. Cline, Donelson, Tennessee: "Wayne Coats was telling us about the phone conversation you and he had recently concerning the hurricane out in the Far East and how the preacher was amazed the way the fruit bats had clung to the rafters. That's how our faith should be—'clinging to the rafters and not letting go!'"

[NOTE: Re: the fruit bats who held on to the tree where they were roosting even through the hurricane in India, this, to me, is one of the finest examples of steadfastness I ever heard of. IYR Jr.]

Do not be afraid to fly;
When life is past you'll go;
You'll leave your body by and by,
Depart these realms below.
If you have made the sacrifice
And done as God said do,
You'll reach a place called Paradise;
He has a crown for you.

—from *Wait A Minute*
by Reg Rogers

Ralph Denham, of Hebron, Kentucky, sent us a church bulletin from Cincinnati, Ohio, in which the Tulsa Workshop and Harding Youth Forum were announced.

"If I had left Crossroads, I would not be sending a van load of people to the Tulsa Workshop. Would you?" he asked.

[NOTE: Having kept that bulletin unfiled for more than ten years, I finally wrote, "...my answer would have been 'No' then and still would be 'no' now. There was a time when I thought Marvin Phillips and Garnett Road Church of Christ stood for the truth; however, they

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left it long ago and never returned." (YRJR.)

* * * * *

Sam & Patricia Mormino, Canton, Texas: "We are worshipping at Ben Wheeler, Texas. It is very hard to find a true congregation these days. Some people we would have declared would always be faithful have gone off so far...Some who claim to be elders were the ones we trusted to remain faithful. A lot do not like hearing the truth any more."

Adron Doran, Lexington, Kentucky: "You have done such a creditable job of devoting the entire [January] issue to a tribute to the beloved Joe Gilmore, Jr. Many others of us came to appreciate him as you and the other writers expressed. 'Won't it be grand to hear Him say well done?'"

"I have a copy of your recent Newsletter of your report on the missionary journey to the Far East. It is an exciting report and the pictures are moving. I am glad you were able to persuade brother Elkins to go with you. I am sure that he was 'the star of the show.' I commend you to God for this great effort. Vada, too! (Signed) Adron."

[NOTE: Thanking brother Doran for his delightful letters and for the \$100.00 he enclosed for the new press in India, I replied, in part, "Vada and I have mentioned several times to each other how much we enjoyed being with you both when you spoke in Memphis. We often think how enriching it would be if we lived close enough that we might visit back and forth. As is, we are reminded of that old song, 'Won't it be wonderful there!'"

"Thank you for what you said of the special issue of *Contending for the Faith* we dedicated to Joe Gilmore. In our estimate, he was a great one. I mentioned to

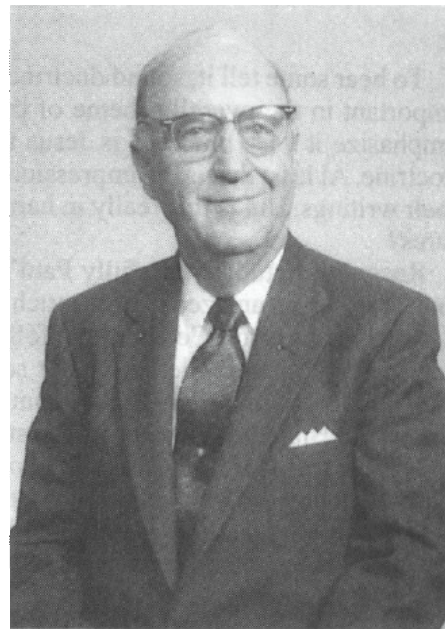
brother Cates just yesterday how timely it was that we had the big appreciation dinner for him and Joy last year. We had one last night for Wayne and Elaine Coats. Your compadre J. E. Choate was here; and we both spoke. With Wayne's health as precarious as it is, this one, too, could be just under the wire. However, we still hope the doctors can decipher his malady so that he may have a few more years yet.

"Thanks for what you said of our Far East/World Evangelism Newsletter concerning our year-end effort to the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and India—especially for the \$100.00 you sent. We shall apply this on the new printing press so sorely needed for the work in Kakinada. You are right that Garland Elkins was the 'star' in that particular effort. How about you going with us next time?" (YRJR.)

* * * * *

J. E. Choate, Explanation and Correction: "In the winter 1995 issue of the DCHS publication, *Discipliana*, Gary Holloway and Michael wrote in their Kilpatrick DCHS paper that 'two models for worship are most evident among Churches of Christ...Willow Creek Community Church...third wave charismatic worship...' I wrote that they 'proposed the two paradigms.' My purpose then and now is to show that the two paradigms introduced into the worship of churches came from documentation not my own.

"In the October issue of *Contending for the Faith*, I made the unintentional mistake that Dr. Richard Goode, talented young DLU social science Vanderbilt Ph.D. professor, was a former Bethany College faculty. The correction is not to be construed as altering in any respect the full intent of the article. Dr. Goode has no connections with Bethany College."



Preston Cotham
[1920-1998]

Hardly had we announced the passing of Perry B. Cotham's wife Theresa Cotham than word came of the passing of Perry's brother Preston Cotham who had just taken part in her funeral.

David Preston Cotham, of Hillsboro, Texas, was born November 23, 1920, in Murray, Kentucky, the son of Ben and Nannie Cotham. He was 77 years of age when he died February 5, 1998 at his home in Hillsboro.

A graduate of Freed-Hardeman College, of Henderson, Tennessee and of Central State College, of Edmond, Oklahoma, he was married to Loveda Craig, June 1, 1943, in Oklahoma City.

Dearly loved by the College Hill and the Westside churches of Christ, for his combined 21 years of service as minister to these two congregations, prior to his moving to Hillsboro, he and Loveda had served other congregations in Edmond, Paul's Valley and Lawton, Oklahoma; and in Childress, Fort Worth, Dallas, Garland and Sweetwater, Texas

Brother Preston touched many, many lives during his long years of gospel service. He made innumerable visits to hospitals and rest homes to encourage the sick and shut-ins, whether he knew them well or not. He assisted many grieving families and officiated at numerous funerals. He preached the gospel of Christ for 60 years; but perhaps his most powerful proclamation about Jesus was through his unselfish life of service to others.

Preston is survived by his wife, Loveda, of Hillsboro; two daughters, Kay Mickey, of Garland, Texas, and Beverly O'Dell, of Odessa, Texas; two brothers, Perry Cotham, of Grand Prairie, Texas, and Harry Cotham, of Memphis, Tennessee; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

* * * * *

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We have a great potential for growth in the Kittitas Valley. There are several smaller towns in the immediate area that have never been evangelized. Central Washington University is nestled in the Valley at the base of the Mount Stewart Range in Ellensburg. Just west, the Cascade Mountains divide us from the greater Seattle area. Folks from Seattle, old and young families alike, have come to think of Kittitas Valley as their home. They have purchased homes here, and commute two hours daily to their jobs in Seattle.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

B.J. Clarke

To hear some tell it, sound doctrine is really not all that important in the overall scheme of things. We ought not emphasize it very much. It is Jesus that matters and not doctrine. At least that is the impression many are leaving in their writings. But is this really in harmony with the scriptures?

Recently, I studied carefully Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. I was amazed at how much emphasis Paul gave to truth versus error. Consider the following evidence and decide for yourself whether or not sound doctrine really matters. Space limitations forbid comprehensive analysis. Open your Bible, read the passages listed and follow along.

1. **I Timothy 1:3,10**—If sound doctrine is not significant, then why did Paul exhort Timothy as he did?

2. **I Timothy 1:18-19**—Paul pondered sound doctrine in view of eternity and related his concerns to the destructive doctrines of Hymenaeus and Alexander, who through their doctrine shipwrecked the faith of others.

3. **I Timothy 2:7**—I speak the truth and lie not.

4. **I Timothy 3:1**—This is a true saying.

5. **I Timothy 3:15**—The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. Contrast this statement with those who ridicule those who love the truth by sarcastically calling them "*the truth squad*."

6. **I Timothy 4:1-6**—Paul speaks of the danger of doctrines of devils, speaking lies, the importance of believing and knowing the truth and continuing in good doctrine. This same apostle wrote of the possibility of believing a lie and being damned (II Thessalonians 2:9-10; Matthew 15:13-14).

7. **I Timothy 4:13**—Give attendance to doctrine!

8. **I Timothy 4:16**—Take heed to thyself and the doctrine for in doing so you will save both thyself and them that hear thee. Paul couples taking heed to doctrine with salvation. If that is not proof that sound doctrine is a matter of eternal consequence, how else could you prove it?

9. **I Timothy 6:1**—Paul warns those who would blaspheme the doctrine.

10. **I Timothy 6:3-5**—Paul speaks of those who consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord

Jesus Christ. He mentions doctrine and those who are destitute of the truth.

11. **I Timothy 6:21**—Some have erred concerning the faith.

12. **II Timothy 1:8**—Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.

13. **II Timothy 1:13**—Hold fast the form of sound words.

14. **II Timothy 2:15-18**—Paul mentions the word of truth and false teachers who concerning the truth have erred.

15. **II Timothy 3:7-8**—Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They do resist the truth.

16. **II Timothy 3:10**—You have known my doctrine.

17. **II Timothy 3:16**—All scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction.

18. **II Timothy 4:2-4**—Preach the word, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Some will not endure sound doctrine. Some will turn their ears away from the truth (*cf.*, Acts 7:51 ff).

19. **II Timothy 4:14-15**—Alexander did evil by withstanding apostolic doctrine.

20. **Titus 1:1**—Acknowledging truth which is after godliness.

21. **Titus 2:1**—Speak the things which befit sound doctrine!

22. **Titus 2:7-8**—In doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, and sound speech.

23. **Titus 2:15**—Speak, rebuke, exhort with all authority.

24. **Titus 3:9-10**—How to deal with a heretic.

If a study of these verses has not convinced you of the importance of sound doctrine, then I honestly do not know what could. Let us unashamedly, uncompromisingly, and everlastingly preach sound doctrine.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

JUBILEE 1998

THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

Gary L. Grizzell

Jesus teaches that if the spiritually blind lead the biblically ignorant, both shall fall into the ditch of apostasy (Matthew 15:13-14). A fact that many religious people ignore is that followers of false teachers are equally accountable to God (II John 10-11). If you recently attended Jubilee as an endorser and supporter of the false teachers on that program, you are a partaker of their evil deeds. Consider the following destructive teachings taught at "Jubilee" during their 1998 convention. As you read, ask yourself if you agree with the following doctrines.

During this year's "Jubilee," **Joe Beam** ridiculed certain sound brethren because they would not baptize an individual who had refused to repent of living in an adulterous marriage relationship. (To repent means to cease the sinful relationship. One is authorized to be baptized only after he repents. Acts 2:38; Matthew 19:9; 14:4; Colossians 3:5-7).

Mike Cope persuaded people in his audience to lay hands on one another as he read his prepared prayer requesting God to grant them "power" (among other things). Although he had denied he was requesting miraculous abilities at one point, his request for "power" upon those receiving the laying on of hands implied a contradiction.

Jeff Walling, emphatically and explicitly cried out that water baptism by immersion is NOT A WORK, not something you DO. He stated,

Let's clear up the air. It is not a work. Everything about baptism is submission. Everything about baptism is, you do it to me. It is a verb even in itself.

Somebody did not run out and say, I went and baptized! ... I was baptized. All of you English majors know, that's one of those words that is not an active verb but is a passive verb. It is the difference between John ran and John was run over. Those are two very different things. Baptism is

not something you go and do, it is something, I was baptized, it happens to you. And God did it that way, I'm convinced, so none of us would think, that salvation is a from-me-to-him thing. No, salvation is a from-God-to-me thing. A righteousness from God, Paul says, has been revealed, not a righteousness from man. (Clapping). Baptism is a moment and a way of saying, everything about my salvation belongs to God. All the credit goes north. All the glory goes up. I sometimes tell kids, baptism, and becoming a Christian, salvation, is not a Chuck-E-Cheese kind of thing.

THE WORD OF GOD VERSUS JEFF WALLING

Baptism IS a work. Walling lied when he said, "It is not a work." We are justified by works and not by faith only (James 2:24). Baptism saves (I Peter 3:21). Therefore, baptism is a work. It is a work of faithful obedience, not of merit, but it is still a work (Ephesians 2:8-9). When one is baptized he is to do it with sincerity and with understanding of its purpose (remission of sins, Acts 2:38) or it becomes an unscriptural work.

Baptism is something you go and do. When Paul arose he was going (Acts 22:16). When the Eunuch stepped down from his chariot and walked down into the water, he was going (Acts 8:38). When Paul, a penitent believer, asked the Lord what he would have him to "do," Jesus told him to "go" and it would be told to him what he must "do" (Acts 9:6). Jeff Walling says, "Baptism isn't something you go and do." Jesus Christ says, "**Go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do.**" When one exercises intellectual understanding in his thought processes while being immersed this is doing something. The people on Pentecost were able (and expected by Peter) to exercise the eyes of their understanding (which is work, doing something) as to the reason they were being immersed.

(Continued on Page 5)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXIX, No. 7

July/1998

Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*
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Associate Editorial...

GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

One preacher declared that he would preach the gospel anywhere. This statement may sound good, but upon examination it will not hold water. Does the New Testament authorize (Colossians 3:17) faithful preachers to speak on a program:

1. that is sponsored by those who are out of fellowship with God;
2. whose speakers are out of fellowship with God;
3. when you know that your name will be listed right along aside such speakers with no distinction made between the faithful and the unfaithful;
4. with no mention made that you are any different in belief and practice than the apostate speakers;
5. with public advertising that makes all participants appear to be in fellowship with one another?

I know that under certain circumstances and situations a gospel preacher is authorized by the New Testament to be among sinners (alien and apostate). How else could he teach them the truth? Hence, under given circumstances a gospel preacher could and should preach in denominational churches as well as apostate one's. *However, he has no authority to do such if he cannot do it in a way that will make it clear to all that he is not in fellowship with those in error. Moreover, he has an obligation to rebuke their error and teach the truth.*

In the 1998 May issue of this paper we revealed that **Hardeman Nichols** and **Mack Lyon** appeared on a lectures series with **Steve Flatt**. There is nothing in the advertisement of the lectures that indicates that there is any difference in Nichols, Lyon, or Flatt regarding doctrinal matters. Would Nichols and Lyon appear on the same lecture series with one of the following men in the place of Flatt: **Rubel Shelly**, **Jeff Walling**, **Mike Cope**, **Rick Atchley** or **Joe Beam**? Steve Flatt is in fellowship with all five of the preceding false teachers. Is it scriptural to appear with them as long as you do it one at a time, but wrong if you appear with them all at one time? The truth of the matter is that there is no difference in appearing with one of them and appearing on the *Nashville Jubilee* or any other apostate party with all of them.

Are preachers in fellowship with those with whom they associate *only* if they "agree together and endorse one another?" A Christian is not to invite a false teacher into his house or bid him God speed (II John 9-11). That being the case, how may gospel preachers participate on lectures with one or more false teachers in such a way that all appear to be in fellowship with

each other? No good comes from this kind of association. Jesus never appeared with the wicked of his day in a way that caused anyone to think that he was in fellowship with them or in any way condoned their sinful

conduct or doctrine. Let us emulate him. That is the way that is right and cannot be wrong (I Thessalonians 5:21).

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

"BIG BUBBA" SQUALLS AND BAWLS WITH THE PROMISE KEEPERS

J.E. Choate

What is wrong with the *Promise Keepers* movement? Individuals who accept the ethical and moral virtues of evangelical Christianity generally endorse the Promise Keepers. While some of my brethren gush over the Promise Keepers, I have felt in my bones there is something askew with the Promise Keepers. My reasons follow:

Who are the Promise Keepers? They are men guilty of abusing their wives and families. They are just a sorry bunch of men who must have a national forum to make a public display of familial abuses. They wallow in pools of self pity, and they would exorcise the demons from their guilt ridden consciences. Raw language? So intended.

Every last man among them should have been home embracing his family in his bosom around the family hearthstone. Then and only then in the privacy of their homes should they confess their guilt for the suffering caused. Anything less would be a portrayal of moral cowardice.

Scriptures teach the fundamental Christian principles of what must be done when sins are committed against the innocent members in the church (Matthew 18:15-17). The abusive husband seeks the forgiveness of his wife and children in the privacy of their home without the prying eyes of outsiders.

There is no need for one to go to Atlanta or Washington to hide with a great host of bawling and squalling miserable men who cannot live with themselves. Has his family not suffered enough without the glare of TV cameras focusing on their problem of family abuse? Why must the Promise Keepers have their public Freudian couches to unload their guilty souls?

If the family's shame becomes known to the church and the community, then let the offending husband muster the moral courage to stand before the church; and if need be, mount the scaffold of public opinion to make his confessions that he may again join that noble fraternity of men who love and respect their families.

The moral coward lacks the personal courage to do this. He must hide himself in the baggage of a Promise Keepers rally. Here he would with his blubbing "bubbas" escape the glut of their shame by crying, talking, and hugging each other. They want to be real men. This is what **Rick Atchley** is straining to say in a recent issue of *Wineskins*.

WINESKINS PROMISE KEEPERS ISSUE

The recent publication of *Wineskins* is not called the Promise Keepers [Fathers] issue, but is. And the articles are as harmless as a warmed over bowl of pabulum with the exception of the lead article written by **Rubel Shelly**. Now why go to the trouble to tell about the latest escapades of Dr. Shelly? His is a name that we have grown weary of hearing. Had he merely made a personal pitch for the Promise Keepers, there would have been no interest at all in the article.

Our sluggish brethren are beginning to realize that what they considered to be a creative intellectual genius is really a sophist showman who can say something new and different on any subject.

Rubel Shelly's lead article in the last issue in *Wineskins* sets up a defense for the Promise Keepers. We propose to look inside the article to learn what he has in mind. He cannot make a speech without ridiculing or poking fun at churches of Christ. He would fasten the blame on the churches of Christ for contributing to the spousal abuse of their wives and children. [Remember the **Gayle Napier Jubilee** story.] Dr. Shelly has some harsh words for church of Christ preachers who do not agree with him.

Dr. Shelly has only good things to say about the Promise Keepers, and nothing good to say about churches of Christ which nurtured him from birth, put food on his table, and paid for his Vanderbilt doctorate. Speak about biting the hand! Dr. Shelly has an insufferable ego. There is no tailor on the globe with a tape long enough to measure its girth.

In his *Wineskins* article, "Encouraging Men To Be Godly Men," Shelly extols the Promise Keepers to the high heavens. But he thinks there is something humorous about the *National Organization for Women*. He thinks that he may be missing something because they criticize the all-male-membership of the Promise Keepers. Of course, not being a woman, Rubel is about par on this one, and he is missing something.

It has not been all that long ago that **Howard Norton** praised the Promise Keepers in the *Christian Chronicle*. It is an interesting revelation that leading women on the na-

tional scene express their contempt and scorn for the Promise Keepers national spectacular. The mothers, wives, and daughters have been too long the keepers of the family flame on the hearthstone. They await the return of their guilt-ridden husbands who have been away reciting their lurid stories of spousal and family abuse with low expectations of better times to come.

Imagine a million women abused by their male counterparts marching on Washington to tell their horror stories of personal abuse while their husbands sit back home and see themselves portrayed as “wife beaters.” There would be the white heat of anger curling from the stories as the women told their side of the familial outrages. Do not expect ever to see this because the wives and mothers of America have better judgment and a moral decency lacking in the Promise Keepers.

And Dr. Shelly adds: “Some of the strongest and most positive encouragement coming my way is from Promise Keepers.” And so on *ad nauseam*. I choose to identify with those critics, and especially the women, who find the Promise Keepers agendas disgusting.

Mike Cope has somewhat to say in his article, titled, “Our Struggle For Purity.” In the article, he tells about a Promise Keepers rally he attended and heard the results of a PK survey. And he warns about the pitfall out there waiting to snare real men. Do real men attend the PK meetings?

Ron Rose in his article, “I Was Standing In The Gap,” tells us of the humble and overpowering experience of standing in the Washington Mall during an emotion-packed Promise Keepers meeting. Who can give one sound reason why thousands of negligent and abusive men must come together to talk about the abuse of their families? After the catharsis of frenzied excitement and emotions is spent, what remains?

And by all means, read the article written by the “grand daddy,” **Lynn Anderson**, of the postmodern “change agents.” His article is a good sermon on the shame suffered by King David because he had tragically failed as a father. If he had preached such sermons over his lifetime, no doubt his brethren would see him today as something other than a chief trouble maker.

[When the last word of Restoration history has been written by church of Christ historians in this century, Lynn Anderson will be remembered as being one of the persons most responsible for the beginning of the division of the churches of Christ, and the beginning of a Church of Christ denomination. The setting was the September 10, 1973 *Herald of Truth* meeting in Memphis, Tennessee.]

And we must not miss the “After Glow” of **Phillip Morrison** whose early heroes were the macho men in his family going off to war, and the loud, bombastic, never-in-doubt preacher-orators. Read the roster of Jubilee speakers, and the *Wineskins* table of contents for his present day heroes. [I prefer his first heroes because they believed in something.]

And a question for **Alton Howard**: just what do you have in mind and what are you accomplishing and hope to

accomplish by keeping *Wineskins* going and going and going? You were at Jubilee last summer and you know all about the **Lucado** fiasco. *Mission* and *Image* folded, and just as surely as God made little apples, *Wineskins* is a goner sooner or later.

A FOOTNOTE

Several months ago, I wrote a series of article on the Willow Creek Community Church as the adoptive model of “church growth” paradigms favored by churches in and around Nashville. This unsolicited letter came to me in the mail:

Dear Brother Choate,

In your article on the churches in Nashville and the church at Willow Creek, I agree that we are in trouble. I am a student at Lipscomb and know that we have drifted toward liberalism. I agree with what you said. I know that Mr. Varnado has been a follower of Rubel Shelly since back in the days when he was an assistant minister at Woodmont Hills. He is now doing a lot of the teaching and preaching at the Community Church too as well as leading student missions. He told the chapel that he took a group to the Promise Keepers meetings the last two years. He may be popular to some but he is not to others. Thank you for your exposure.

I choose to emphasize with the wives, mothers, and daughter who are “sick unto death” of the low estate and suffering to which their fathers, husbands, and sons have put them. To put it bluntly the Promise Keepers make me sick too. And the *Wineskins* editors and staff writers just go wild over the Promise Keepers!

It is not at issue here to discount the good which comes from Promise Keepers meetings or the good that anybody does. The brothers and sisters in the local churches of Christ can best handle and manage their own problems of whatever kind, and especially without the Promise Keepers, or any other para-church ministry.

POSTSCRIPT

There are two Lipscomb University advertisements in the current issue of *Wineskins*. Pepperdine et. al do not have a single one. The Lipscomb CEO says he has made a solemn covenant with the founders and patrons of Lipscomb University to honor the charter and traditions of Lipscomb University. But here he is still hooked up a with *Wineskins*, *Jubilee*, Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, et. al with his obvious full endorsement.

—3714 1/2 Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215



JUBILEE 1998

(Continued from Page 1)

This mental exercising or thinking was done during the process of their immersions. Walling says you cannot "do" anything in baptism but that God does it all. Strange doctrine indeed.

Everything about one's salvation does not belong to God. Walling tells us that "everything" about one's salvation belongs to God. This is the salvation by grace only doctrine! His statement makes an irrational idiot out of the inspired apostle Peter when he told men on Pentecost to "save yourselves" (Acts 2:40). Walling creates a straw-man argument. Peter understood (and we understand) it was by grace that men were given God's instructions, could know God's requirements and be offered the opportunity to obey! God's part is 100 % grace, man's part is a 100% obedient faith (Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:8). When one claims to be a Christian yet wildly argues Calvinism, we need not wonder why the hungry wolf stays among the sheep (Matthew 7:15; John 10:12).

Jubilee false teachers are as peas in a pod. Joe Beam told his class, "I really appreciated Jeff's teaching so clearly on baptism last night. I thought it was a wonderful thing ... last night he made it crystal clear." When faithful brethren expose Walling's statements he dare not claim he was misunderstood when his cohort has stated "he made it crystal clear."

Rick Atchley enlightened us regarding the word "providence." He declared that it is not in the Bible (guess he had not read Acts 24:2, KJV). He said that when an older preacher took him to task for saying in a sermon, "Let's ask God to do miracles among us today," it was only a matter of semantics, that he should have used a different expression. He then informed his fellow Jubilee audience that in prayer, "The Spirit will bring something to mind if you are sincere in your asking." Evidently Atchley has not read or does not believe I Corinthians 13:8-10. The passages teaches that the direct operation of the Holy Spirit was available only prior to the divine production of the completed, written New Testament. Atchley told his audience to ask God to: "put on your heart... some plans"—to pray for "a dream"—"a vision"—and to "claim" information

coming from the father through their prayer. Does Colossians 3:17 mean anything to this man?

Have you supported "Jubilee"? Those of us who sincerely oppose "Jubilee" do so because of the false teaching done therein, not because we oppose the use of scriptural, modern-day expediencies. If you attended "Jubilee 1998" as an endorser of these teachers, you may now realize you were caught up in an unscriptural movement for which you are now sorry. Will you repent? Will you courageously choose to disassociate yourself from those whose design has been/is to change the Lord's church into a man-made denomination? Be assured, that your soul's salvation depends on your decision. (Acts 8:22; James 2:10; II John 9-11; Ephesians 5:11).

1999 JUBILEE PLANS

Plans to have "Jubilee 1999" with Lynn Anderson as the keynote speaker have been announced. The theme is "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High!" Lynn Anderson, a known false teacher, has a personal track record for ridiculing faithful brethren who respect the authority of Christ. Choosing Anderson as keynote speaker is not only diametrically opposed to the announced theme, but also tells us that "Jubilee" will continue to be doctrinally corrupt, compromising and denominationalistic.

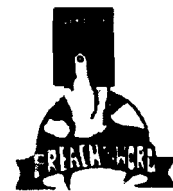
Let us unashamedly be the church Jesus established, the pillar and ground of the truth, refusing to loose where God has not loosed or bind where God has not bound (Matthew 16:18; I Timothy 3:15; Acts 2:47; I Peter 4:11). May we choose to be supporters of all of God's truth so that God will be pleased and souls may be prepared for eternity with him.

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LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY SUMMER SERIES FEATURES FALSE TEACHER

Toney L. Smith

I received a brochure advertising the 1998 DLU Summer Series and I could not help but be disheartened when I saw the names of some of their speakers. For example, one of these was **Joe Beam** about whom much has been written concerning his apostasy. Generally these articles state that Beam is teaching false doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit's work in today's world. Also, I have recently listened to a series of lessons presented by Beam at the 1996 Nashville Jubilee. He clearly is one of the "change agents" who is seeking to move the church of Christ away from its firm foundation. He strongly denies that he is Pentecostal, but his position clearly overrides his denial.

Notice some of his positions concerning the Holy Spirit. He said, "Some people will never be free of sinful addictions in their lives without God's intervention." Beam stated that the Holy Spirit works in three avenues: through the Word, through spiritual wisdom, and in what he called wakening or promptings. It is in this latter category that his

Pentecostalism is exposed. Notice these examples that were given:

- In counseling a young couple, Beam stated he asked God to let him know when either lied. After some time in the counseling session, he stopped the young man and told him that God had just told him that he had lied!

- On another occasion, Beam claimed that the Spirit led him to a home where he surmised that the man was having an affair, without any evidence to sustain the allegation.

- He said a prisoner's soul was saved because God led him to a trashcan where someone had discarded some Bible material.

- He alleged a Texas preacher was able to keep a man from committing murder because God sent him to stop the would-be killer.

- Once he asked God to speak to him. He turned on the radio and pushed buttons until a woman came on singing a song that related directly to him.

- He also stated that sometimes he listens to his speeches and hears himself saying things that he never knew before.

- He saw a denominational program on television concerning a man who had not been able to speak above a whisper for ten years and God miraculously restored his voice. He then affirmed that God cannot be put in a box and that his fellowship extends beyond the church of Christ.

It is difficult to comprehend how a "Christian University" could promote and endorse such. It is clear that the administrators of this school no longer desire to make any real distinction between truth and error. We are to "mark and avoid" false teachers and those who promote such (Romans 16:17).

—517 Gaylord Road
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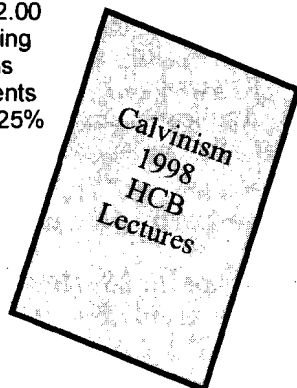
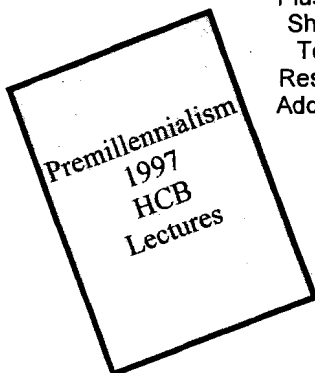
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BEAM, BOGARD AND THE COMFORTER

Jerry C. Brewer

God didn't leave the earth in the first century God came to the earth in the first century in the form of the Holy Spirit. So that Jesus, when he was here incarnate in the flesh, when he was leaving us, said, 'I'm gonna give you a Comforter, a buddy, a pal.' And I don't use those words sacrilegiously at all. He meant somebody who would stand with you through it all, to be your friend, to be there to strengthen you in the inner person when you need strengthening and that would be the Holy Spirit of God and he is here for us (Joe Beam, "The Holy Spirit," Tape 3, Nashville Jubilee, 1996).

Joe Beam's Pentecostal doctrine, which he slobbered forth at last year's Nashville Jubilee, squares nicely with the Baptist doctrine espoused by Ben M. Bogard in his debate with N.B. Hardeman in 1938. But there is a major difference between Beam and Bogard. The latter had enough respect for Deity to refrain from calling the Holy Spirit a "buddy" or a "pal."

Did you ever stop to think or consider that Jesus said the Holy Spirit would come to take his place? Have you not read where Jesus said, 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever?' (John 14:14-17)...What I am affirming is that the Holy Spirit is personally present, is really present, in the conviction and conversion of the sinner as Jesus was present when he dealt with men and women while he was here in body, during his personal ministry (Ben M. Bogard, First Affirmative Speech, "The Work of the Holy Spirit," Hardeman-Bogard Debate, Gospel Advocate Co., 1938, p.9).

While Bogard affirmed the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners, Beam affirms the Spirit's direct influence in strengthening the Christian. Beam and Bogard both misused Christ's statement regarding the Comforter, in order to sustain their errors.

Jesus' selection of the word Comforter indicated a unique relationship between the Holy Spirit and the apostles — a relationship, which only the Spirit and the Apostles sustained. Consider the context of Jesus' final discourse in John 14-16. He was speaking to the apostles. What he said of the Comforter related *only* to the apostles and the special relationship he would sustain to them. Beam, Bogard and others with Calvinistic tendencies have taken Jesus' promise to the apostles out of context and twisted it to suit their own theological speculations.

From the Greek *parakletos*, the word Comforter indicated a Divine presence in the apostles that would console, intercede and be an advocate for them. The meaning of the word is inseparably connected with inspiration in the apostles of the first century and cannot in any way refer to a

function of the Holy Spirit in our lives today. This is clearly indicated by the context in which Jesus spoke of the Comforter. (John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-13).

Jesus had been the apostles' guide, intercessor, advocate and teacher while he was with them. Saying he would soon go away, he promised one who would do for them in his absence what he had done in person. That was the Holy Spirit who is styled the Comforter because of his special relationship with the apostles.

Focusing on the work of the Holy Spirit in the apostles' lives, Jesus said, "**whom the world cannot receive**" (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit as Comforter was promised only to the apostles for the revelation of God's plan of redemption. His work of revelation was to be accomplished only through them and his function in them is described in John 14:26 and 16:13.

Here is stated the two-fold office of the Holy Spirit Comforter in the apostles; first, the reminding office of the Holy Spirit in them: 'bring all things to your remembrance'; and second, the revealing office of the Holy Spirit in them: 'he shall teach you all things' and 'he will guide you into all truth.' It was therefore reserved for the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of inspiration, to reveal to the apostles the things that the Lord had not himself told them, and thus complete the gospel plan of redemption. (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *The Mission and Medium of The Holy Spirit*, Foy E. Wallace, Jr. Publications, 1967, p.96).

One who claims that the Holy Spirit as Comforter functions in the lives of Christians today, makes a false claim. The Holy Spirit was not a Comforter to all Christians even in the first century. That function in the apostles was inspiration and was demonstrated in the "**signs of an apostle**" (II Corinthians 12:12). Moreover, Jesus did not denigrate the great work of revealing the scheme of redemption, nor the Holy Spirit himself by referring to him as a "buddy" or a "pal" to the apostles.

Joe Beam is a false teacher. He is convicted of such out of his own mouth. Beam has no respect for the word of God and the Holy Spirit who revealed it. He has misused and misapplied Jesus' teachings regarding the Comforter and claims something he cannot substantiate. If the Comforter functions in Beam as he did in the apostles, then Joe Beam knows everything the apostles knew and is obligated to demonstrate his inspiration by signs and wonders. "As goes the proposition, so must be the demonstration" (Mark 16:7-20; II Corinthians 12:12)!

—7th and Main
Arapaho, Oklahoma

CHRIST'S WITNESSES

Joe E. Galloway

The apostles were the witnesses of Christ mentioned throughout the New Testament. Man, not understanding their unique work, misapplies the term "witness," using it as a designation of Christians and their work today.

Peter, speaking of himself and the eleven, said, "**we all are witnesses**" (Acts 2:32). As a witness he testified (v.40). He repeated in Acts 3:15; 5:32 and 10:39 that "**We are his witnesses.**" Peter and John are said to have "**testified and preached the word**" at Samaria (Acts 8:25). Those "**which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem**" (the apostles) "**are his witnesses unto the people**" according to Acts 13:31. Both Peter and John later wrote that they were witnesses of Christ (I Peter 5:1 and I John 1:2).

WHY WERE THE APOSTLES CALLED WITNESSES?

A witness is one who has personal "firsthand" knowledge of something. The apostles had seen and heard Jesus

while he did his work and teaching following his resurrection. Jesus told them, "**ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning**" (John 15:27). The one chosen to take Judas' place had to have been with him and "**a witness with us of his resurrection**" (Acts 1:21-22). Later, Peter spoke of the apostles being, "**witnesses of all the things which he did.**" They said that following Christ's resurrection. God "**shewed him...unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.**" (Acts 10:39-41).

Miraculous power accompanied Christ's witnesses. When Jesus told the apostles "**ye are witnesses of these things,**" he followed this statement with the requirement that they wait in Jerusalem to be endued with power from God (Luke 24:48-49). This connection of miraculous power with their being witnesses is further emphasized in Acts 1:8: "**ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me.**" Acts 4:33 says, "**with great power gave the apostles witness.**" Acts 14:3 connects testimony with signs and wonders. Concerning the apostles, Hebrews 2:4 says: "**God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.**"

Paul, was/is also a witness. He "**was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles**" (II Corinthians 11:5), even though he was "**born out of due time**" (I Corinthians 15:8). So, God had chosen him to "**see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard**" (Acts 22:14-15; also see 26:16). Consequently, Paul is often said to have testified, or witnessed, concerning Christ (Acts 18:5; 20:21, 24; 23:11; 26:22; 28:23; I Corinthians 15:15).

NO MORE WITNESSES

At the close of the apostolic age there were none left who had seen Jesus. Hence, witnessing (or testifying) for Christ was no longer possible. Also, the miraculous power accompanying their witnessing had ceased. Such was not needed any longer. Their testimony had been written and miraculously confirmed by the power of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

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WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING

Tom Moore

Probably the easiest time for us to be faithful is when we are surrounded by those of **"like precious faith"** (II Peter 1:1). When we attend the assembly to worship God, it is easier to be faithful because others around us are faithful. It is easier to do that which everyone around you is doing. The true test of the faithful Christian is: "Are you faithful when no one is looking?" That is to say, "Are we faithful when our Christian peers are not looking?"

PUT TO THE TEST

A true test of a Christian's dedication is the desire to be faithful when no one else around him is. Do you remember the Old Testament account of Joseph being sold into Egyptian bondage? Joseph found grace in the eyes of Potipher. He put Joseph in charge of his whole house (Gen. 39:4). In the process of time, Potipher's wife lusted after Joseph (Gen. 39:7). She constantly sought to seduce Joseph. However, notice how Joseph reacted to her propositions. He asked, **"How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"** (Genesis 39:9). Joseph could have consented to the proposition and no one would have known. But Joseph was dedicated to God and was going to be faithful even when no one was looking.

Another fine example of faithfulness is seen in the life of Daniel. Daniel, as a young man, was taken into Babylonian captivity. He, among others, was selected to be servants in the king's palace and was offered provisions from the king's meat and wine. But consider seriously Daniel's reaction, **"Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank"** (Daniel 1:8). The food that they were served, in some way, was unclean according to the Law of Moses. Daniel, therefore, refused to eat that which would defile his body. Consider this, Daniel was in a strange place, around strange people, and yet, he still had the courage and dedication to be faithful to the Lord. Daniel was young and could have easily given in, for there was no one looking. Daniel did not care who was or was not looking; he was going to be faithful to his God.

WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Today, we are all going to be confronted with situations similar to that of Joseph's and Daniel's. We are going to have to make a choice. Are we going to be faithful even when no one is looking? When we go on vacation will we take the time to worship God on Sunday: even though no one is looking? Do we ever find ourselves in a questionable place—simply because no one is looking? Do we ever find ourselves doing things we ought not merely because no one is looking? Do you have secret sinful habits in which you engage only when no one is looking? How do you act and talk, when you are not around your faithful brethren?

Consider these sobering words of Paul: **"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"** (Colossians 3:17). Also, **"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of man by Jesus Christ according to my gospel"** (Romans 2:16).

Be aware of this, there is one that is always looking, and is always aware of our actions and thoughts—the almighty God. The Lord declares, **"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes,"** (Jeremiah 16:17). **"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD"** (Jeremiah 23:24).

Are you being faithful when no one is looking?

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The Use of the Garden City Church of Christ Building by Religious Groups Such as Denominations, Cults, and Sects

Dan Goddard

From time to time we receive phone calls from various denominations, cults and sects wanting to use the Garden City Church of Christ building so that they may hold their religious services.

Listed below are a few of the reasons why we do not allow the Garden City Church of Christ building to be used in such a way.

1. We would be bidding God speed to these evil workers **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).**

2. We would be violating the principle of Galatians 2:5. **"To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."**

3. We would be violating Titus 2:1. **"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."**

4. We would be violating Romans 14:16. **"Let not then your good be evil spoken of."**

5. We would be violating Philippians 4:8.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever

things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

6. We would be violating II Corinthians 6:14. **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"**

7. We would allow, encourage and endorse the group or at least, not be willing to condemn such a group as false.

8. We would be leaving the impression that we are endorsing the group, thus, we would loose our distinctiveness as the New Testament church. What will others think as they see this? For some that just does not matter, for with them one church is as good as another.

9. We are not in the church rental business—particularly to a group that denies New Testament Christianity.

10. We would be branding ourselves as endorsing, or at least being associated with, a cult, and the doctrine of said group.

11. We at Garden City believe the church property belongs to God not the brethren. We would be allowing God's property to be used to promote and endorse that which God has not ordained, and which, in fact fights against and seeks to destroy the precious bride of Christ. It is a blatant willful sin based on all the above. **HOW CAN GOD BE PLEASED?**

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who shall be able to teach others also—II Timothy 2:2

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*Directed by Bob Berard; a work of the Spring Church of Christ
overseers: Kenneth D. Cohn & Buddy Roth

“TURN NOT TO THE RIGHT HAND NOR TO THE LEFT.”

Jodie Boren

For 120 years while Noah was preparing the ark, he preached God's righteousness to the wicked people of that day. The Bible does not reveal how they responded, but since none were saved except Noah and his immediate family, we can safely conclude—human nature being as it is—that they mocked Noah's preaching. No one was going to tell them what to do!

Many years later we find the same attitude manifested by the children of Israel as **“every man did that which was right in his own eyes”** (Judges 21:25).

Coming on down to Jeremiah's day, we again find this arrogant and self-righteous attitude prevailing. In Jeremiah 6:16, 17 as they were admonished to seek the old paths of God, the people replied, **“We will not walk therein. . . we will not hearken.”**

This attitude was true in Christ's day (John 5:39,40; Matthew 23:37) and it is true in our day. It needs to be understood, however, that all refusals to walk as God has commanded, do not come in the form of an outright verbal rejection. The repudiating of God's word often comes in the preaching of a perverted gospel (Galatians 1:6,7) by the adding to and the taking away from God's commandments. Jesus warned of such teachers in Matthew 7:15 that they would come **“in sheep's clothing”** but were actually ravening wolves. Paul echoed this same thought in Acts 20:29 when he wrote, **“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.”** In the very next verse he adds that from **“your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.”**

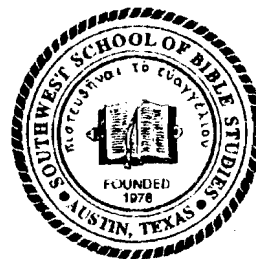
So, from the pulpits of the Lord's church, the trumpets are being sounded that are giving uncertain sounds. The commandments of God are being changed to satisfy the whims of man. Entertainment with choirs, solos, drama presentations, and such like are replacing the “spirit and truth” of our worship services. Humorous anecdotes and social events in the preaching are replacing sound doctrine. In so doing, are they not guilty of **“offering strange fire”** as was Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10:1, 2? In essence they are telling God, “we'll walk as we please regardless of what you say.” Notice carefully, Deuteronomy 5:29-33. Herein God tells Moses to teach the people his commandments. He puts it in terms that cannot possibly be misunderstood. He told them, **“ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.”** When Moses died and Joshua succeeded him, God gave him the same instructions in Joshua 1:7. He declared, **“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left.”** The effrontery of man to change God's word

today is not only difficult to comprehend but it is appalling! “These things ought not so to be.” How is it possible for the creature to know better than the creator as to what is best?

When we cannot give a “thus saith the Lord” for all we teach and practice in Jesus' name, then what we are doing is perverting his gospel. To do this is to reject his authority and to face his wrath in the day of judgement (John 12:48; Matthew 7:24-27).

Once again, in Proverbs 4:26, 27 we are told, **“Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. TURN NOT TO THE RIGHT HAND NOR TO THE LEFT.”**

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"EXCEPTIONISM"

James Nash

"Exceptionism" is one of the most dangerous false doctrines in the Lord's church today. Perhaps it is the most destructive doctrine with which it has ever had to deal. What is this bane to the bride of Christ? What do I mean by "exceptionism"? I would define it by the following sentence that characterizes certain persons in and out of the church. "Surely I am the exception to the rule." The church is full of, and the pews are packed with, those who think that they are excepted from doing God's will. No matter how many sermons are preached or how many Bible classes are taught emphasizing that God is no respecter of persons, many continue to believe that surely God will make an exception for "them."

"Exceptionism" says that whether or not I am baptized for the remission of sins to be added to the Lord's church does not really matter (After all, I am a good person.). Whether or not I put forth every effort to attend every service of the church does not really matter (Sometimes I get tired or busy.). Whether or not I live my life in accordance with God's word does not really matter (Does he really expect us to live like that?). Whether or not I ever bother to take the gospel to anyone else does not really matter (You know some are offended by it.). Surely, I will be the exception (me and my denominational friends and relatives).

"Exceptionism" presupposes that God not only can, but will deny his own nature and teachings in order to save "me" (and others whom I want to go to heaven with me). The problem with this theory is that it is based in selfish arrogance and biblical ignorance. It has no hint of a shadow, of a sliver, of a shade, of a foundation in God's holy word.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "if we deny him, he will also deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Timothy 2:12-13). We deny him when we disobey his will (Titus 1:16). However, God cannot deny himself in order to save those who disobey him. God cannot make us his "exception." God is just, and this part of his nature will not allow him to be a respecter of persons (Deuteronomy 32:4, Acts 10:34).

After this life has ended we must personally answer to God for the way we lived on earth (Romans 14:12; John 12:48). Those who expect to be God's little exceptions will be sorely and eternally mistaken.

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Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (Acts 10:34,35).

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HOW LONG MUST ONE KEEP TAX RECORDS?

Kenneth D. Cohn, CPA

The Internal Revenue Code provides many simple and straightforward deadlines such as the April 15 filing deadline or estimated tax payment deadlines. When it comes to tax records and how long one should keep them, the answer is neither simple nor straightforward. It is of great interest since the "burden of proof" is on the taxpayer except in cases of fraud.

As a minimum, tax records that support an item of income or deduction should be kept until the expiration of the time period in which the IRS can question a return (the so-called "statute of limitations"). Typically, the statute of limitations expires three years after the later of the normal filing deadline or the actual filing date. For example, the statute of limitations for individual returns filed on or before April 15, 1998 is April 15, 2001.

Statute of limitation periods range from the previously mentioned three year period to no limitation period for fraudulent returns or failure to file. The following is a useful guide in navigating the record retention labyrinth.

- Retain documents verifying the basis of properties (such as real estate or stocks) until the expiration of the three-year statute of limitations of the return reporting the gain or loss from sale of the property.
- Keep records of tax returns indefinitely. The taxpayer must be able to prove he or she filed a return.
- Keep records supporting a claim for a refund or credit based on bad debts or losses on worthless securities for at least seven years.
- Because a net operating loss (NOL) can be carried back three years and carried forward 15 years, keep all records supporting the NOLs and the returns to which the NOLs may be carried back or forward *plus* three years.
- The statute of limitations is extended to six years if the IRS finds income on a return is understated by more than 25 percent.
- There is no statute of limitations where a fraudulent return or no return has been filed. In such cases the IRS may assess taxes and penalties at any time.
- And, there is the rare occasion of new tax legislation providing a retroactive benefit. An amended return to claim the benefit may be filed only if the taxpayer has retained the appropriate records.

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

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Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

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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, Evangelist. (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, Evangelist, 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 Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—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, Evangelist.

—Michigan—

Garden City—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m.

—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, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist.

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Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 363-3330 or Steve Ellis, Evangelist, (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, Evangelist, tel. (615) 758-7406.

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Cheyenne—High Plains Church of Christ, 4901 Ridge Rd., Cheyenne, WY 82009. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m.,

NOTES AND QUOTES...

Donald Thornton, Section M, Fourth Street, Number 31, Fairview Park, Yuen Long, N.T., Hong Kong, SAR, China: "There were nine baptisms in January and February. They were local students.

"The first was a man, which is unusual locally for most of the time it is a female that responds.

"The last baptism was a young 18-year-old Chinese girl, **May Leung**. May's father and mother did not want her to be a Christian.

"One of the Chinese girls (**Silvia**) baptized in November was stopped by her mother from worshipping with us. Her mother went so far as to spread the rumor among her friends and some of our students that Sylvia had gotten a serious skin disease while attending the worship. The disease was from Christians, she said.

"We worry about May and others like her, that have been so good to study the Bible. We studied with May for about six months. She has taken over my daughter's Sunday school class for children.

"My daughter, **Ivey**, and my oldest son **Donnie** have gone to America to Oklahoma Christian University.

"**Carol**, the other Chinese girl, has a good mother who does not discourage her daughter from being a Christian. The mother noticed that the daughter has been much happier with a very good attitude since she became a Christian. Her mother is not a Christian; she is a Buddhist. We are thankful that her mother supports her to be a Christian.

"We have four Chinese men who could obey any time and at least two Chinese women who might do so.

"**Philip** is one Chinese man we have studied with for more than five years. His wife is a Christian but she doesn't come to worship so often lately because she has started a business and puts her heart, it seems, too much into the business. But Philip is concerned and said when he returned from his visit to Canada that he wants to be with us; so we hope he will become a Christian.

"We have many students here in Hong Kong. The students who are Roman Catholics are easier to reach. They know there is one church. They are impressed that the New Testament teaches that all Christians are priests. They can see that idolatry is not good from what they see in Hong Kong.

"We have many Bible students taking lessons by mail. This takes almost all our time during the week answering questions, grading, and recording the information, then sending the lessons and new lessons back.

"Many Bible correspondence course students ask about baptism. We continue to tell them that they can find brethren where they are, and if not, we have lessons they can study about what they can do to be saved and start the church. They want to know how to find the church they read about in the New

Testament. They want to know how to be right.

"From hundreds upon hundreds of students, there have been many questions about subjects like miracles. From these students they have many questions about the Sabbath...the God-head...about Christmas...about when Jesus was born...about what Adam's skin color was...about where Cain got his wife...about grace and law...about spiritual gifts in the Bible.

"It is difficult, it seems, for people to understand what a miracle is. Some who want baptism are still confused about baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit baptism.

"Many Chinese—and a good number of Filipinos—once they try to have a business seem to forget about being a Christian. About ten Chinese and many from the Philippines have put their business as being more important than being a Christian.

"We had very good attendance for January and two weeks of February. An average of 60 people attended each worship. The room was almost full. Then the last two weeks so many people have been sick with colds and flu the attendance dropped to 40. My family has been sick. It seems that when one person gets sick in Hong Kong almost everyone will have the same sickness.

"Our main problem is where we meet. First of all, the auditorium cannot hold more than 70 people. We have nice posters, displays and things like that; but in reality we do need much more space to be more effective in handling others.

"The other difficulty is there will be 50 or more women and only ten men or less in attendance. Also, before we can do better in China, there is the problem about where to meet. So it is always this kind of struggle.

"In China we cannot be so obvious in what we are doing, so we would need to rent an office. We always hope for things to change. That is the reason we wait until **Alice** comes back [from Four Seas College, in Singapore] so we can get the feeling of what is going on in China at the end of the year."

[NOTE: In sending brother Thornton another \$500.00 to help with getting out our Basic Bible Course and other correspondence courses from Hong Kong, I wrote to him, in part, "Your mentioning how so many Chinese as well as Filipinos put business before Christianity reminded me of our work in Singapore especially. Even those who seemed to be truly converted otherwise would drift away as soon as they got a good job or got married. As a result of this tendency, for years it seemed we could NEVER get a self-sustaining work established. But we finally did so.

"I have wondered what the letters 'SAR' in your mailing address stand for. Also, if you would put your telephone number in each newsletter, it would help

visitors be able to get in touch with you..." IYR Jr.]

Alexander & Tatyana Nesterkin, Murmansk, Russia: "We are doing very well. We have had very cold weather in this February. There is a lot of snow everywhere!...

"It is truly sad that brother **Joe Gilmore** is not with us any more, but he has a better place to stay in right now. We have read through this issue and saw how many good brethren knew him and worked with him and were encouraged by him. The last time I talked with brother Joe Gilmore he asked me, 'Would it be possible for me to come to Russia for work there?' I am sure that he could come; but it never happened.

"We had now good month of intensive work with the tremendous help of the brethren. Tomorrow we are going to say goodbye and continue on with following up work with the people. I had always too many irons in the fire, but now I have them even more. Sometimes I become depressed because of impossibility to do everything. I understand that it is impossible to do all; nevertheless it makes me feel behind.

"This time we had pretty good meetings in Murmansk and are planning to continue Bible class every Sunday from next week on. One of the ladies attending our lectures was a student of the Bible correspondence course, and it was really good to meet her there. She is a teacher of the very same school where our lectures happened to be. Brethren **Dub McClish**, **David Brown**, **Terry Mayberry** and **Wayland Melton** did very good job preaching there and in Murmansk, also.

"I wrote you about **Raisa Ivanovna**, and you responded that she is not far from the kingdom of God. You were right, because she was recently baptized and continues faithfully to study the word of God. I wrote you already about others who were baptized during these last weeks, and it is great to see the growing of the church in Murmansk.

"We now have 62 students of the Bible correspondence course; but this number does not help us to grow yet. Hope in the future it will be so..."

[NOTE: In my reply of March 26, 1998, I said, in part, "Billy Bland showed slides at midweek service last night; so we are clear on what you mean when you say 'there is a lot of snow everywhere.' More than half of his slides showed snow. He said it got down between 30 and 40 degrees below zero. Now that's cold!

"As for Memphis, we have had the mildest winter in many, many years. Perhaps **Dmitri** has told you of the effects the El Nino phenomenon from the Pacific Ocean is having on our weather. On the West Coast, floods of rain; on the East Coast, snow and freezing in the north-east, tornadoes in Florida's southeast coast. Here in Memphis, almost no snow, lots of rain, but mild temperatures.

"You mentioned **Joe Gilmore's** desire to preach some in Russia. No doubt he would have tried it, had the Lord extended his time.

"Thanks for telling of the new work in Murmask. Also of the eventual conversion of Raisa Ivanova. If she will keep studying, she will grow strong in the faith..."

In another letter, I said, in part, "Your information about church and college work there is especially gratifying. It is a good thing we got brother Leroy Brownlow's book translated and printed in usian. Here is hoping the lady from the New Apostolic denomination continues studying with you and that she obeys the gospel soon..."

"You were right to emphasize to Katerina that her being baptized must be for Christ's sake and not for the sake of any human being, including her own daughter.

"Your mentioning that the Basic Bible Course is generating many Bible questions on the part of those studying it is wonderful. Once they start asking such questions, you can do 'follow-up' teaching, leading to their conversion...The course itself is 'build-up.' Personal teaching to those enrolled is 'follow-up.' It takes both 'build-up' (planting) plus 'follow-up' (watering) for God to grant the 'increase' (I Corinthians 3:6).

"There is no way to compare what happens in Russia with what is happening elsewhere in the world. The situation there is so entirely different. However, just keep planting and watering and God's increase will come..." IYR Jr.]

* * * * *

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNET

Sender: owner-rm-bible@BIBLE.AC.U.EDU
Date: Tue, 28 Oct 1997 18:54:47-0600 (CST)
MIME-Version: 1.0
To: RM-BIBLE@BIBLE.AC.U.EDU
From: Phillip Morrison (wineskin@edge.net)
Reply-To: RM-BIBLE@BIBLE.AC.U.EDU
Subject: Jubilee '98

As a new subscriber to RM-BIBLE, one of my early impressions is that some people have something to say and some just have to say something. I'll save you the trouble and put myself in the latter category, for I have to say something about Jubilee.

I have been privileged to direct 7 of the 9 Jubilee events held in Nashville the week of July 4 each year, and am looking forward to #8. Contrary to some published speculation, there will be a Jubilee July 1-4 in 1998, God willing. Jubilee has outgrown the ability of a single congregation to sponsor it, as Madison, Antioch, Woodmont Hills, and Donelson have done in the past, with the eldership of the sponsoring church comprising the Board of Directors each year. We have now revised the bylaws of Christian Jubilee, Inc. to provide for a board comprised of elders of supporting churches. Our chairman is Dr. A. D. Pollock, an elder of the Western Hills church and president of Nashville Christian School; vice chairman is Paul Martin, an elder at the West End church and retired Major General in the

USAF; secretary is Larry Bridgessmith, an elder at Woodmont Hills and managing partner in a major law firm; and the treasurer is J. D. Elliott, an elder at Madison and president of the Memorial Foundation. More churches are providing more money and more people support for Jubilee '98 than ever before.

Jubilee will begin Wednesday evening, July 1, 1998 and conclude Saturday afternoon, July 4, in time for everyone to enjoy holiday fireworks at Nashville's Riverfront Park, just a sort walk from the Nashville Arena and the Nashville Convention Center. Jeff Walling will be the keynote speaker Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings.

For more information you may e-mail wineskins@edge.net (Wineskins and Jubilee share the same office) or call toll-free at 800-382-5004. We hope you will be among the 14,000 people expected to attend Jubilee '98!

[Signed]
Phillip Morrison

* * * * *

MORE TAKEN FROM THE INTERNET

Jubilee '98 - Up From The Grave
Jeff Walling, Keynote Speaker
July 14, 1998
Nashville Arena and Nashville
Convention Center
For more information call
800-382-5004

This site will [be] updated soon
with more detailed
information, registration forms,
accommodations, information, etc.

For 10 consecutive years, July in Nashville has been the time for Jubilee, three days of celebration and thanksgiving for the things God is doing among and through his people.

Again this year, Jubilee is using the entire Nashville Arena as well as the Nashville Convention Center and the Central Church of Christ. Conveniently located in downtown Nashville, these facilities are near major hotels, restaurants, and popular tourist attractions. More than 10,000 people from almost 40 states and a dozen foreign countries typically attend Jubilee.

Major keynote addresses will be delivered each evening by Jeff Walling, one of the most effective orators of our day. After many years of preaching in California, Jeff is now minister for the Providence Road Church of Christ in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Other keynote speakers include Rick Atchley, Joe Beam, Mike Cope, Rubel Shelly, and Nokomis Yeldell. Worship in song will be led by Ken Young and Hallal Singers along with Jerome Williams and the Carriage Hills singers.

Each of the Jubilee days will be packed with classes and workshops. These classes will be built around tracks on teaching children, church leadership, family strength and parenting, evangelism, spiritual discipline, worship, textual studies, and classes of special interest to

women. Child care will be available for children from birth through age three, and a full range of classes is available for children from age four through grade six. Special classes for junior high and high school ages will draw more than a thousand teenagers.

Speakers and teachers include:

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Rick Atchley
Bill Banowsky
Joe Beam
Deanna Beauchamp
Gary Beauchamp
Buddy Bell
Philip Black
Gieger Broslat
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Special Thanks to the Twickenham Church of Christ in Huntsville, AL, who sponsored the webcast of Jubilee '97!

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[NOTE: More than half of these speakers listed are well known either to teach contrary to the Bible themselves or to fellowship those who do. How using such questionable teachers on Jubilee '98 will further the cause of truth escapes us. IYR Jr.]

Should A Christian Be Involved in the Political Process?

Barry Grider

America celebrated her 222nd birthday, July 4, 1998. The price our ancestors paid for our liberty was their very blood. Many privileges have been granted to us by reason of birth in this democracy. For this reason, our hearts are saddened as we see many of our precious resources squandered in an increasingly godless society. There are those in government, business, education, and entertainment who are militantly and vehemently advancing their liberal, humanistic agendas on all Americans and dare anyone to stand in their way. Recently, U.S. Senate Majority Leader **Trent Lott** of Mississippi, was castigated in Washington for calling homosexuality a sin, which is exactly what God calls it. The administration has already ridiculed such language as backward.

Christians have the responsibility to always oppose error (II John 9-11) and fight against evil (Ephesians 5:11). Despite this divine exhortation, there are many church members who evidently believe that our political leaders should never be corrected in sermons, Bible classes, or in religious periodicals. These same brethren would stand solidly opposed to mechanical instrumental music in worship or denominationalism, as well they should. However, they want us to leave politicians alone, even when they are at variance with the word of God. Have these sincere individuals just been misguided along the way, or are they more in love with a certain political party than with the kingdom of God? While I do not intend as a gospel preacher to advance any particular political agenda, I do plan to stand always on truth and be willing to aggressively defend it.

Some of the myths concerning a Christian's political involvement that I have heard through the years are as follows:

Myth #1 "The separation of church and state prohibit a Christian's involvement in the political process." The term "separation of church and state" is not found in the constitution. It is a liberal phrase designed to keep God out of public life. The founding fathers set forth the first amendment to keep government out of religion, not the other way around.

Myth #2 "Politics is dirty." The political process itself

dirty. The problem is that many men and women who are seated in positions of power are dirty. Too often, individuals of questionable character and of ill repute are the ones elected, and not men and women of honor who want to serve and live by the golden rule (Matthew 7:12). Are we ready to allow only the most despicable among us to seek public office, rather than encouraging the best to seek such?

Myth #3 "The church is the spiritual kingdom of God, not America." It is true that the church of Christ is God's spiritual Israel, and all spiritual blessings are found in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). Furthermore, God will save only those who are in his church (Ephesians 5:25). Being an American has nothing to do with man's salvation. However, the church is that divine army that is to wage the battle against the forces of darkness (Ephesians 6:11ff). God, who is the sovereign ruler over all the nations (Daniel 4:25), has promised he will bless those nations that live by his principles (Proverbs 14:34).

Myth #4 "Jesus and the apostles never challenged the government." This is untrue. While Jesus taught to "render unto Caesar," and while he sought to peacefully live under Roman rule and respect the authority of the state, he did not refrain from calling King Herod a "fox" because that is exactly what Herod was. Peter, by divine revelation, instructs us to "honor the king" (I Peter 2:17), but in Acts 5:29, Peter stood before the Sanhedrin, and declared, "**we ought to obey God rather than men.**" While we love and respect our democratic form of government, and while we ought to pray for our leaders, we also are admonished to stand in opposition to them whenever they espouse those views that are in violation of God's will.

As the people of God in the midst of a perverse nation, let us never be afraid to declare the "**whole counsel of God**" to this lost world (Acts 20:27). Remember, regardless if it be in an individual's life, in the church, or in the government, Christians always have a responsibility to defend truth and oppose error.

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IS ALL OF LIFE WORSHIP?

Curtis A. Cates

[EDITORIAL NOTE: Another indication that the Lord's church has been influenced for the worse by the denominations is the fact that certain brethren have espoused the false doctrine that "all of life is worship." It is interesting to note that the New International Version declares such so to be in its mistranslation of Romans 12:1. In the following article Curtis Cates, the faithful director of the Memphis School of Preaching, exposes the false doctrine that "all of life is worship" and upholds the truth of the Bible on this timely and important matter. —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

The word of God makes a clear distinction between "worship" and "service." Of the many such verses in the Old Testament, note the following: "...**Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them**" (Exodus 20:5); "**thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God, and Him shalt thou serve**" (Deuteronomy 6:13); "**Because they forsook Jehovah their God... and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath Jehovah brought all this evil upon them**" (I Kings 9:9); "...**go not after their gods to serve them, and to worship them...**" (Jeremiah 25:6).

ALL WORSHIP IS SERVICE BUT NOT ALL SERVICE IS WORSHIP

While there are other scriptures making careful distinction between worship and service in the New Testament the following passages clearly show that God makes such a difference. "**Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve**" (Matthew 4:10); "...**they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever**" (Romans 1:25).

To serve is more broad than to worship. *Thus, all worship to God is service to him, but not all service to him is worship.* The refusal/failure to recognize this distinction brings confusion and departure from the biblically authorized worship.

Men and angels are often described as serving while not at the same time worshipping. We are commanded to render service to orphans and widows (James 1:27), to all men and especially saints (Galatians 6:10), to "**all the Saints**" (Philippians 1:1), as "**your servants for Jesus' sake**" (II Corinthians 4:5). Angels "**do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation**" (Hebrews 1:14). Do we or the angels worship those whom we/they serve? What about Christ, who came "to minister" to (serve) man (Matthew 20:28)? Did he come to worship man? David is described as having "**served his own generation by the will of God**" (Acts 13:36, KJV). Did he worship his fellow men as he served them as king of Israel? "Worship" and "service" are not always interchangeable or synonymous!

GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE GONE TO AND RETURNED FROM WORSHIP.

When the patriarchs gathered around the altars, they were doing things in which they were not previously engaged before and as they came to the place of worship and returned from it. Abel **brought** his sacrifice (Genesis 4:4), as did Noah (Genesis 8:20). "**And Abraham said unto his young men, we will worship, and come again to you**" (Genesis 22:5). If worship is continuous, why did Abraham speak of "going" to worship? He would have been worshipping all along. Would not such have been redundant and superfluous? (This also refutes the idea that worship is simply and solely an emotion, rather than an act.)

The Hebrew men also had to assemble for worship

(Continued on Page 4)

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Associate Editorial...

LIBERALS HAVE ALTERED THE BIBLICAL CONCEPTS OF WORSHIP AND SERVICE

Beginning on March 6, 1973 in *Reuel Lemmons' Firm Foundation*, page 7, **Ervin Bishop** began a series of six articles entitled "The Christian Assembly." In his first article Bishop opposed such terms as "the worship service" and "going to worship." In his second article in the March 13, 1973, *Firm Foundation*, page 8, he wrote, "Worship in the New Age is not to be limited as to time and place, as it was under God's former arrangement but rather encompasses the worshiper's total life and relationship with God." In his third article in the June 19, 1973 issue of the *Firm Foundation*, page 7, he engaged in a study of five New Testament words that he referred as "worship-related." His conclusion was that these words, "when ever applied to Christians, refer without exception not to a 'worship service' but rather to a *life* of service." Furthermore, he wrote,

Both God-directed praise and man-directed service are considered acceptable offerings of worship and neither is confined to any special time or place—being always in God's temple, we offer them 'continually.'

GARMON DIVIDED AYRES STREET CHURCH OVER THIS FALSE CONCEPT

In June and July of 1978 in Corpus Christi, Texas **Lindsey Garmon** preached a series of ten sermons on "The Concept of Worship." In this series he said, "we think in terms of certain acts of worship" or "avenues of worship." Furthermore, he said the New Testament sets forth a view of worship that "goes far, far beyond what we do in this building. And it goes far, far beyond what we do through five avenues of worship." Moreover, he taught that Jesus announced "an entirely new concept for worship that he had come to effect." He went on to say that Romans 12:1, 2 "may be the most significant passage for a clear and adequate understanding of Christian worship." Incidentally, please notice that he used the word "worship" and not "service" in verse one. He then declared that "the worship terminology of the New Testament is applied to all areas of ministry and service." He went on to explain:

You see, wherever you are, there is a temple, because Christians are temples of God. You're the temple of God, and wherever you are, there's a priest on the scene because you are a royal priest of God. Now wherever you have that combination—a temple where God is present and where there's a priest on the scene—not only *can* worship occur, but when you have that combination, worship *must* occur...Not only *can*, but it *must*.

It is obvious that Garmon equates acts of worship with acts of service. No wonder he believes that *everything* one does is worship. Speaking to the men he declared: "You dedicate your job to Jesus. You be a

good employee or good employer and you offer that as an expression of worship to God.” Speaking to the women he said: “You serve in that home and you change those dirty diapers and you do it to the glory of Jesus, and that’s worship.”

McGUIGGAN ERRONEOUSLY INCLUDES NON-RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AS WORSHIP

In his commentary on Romans, pages 338-348, **Jim McGuiggan** declared: “Worship is as broad as the Christian life.” He went on to write, “the man who lawfully offers to God what pleases God is worshipping God!” Furthermore, he penned: “involved in that life of worship is paying debts, providing for one’s family, doing good.” He combined the previous items along with other things that are routinely associated with worship.

McGuiggan declared that “playing golf, brushing one’s teeth, washing one’s hands, and the like” was worship. Listen to him. “I don’t see any difficulty in getting it into worship (honoring, doing homage).” Moreover, he stated that “Worship is the conscious giving to God in a pleasing way that which is pleasing to him.” Regarding this statement McGuiggan gave this explanation: “It’s pleasing to God for a group of saints in social merriment to beat the brains out of a piano to ‘Show Me the Way to Go Home’ (isn’t it?!)...” He went ahead to write, “If the saint can pleasingly offer the activity to the Lord, he is worshipping the Lord.” However, he denied “that only ‘religious’ type activity (such as praying and singing) is ‘worship.’”

MILLER, OTHERS JOIN MARCH INTO THIS DOCTRINAL ERROR

In an article in the October 2, 1986 issue of the *Gospel Advocate* entitled “Worship – A Transcendent Wonder,” page 601, **Waymon Miller** wrote:

To speak of our ‘worship service,’ meaning what is performed in the public assembly, is, therefore, redundant in that worship is service, and service is worship. It is incorrect, then, to ‘Begin our worship service with announcements, a hymn, a prayer, or whatever, as though we abruptly cease things that are not worship and begin a service that is.’

The previous information is sufficient to establish that the false doctrine of “all of life is worship” has been around for a long time in the church. However, some elders(?) are so ignorant of the Bible and willingly ignorant of persons and events in the church today that they find themselves supporting this error and possibly others. (Today, can you imagine a *faithful* elder so behind the times that he does not know who **Max Lucado** is?) When their hand is called for allowing such a false doctrine to be taught, their own pride gets in the way as well as their respect of persons. They end up condoning the error rather than stopping it.

Any preacher who knows anything about the design, preparation and delivery of sermons ought to un-

derstand that knowing what the will of Lord is regarding worship and service (or any other subject) precedes designing, preparing and delivering a sermon on it. One just as well have an alleged medical doctor trying to do surgery without any knowledge of human anatomy, or an attorney attempting to represent his client properly without knowing the law, as to have a “wannabe” preacher telling us that “all of life is worship.”

WHO WILL AFFIRM THIS PROPOSITION?

Is there anyone or his kinsman who desires to affirm the proposition: “*The scriptures teach that all of life is worship?*” If such is the case, the polemic platform of honorable controversy is ready. We know of one person in a semi-private meeting who declared that the previous proposition could not be successfully negated. He concluded that the silence of the person who opposed the view (that all of life is worship), was adequate evidence that he could not refute it. Pilate made the same sad mistake when he concluded the same thing when Jesus would not respond to his questions.

Furthermore, we have no business redefining the words “all of life is worship” in order to protect some one who is fully capable of protecting and defending himself. Why declare that one who taught that “all of life is worship” really did not mean what he said or say what he meant. *Anyone allowed to define his terms to suit himself can teach whatever he desires.* Words have meanings and we know what people mean when they teach that “all of life is worship.” No amount of double-talk will change what the phrase means.

In this issue of *Contending for the Faith* we have published several articles dealing with worship. I know of no more serious study pertaining to the church of Christ than the subjects of worship and service. We must be determined in these and all other areas of our conduct to do only what our Lord has authorized us to do (Colossians 3:17; I Peter 4:11). We dare not allow our friends, family, or brethren to cause us to compromise the truth of the gospel on this important part of our lives. For the serious Bible student it is clear that the word of God does not sustain the doctrine that worship and service are the same in meaning. Therefore, all of life is *not* worship. Worship requires specific action. It has a starting place and a stopping place. It is not an ongoing state. Again, let it be clearly understood that *all worship is service but not all service is worship.* I am willing, therefore, to affirm in public discussion the following proposition: “*For the worship of God the New Testament authorizes only five acts (singing, praying, preaching, partaking of the Lord’s Supper and contributing of one’s means).*”

—David P. Brown, Associate Editor

LIFE WORSHIP...

(Continued From Page One)

(Deuteronomy 16:16; Exodus 34:23-24). Did not Joseph, Mary, and Jesus go up to Jerusalem on the occasion of the Passover (Luke 2:1-42)? What was the purpose of going? When they got back home, had they returned from worship to God? They had done what Elkanah and Hannah did when they went to worship and went back home. The record says, "And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before Jehovah, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah" (I Samuel 1:19). The *going* and the *returning* were certainly distinct from the worshipping, as were the going and coming of the wise men in Matthew 2:11-12, "And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him;...And... they departed into their own country another way." Notice that the Ethiopian "had come to Jerusalem to worship; and he was returning..." (Acts 8:27-28). Interestingly, not one verse in all the Bible declares that all of life is worship! If words mean anything, worship is to be viewed as specific, authorized acts which have a beginning and an ending. The necessary implication of the false view of "all of life is worship," is that worship neither begins nor ends (except when one obeys the Gospel and dies). Furthermore, any act a person might perform (from addressing an envelope, to eating a common meal, to rebuilding an automobile engine, to zigzagging around a mountain, et al.) would be

worship. The Bible knows nothing of such a view of worship.

Furthermore, if all one does is worship, no one can worship in the wrong way; any and every innovation is authorized, whether burning incense and counting beads, or washing feet and dedicating babies, or whooping and hollering, or using mechanical instrumental music and serving hamburgers and Coca-Cola on the Lord's table. Moreover, why would anyone feel obligated to worship with the saints at anytime, even in the Lord's day assembly? If everything one does is worship, the local church can dismiss all assemblies. It goes without saying that this would destroy the Lord's church in every place!

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The Bible Clearly Distinguishes Between Worship and Service

David P. Brown

In this article we will be primarily engaged in a study of the Hebrew and Greek words translated worship and service as they appear in the Bible. The first part of the study pertains to worship and the second service.

WORSHIP

From the beginning God has expected mankind to worship him. However, we journey some 22 chapters into the Bible before the word worship first appears (Genesis 22:5). The final appearance of the word in the divine volume is in the last chapter of the book of Revelation. Twice in the book an angel told the apostle John to worship God (Revelation 19:10; 22:8).

In the Old and New Testaments the Holy Spirit employed several different words that are translated worship in our English texts. The primary word translated worship in the Old Testament is *hishtachawa*. Its meaning is “to bow down,” “to prostrate one’s self,” or “to worship.” Out of its 170 appearances in the Hebrew Bible it was rendered worship 99 times by the *King James Version* translators. In the majority of the other 71 times it is found in the Hebrew text it is translated as “bowing” or “doing obeisance” or “reverence.” Please study the following references where the word *hishtachawah* is employed (Exodus 34:14; 20:5; 23:24; II Kings 17:35). Please note carefully the distinction between worship and service in these passages.

Sagad is another Hebrew word for worship. It also means to “prostrate oneself in worship.” Only in Isaiah 44:15, 17, 19 is its Hebrew form found. *Sagad* is associated with three of the verses in Isaiah. Its Aramaic form is *segid*. Twelve times in the book of Daniel is the Aramaic form found. Both words have reference to an obvious act of worship.

In the *Septuagint* (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), excluding two instances of its usage, the translators employed the Greek word *proskuneo* in rendering the Hebrew words *hishtachawah* and *sagad* into Greek. *Proskuneo* is also the primary word in the New Testament rendered worship. It is a compound word from *Pros* (“to or forward”) and *kuneo* (“to kiss”). Hence, literally the term means to “kiss toward.” The lips of the worshipper were touched to or toward the hand, foot or ground of the object or person worshipped. Hence, an act of veneration, homage and adoration was carried out toward the divine object. With these facts in mind please study the following verses (Matthew 2:2, 11; 4:9, 10; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 20:20; 28:9, 17; John 4:23; 9:38).

The verb form of *proskuneo* finds usage by the Holy Spirit 59 times in the New Testament. It is always translated worship in the *King James Version*.

Another Greek word that appears in its various forms in the New Testament and is translated worship is *sebomai*. Inherent within the meaning of the word is the idea of the fear of God that causes one to be highly impressed. Such impression expressed itself in an act or acts of worship. In II Thessalonians 2:4 the noun form (*sebasma*) is translated “devotions.” However, the *American Standard Version* translators more accurately rendered it into “objects of...worship.” In Acts 17:23 *eusebeo* is translated “ye worship.” However, in most instances it carries with it a meaning not pertaining to worship.

Another Greek word pertaining to worship is *threskeia*. It is translated “worshipping” in Colossians 2:18. The term “will-worship” of Colossians 2:23 derives from *ethelothreskeia*. These terms also mean an act of reverence.

SERVICE

Let us now turn our attention to the words for “service” employed by the Holy Spirit. The Hebrew word *sharat* ap-



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appears almost 100 times in the Old Testament. It is employed with reference to secular and personal service to a high-ranking person. Most often it is used with reference to religious service. The Holy Spirit employed *sharat* when describing the ritualistic work of the priests and Levites in the tabernacle or temple. The word employed by the inspired Moses first appears in the Bible in Exodus 28:35 when he wrote "it shall be upon Aaron to minister." The same word is used in Moses' instruction to the Levites regarding their work (Numbers 16:9).

Regarding its religious usage the Greek word most often used in the *Septuagint* to translate *sharat* is the compound word *leitourgeo*. It is derived from *laos* (people) and *ergon* (work). Hence, it refers to the "work on behalf of the people" or "public service" (II Chronicles 35:3 and Ezekiel 44:11). Such duties were not considered as acts of worship. *Leitourgeo* and its cognates are found 15 times in the New

Testament. Not one time are these words translated worship (Hebrews 8:2, 6; 10:11; Acts 13:1, 2; Romans 15:16).

The primary Hebrew word translated "serve" is *'abad*. It is found in 290 places in the Old Testament. Its noun form, *abodah*, appears in 145 places. Its fundamental meaning is "to work" or "serve." Such may include worship, but is not limited to it (Exodus 12:25-27; 13:5; Joshua 22:25; II Chronicles 35:16).

In the *King James* and *American Standard Versions* *'ebed* and *'abad* were not translated correctly in the rendering of II Kings 10:19-23. The translators throughout these verses should have employed the word "servants". This was done elsewhere in the Old Testament (Genesis 49:15). Why the translators made this mistake here is not known. However, these mistakes in translation have contributed to the furtherance of the view that worship and service to God mean the same thing.

The Greek word that is the equivalent of the Hebrew word *'abad* is *latreuo*. It comes from the word *latron*, meaning "reward of wages." Ninety times it is found in the *Septuagint* and nine times in its noun form. In all cases it refers to religious service. *Latreuo* refers to the functions of the people in general while *leitourgeo* is only used of priestly functions (Deuteronomy 11:13; Daniel 6:16; Numbers 16:9).

In its religious sense *latreuo* appears 21 times and *latreia* five times in the New Testament. The Greek lexicons and other reference works are divided concerning the definitions of the previous words. Some give worship as a definition of them while others do not (Thayer's Lexicon and Arndt-Gingrich's Lexicon). Regardless of why the scholars are confused on the meaning of this word, the fact of the matter is that *latreuo* and *latreia* refer to general service and not worship in particular. Paul went up to Jerusalem to worship (*proskuneo*). However, he placed himself among those who were "serving" (*latreuo*) God night and day (Acts 26:7). Paul also referred to the heathen who "worshipped (*sebazomai*) and served (*latreuo*) the creature rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). Please notice the distinction between worship and service. This is in harmony with what Jesus declared to Satan when he said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10). Regarding the use of the word *latreia* (service) please study the following passages (Romans 9:4; 12:1; Hebrews 8:5; 9:9; 10:2; 12:28; 13:10).

We may conclude from our study of the words "worship" and "service" that *all of worship is service, but not all service is worship*. To conclude otherwise is to ignore the meaning of the different Hebrew and Greek words employed by the Holy Spirit in expressing the will of God on these two subjects. If words have meanings (and they do), the words "worship" and "service" may not routinely be interchanged.

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CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH—August/1998

"THE FIRE WITHIN" LECTURESHIP

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September 4-6, 1998

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Bailey Street Church of Christ

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

7:00 p.m. Singing

7:30 p.m. "The Church's Pattern." Garland Elkins

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

9:00 a.m. "He Taught Them As They Were Able To Hear." Tim Dooley

10:00 a.m. "Training Tomorrow's Leaders Today." David P. Brown

11:00 a.m. "How The Holy Spirit Trains Leaders." David Jones

LUNCH

1:30 p.m. "The Authority Of A Gospel Preacher." Steven E. Yeatts

2:30 p.m. "From The Eyes Of The Prophets." Rod Halliburten

3:30 p.m. "The Lord's Way Is The Only Way." B.J. Clarke

BREAK

7:00 p.m. SINGING

7:30 p.m. "I Am A Debtor" Curtis Cates

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

9:00 a.m. "Having Been Sent." Darrell Broking

10:00 a.m. "The Distinct Nature Of The Lord's Church " David P. Brown

LUNCH

4:00 p.m. "Every Member Is A Minister." Jason Almond

5:00 p.m. "What Is Right About The Church of Christ?" Keith Mosher, Sr.

6:00 p.m. "The Work Of Deacons." Bobby Liddell

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BACK TO GOD IN WORSHIP

David P. Brown

In the fourth chapter of the book of John we have the account of the Lord's meeting and discussion with a woman of Samaria (verses 1-42). Jesus was sitting and resting on Jacob's well when a certain Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well. When Christ requested a drink of water from her she was surprised that he being a Jew would make such a request from a Samaritan. Christ informed her that he could give her water whereby she would never thirst. Of course, she did not understand his answer because he had no container with which to draw water. Nevertheless, she requested this water. Jesus then told her to call her husband. She informed him that she did not have a husband. Our Lord replied to her in verses 17 through 24:

Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 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. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

In his second installment in his series of six articles entitled "The Christian Assembly" appearing in the *Firm Foundation*, page 7, March 13, 1993, **Ervin Bishop** wrote the following about the previous comments on worship by Christ to the Samaritan woman. "Worship in the New Age is not to be limited as to time or place, as it was under God's former arrangement, but rather encompasses the worshipper's total life and relationship with God."

In a series of sermons preached in Corpus Christ, Texas on "The Concept of Worship," June through July of 1978, **Lindsey Garmon** said of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman about worship: "She had the institutional concept... Jesus used his conversation with that woman to announce an entirely new concept and new system of worship that he had come to effect."

He says, "Lady, believe me, the time is coming when all this is going to change. It's not going to be Gerizim. It's not going to be Jerusalem. But we live in a time when the holy place is your life, everything you do."

That means at home, in the playground, on the job, in the community, worship is taking place. Brethren, the New Testament knows nothing of the place of worship, exclusive and divorced from other places. The only thing the New Testament mentions is the life of worship.

Where is the temple today?... Paul affirms that the church, the people, the redeemed individuals are the temple of God.... Who are the priests? You're a priest. I'm a priest. Jesus is the high priest. And when are we on duty as priests? All the time. And so you see, worship never stops.

Hence, Bishop and Garmon believe that Jesus completely changed the nature of worship. Indeed, the Law of Moses was taken out of the way and with it the Levitical system of worship in the temple, but this does not mean that the complete and total concept of worship is changed. The change regarding worship of which Jesus spoke in his conversation with the Samaritan woman was the cessation of worship in a specified place as regulated by the Law of Moses (I Kings 8; II Chronicles 6; Nehemiah 12:40; Psalms 5:7; 138:2; Isaiah 27:13; 56:7; Jeremiah 7:2; 26:2; Zechariah 14:16, 17).

Does anyone think that God did not require something more of the Jews than "going through the motions" in their worship? They were told "to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12). When Jesus said to the Samaritan woman that man must worship God "in spirit and in truth," he did not announce a new concept at all. Listen to Joshua on this matter. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth" (Joshua 24:14). Such service from the heart God has always demanded.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORSHIP

Several kinds of worship other than the true worship of which the Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman are mentioned in the Bible. The first one of these kinds of worship is found in Jesus' conversation with the woman of Samaria. He told the woman, "ye worship that which ye know not" (John 4:22). Thereby we are introduced to "ignorant" worship. The apostle Paul spoke of the same type of worship in Acts 17. To the citizens of Athens he said, "...as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (verse 23). Acceptable worship is according to the truth. It is motivated by knowledge. Ignorant worship is not acceptable to God.

Another kind of worship is found in Mark 7:1-7. In verse seven Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews of their worship, "...in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." What was wrong with these Jews' worship? What is wrong with washing one's hands, pots, pans, and so forth? These things became wrong when they made them a part of their worship. Hence, their worship became "vain" (pointless, empty). It was sin. True worship is contrasted to vain worship in that man worships God, not only with a sincere heart, but according to God's will.

In Colossians the second chapter the apostle Paul is writing about worship that was not acceptable to God. He penned, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly

puffed up by his fleshly mind." Paul continues with, **"which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh"** (Colossians 2:18, 23). "Will worship" is simply worship prescribed by man. Paul declared that such worship was not acceptable to God. This worship is motivated by the whims, likes and dislikes of the worshipper. True worship is the motivation to proper acts by a sincere and honest heart.

For many years now it has been popular to teach that as long as an individual has the right motive of heart, his worship will be acceptable to God. However, if there is no certain prescribed way of worshipping God, if there is no way that God has laid down for us to worship him, then there could be no "ignorant worship," "vain worship," or "will worship." For false worship to exist there must be true worship (Colossians 3:17; James 1:25).

THE ACTS OF NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP

There is no set order in which the avenues or acts of worship should be listed. Therefore, we shall begin with prayer. Of the church in the city of Jerusalem it is recorded that they **"continued stedfastly in ... prayers"** (Acts 2:42). Hence, the church is to engage in prayer wherever and whenever the need arises (I Timothy 2:1, 2, 8; Romans 12:12; Colossians 1:3; 3:17). Certainly in the assemblies of exhortation prayer would constitute one of the avenues of worship (Hebrew 10:25; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1, 2). In view of the totality of the information on prayer in the New Testament we understand that Christians must pray according to the model Jesus gave them to follow (Matthew 6:5-15). Also, they must be persistent in their prayers (Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8); pray with humble hearts (Luke 18:10-14); pray with watchfulness (Mark 13:33; 14:38; Matthew 26:41); and pray for their enemies (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:28). One must be righteous and he must be effectual and fervent when he prays (Psalm 119:172; James 5:16). The Christian's prayer must be according to the will of God and offered in faith (I John 3:22; 5:14, 15; James 1:6-7). There are more details regarding prayer than are herein given, but these are sufficient to prove that prayer is an act of worship.

Singing is another act of worship. Paul instructed the church in Ephesus to speak to one another as they sang psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs while making melody in their hearts unto the Lord (Ephesians 5:19). The authorized music whereby God desires to be worshipped is singing. This is the kind of music specified. To use any other kind is to go beyond the teaching of the New Testament of Christ. Such action is sin (I John 3:4; II John 9-11).

Bible teaching is also one of the avenues of worship to God. The church is built up spiritually by instruction from the Bible (II Timothy 2:15; 3:16, 17; James 1:25; Acts 20:32). Thus, Paul preached to the church in Troas on the first day of the week assembly (Acts 20:7).

We learn that the church gave of its means to further the work of Christ (I Corinthians 16:1, 2). This contribution is to be purposed from the heart and given cheerfully and not

grudgingly. We are to give liberally to the Lord to support his cause (II Corinthians 9:6, 7). There is authority in the New Testament for individual Christians to do good whenever the opportunity presents itself (Galatians 6:10). However, the contribution of I Corinthians 16:1, 2 is to be taken during the first day of the week assembly. Provision to accomplish such is to be done during the week preceding the collection.

The last item of worship considered is that of observing the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 7:17; 16:1, 2). The New Testament authorizes the Supper to be observed in the assembly of the saints only on the first day of the week. We have no authority (direct statement, example, implication) to partake of it any other time than what is revealed in the will of the Lord. When we do this we show forth our Lord's death till he comes again (I Corinthians 11:23-26).

There is authority from the Lord to pray, sing, and study the Bible at any place or time conducive for such on any day of the week. There is even authority for the Christian to spend his money to help others who are scripturally qualified to be helped as the opportunity presents itself (Galatians 6:10). However, there is no authority to observe the Lord's Supper on any other day than the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7). Since we must do only that which is authorized by the Lord, we are sinning if we alter his word to do as we please (Colossians 3:17). Remember "will worship" is sin (Colossians 2:18, 23).

Hence, on the first day of the week when saints assemble to engage in worship they are authorized to engage in the five acts or avenues of worship previously studied. There is no authority to use anything else as avenues of worship. Hence, New Testament worship consists only of praying, singing, giving of our means, studying the Bible, and the Lord's Supper. There are no other acts, avenues, or items of worship authorized by the Christ in which Christians are to engage in the worship of God revealed in his last will and testament.

—25403 Lancewood
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Llano Church of Christ Lectures "The Holy Spirit" September 4-6, 1998

Gary Colley • Joseph Meador • Jerry Moffitt
Terry Hightower • Dub McClish • Perry Cotham
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Joseph Meador: "The Holy Spirit Dwells in the Christian Representatively Through The Word of God Alone." Dub McClish: "The Holy Spirit Dwells In the Christian Literally and Personally." On Sunday Dub McClish will refute the direct operation of the Holy Spirit apart from the Word.

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MEANINGFUL WORSHIP

Chuck Pearson

If worship is somehow boring or uninteresting to us perhaps we need to change our state of mind regarding worship, not our methods of worship. It is up to us to find meaning in simple, God-authorized, New Testament worship (Colossians 3:17).

In John 4:23-24, we are told to **“worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him”** (v.23). Furthermore, we are told that we **“must worship him in spirit and in truth”** (v.24). Notice the elements for proper worship: **“spirit and in truth.”**

To worship in spirit means that we must have the right attitude. In our minds we must be purposely directing our acts of worship toward God. God does not want our worship to be vain or insincere. Spiritual worship is that which is done from a pure heart, and in accordance with God’s will (This is not to be confused with emotion. Just because worship “feels good” does not mean it is spiritual.)

To worship in truth means we must worship in a manner that is pleasing to God, doing only the things which he has prescribed. Why is this important? Because we worship the God of truth (John 17:17). Jehovah is the God whom we can know (John 4:22) and whose commandments we can understand (John 8:32).

Is just any kind of worship pleasing to God? No, only that which he has authorized. For example, in Leviticus 10, Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, violated the instructions which the Lord had given regarding the burning of incense. Their intentions may very well have been good. Perhaps they wanted to make the worship more “meaningful.” But it did not matter. God had told them what to do in order to burn the incense in a manner pleasing to him. Instead, they **“offered strange (unauthorized) fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not”** (v.1). Did God precisely or in just so many words prohibit every source of fire he did not desire for them to use? No, rather he had clearly declared (authorized) the source of the fire for the offering. Nadab and Abihu knew exactly from where God wanted the fire to come, but they did it “their way.” Anything more or less than what was authorized was unacceptable. What happened to Nadab and Abihu because of their innovation? **“And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord”** (v.2).

We see then that right worship (according to God’s prescribed pattern) is expected and demanded from God for all who would strive to honor him. Today, that means Christians are to engage in worship authorized in the New Testament of Jesus Christ (Romans 15:4).

“Meaningful” worship is worship done according to God’s will. There is nothing we have to do (either in adding to or taking away from) in order to improve worship. If

worship is somehow boring or uninteresting to us, perhaps we need to change our attitudes and not our methods of worship. Any method that helps God’s people discharge (expedite: get the thing authorized done in the quickest and best way possible) *only* what he has authorized is itself authorized. It is up to us to find meaning in simple, God-authorized, New Testament worship. It is not difficult: we worship through prayer, taking the Lord’s supper, giving of our means (contributing), singing, and hearing the word preached. How can this be made more meaningful?

Worship is not for our amusement. True worship is that which is authorized by God (Hebrews 10:25) and designed for our edification (I Corinthians 14:26). We are made in God’s image (Genesis 1:27). He knows what our needs are (Matthew 6:32). This includes worshipping him. Rather than trying to conform worship to our tastes, let us conform our hearts to God’s divine will (Romans 12:2).

—3950 Forest Hill Irene Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2242

[NOTE: Chuck is a 1998 graduate of Abilene Christian University. He was converted from the Presbyterian Church a few years ago. As a student at ACU Chuck immediately found himself at odds with much of what was and is transpiring in the school. With great courage he stood for the truth in no uncertain terms. While a student he began publishing his paper, “The Pawn of Truth.” Therein Chuck exposed much error that has for a long time characterized ACU. —David P. Brown, Associate Editor]



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ARTIFICIAL WORSHIP

G. K. Wallace

Artificial respiration is well known to almost everyone in America. If heart failure is apparent, caused by drowning, electric shock, and such like, artificial means are used to restore normal life. In drowning, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is sometimes used. To stimulate a weak heart a “pacemaker” is often implanted. The use of an artificial kidney is a common practice in the larger hospitals. These external means are used only when the body is unable to function from within.

In the church we have as Paul said, “**many among you who are weak and sickly, and not a few asleep**” (I Corinthians 11:30). To stimulate worship some are leaving the word of God and resorting to man-made procedures and devices. Some time ago I sat in an audience wherein the preacher talked about the Lord’s Supper. It was at the 11:00 o’clock service. The crowd was large and apparently very reverent. The preacher ranted about formality, ritual and the routine of the service. He laughed about the “three songs and a prayer.” He mocked about the general procedure in taking the Lord’s Supper. He suggested and implied that worship would be richer if only the *manner of procedure* could change. He thought worship could be stimulated by *artificial means*. No true Christian believes “three songs and a prayer” is the divine pattern but he also knows that changing the routine has nothing to do with his true devotion.

For over 54 years I have been taking the Lord’s Supper. I have met with brethren in schoolhouses, homes, under tents, meeting houses and have partaken of the Supper almost 3,000 times, having missed the Supper only four

times since I have been a Christian. It had never dawned on me until I heard this preacher that I might only be engaging in a ritual. I did not know until then that the *order* of the service was what made the hour sacred. My mind went back over the nearly 3,000 times I had taken the Lord’s Supper and to save my life I could not remember a time that the order of the hour had anything at all to do with my worship. I asked myself, “Do I need an artificial *stimulant* for true worship?”

Once a year, for 20 years, I have visited the graves of my parents. I need no artificial stimulant to stir memories at their graves. It makes no difference from which direction I approach their graves nor through which gate I enter the cemetery. All of that is incidental to my visit. Now all of a sudden I am told that if I approach the Lord’s Supper through the *same gate* I cannot properly remember my Lord. I then thought and still think this preacher had lost his divine sense of direction and needed a “pacemaker” to keep *his* religious heart beating.

The denominational world has for a long time depended on artificial means to stimulate worship. The preacher must turn his collar around, wear a robe and use a choir as a stimulant. A youth director of programs for young people recently proposed that the college-age group gather around the baptistery and sing during the baptismal service and teach older members how to worship. The denominations use dark rooms, candle lights, quartets, solos, human testimony, shouting, burning incense and playing the organ. The organ plays while the preacher reads the Bible. The organ plays while they pray. The organ plays while they baptize and during the Lord’s Supper. The organ plays during the invitation song and benediction. The denominations must have an artificial stimulant for what they do.

There are many in our world who depend on marijuana, LSD “speed,” alcohol, and the like because they have no inward strength. The strong need no such stimulant. Only the weak on the inside resort to the use of outside stimulants. We seem to have religious “dope addicts” in the church. They have no inward grace and must have a shot of artificial stimulant. They are not happy to gather about the Lord’s table and worship in a quiet simple way. They cannot depend upon the love of God in their hearts and respect for the son of God to turn their thoughts to Jesus Christ. They must be stimulated by external means. The denominational world could not save their weak faith by artificial means and neither can we. There is just one solution to the question of formality and that is to “**let the word of Christ dwell in us richly**” (Colossians 3:16). If the word of God dwells in us richly the order of worship will in no wise affect our devotion.

—Deceased

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THE HOME TEACHING REVERENCE IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

Thomas F. Eaves

Irreverence in public worship services of the Lord's church today should be considered as one of the tragedies of our generation. It is tragic in that the irreverent person does not engage in worship, hinders those in the same general area in their attempts to worship, and many times hinders the overall worship by distracting and discouraging others who are worshipping or leading in worship. Obviously, one cannot in all cases look at an individual and determine whether he or she is worshipping acceptably. However, there can be serious doubts concerning the attitude and participation in worship of those who play, talk, court, blow bubble gum, play with children, fix finger nails, write notes, and the like.

WHY DO WE HAVE THE PROBLEM OF IRREVERENCE?

The problem of irreverence may exist for a number of reasons (Romans 5:8-9; Hebrews 10:1-12). In this we learn the undeniable fact that God is love (I John 4:16)! These facts alone should be sufficient to motivate any creatures of God to live, honor and adore the God of the universe. There is, however, another characteristic of God which should be taught; it is his justice. The word of God points out man's choices and where his decisions will lead him. Deluded is the man who believes he can turn his back on God and God's way, and be acceptable to him at the judgment. When the home instills in children the love and justice of God, a knowledge of what the sinner's salvation cost God, and that all good gifts are from our heavenly Father (James 1:17; Ephesians 1:3), it will go far in creating a feeling of dependence and reverence toward the God of heaven.

Proper concepts of worship must be taught. It is almost a universal belief among members of the body of Christ that worship is gathering with those who are worshipping. Acceptable worship unto God does not simply involve assembling with worshippers or participating in certain outward

acts. Acceptable worship must be in spirit and truth (John 4:24). The apostle Peter points out in I Peter 2:9, "**But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**" Each Christian is a priest and must offer his own worship (as a priest) unto God. This worship must be in spirit and truth (John 4:24), with understanding (I Corinthians 14:15), and it must be in a spirit of reverence. No one can worship for you! Acceptable worship flows from the inward man (the spirit). God demands that worship begin in the human heart.

REVERENCE BEGINS AT HOME

Develop and nurture within children the characteristic of reverence. Reverence is defined as honor or respect felt for or manifested, and profound respect mingled with love and awe. When we instill in our children the proper concept of God and worship, it will go far in explaining the who, why, and how of worship. While there is a certain level of respect, honor, love, and awe which we exhibit toward our creator and him alone, there is a measure of respect (reverence) that individuals should have toward themselves, life, and their fellow man.

The individual should respect himself as the temple of the Holy Spirit, one who has been bought with the precious blood of the lamb. (I Corinthians 6:19-20). The same respect should be exhibited toward life itself, for it gives the opportunity to serve and glorify God (Matthew 5:16). Respect (reverence) for one's fellow man is also needed; for how can we have the proper relationship with God and have no respect for his creation? This attitude of respect should be developed in all areas of our lives. Thereby it will contribute to our all-important relationship with God.

The home should provide periods of worship in which individual family members can practice the principles which have been gleaned from God's word. Parents, in the home situation, should encourage their children to be reverent during public worship and guide them to sit with their parents or close to the front of the auditorium where they will not be tempted to participate in irreverent activities.

The home can do much to improve the reverential attitude in the public worship of the church. As parents, let us do our best to train our children in this very vital area of worship, and be a reverent example in worship unto God.

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SOME CAN'T TELL A FOX FROM A DOG

Jodie Boren

To serve as an elder in the Lord's church is a great privilege but it is also an awesome responsibility. The elders are to *take* the oversight of the flock (I Peter 5:2) and in this capacity they are to watch for the souls of the flock knowing that they are to give an account for their stewardship (Hebrews 13:17).

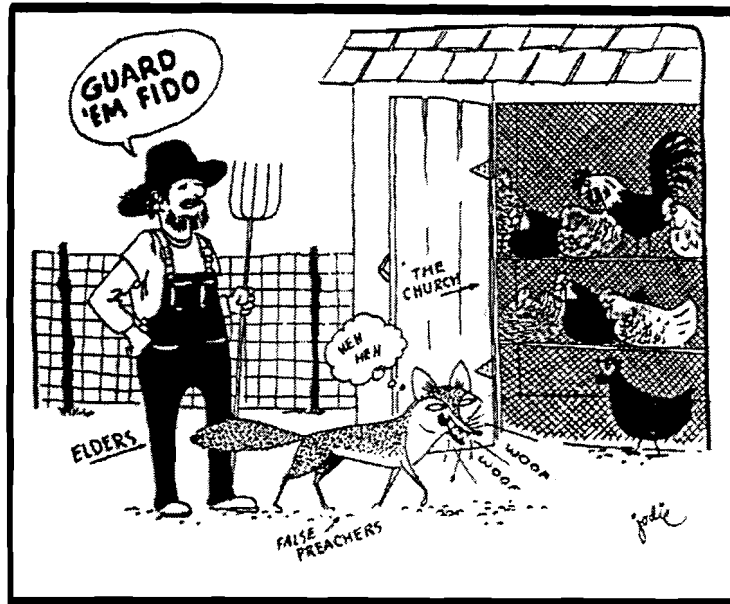
Watching over the flock's souls carries with it the idea—among other things—of guarding them from false teachings. Paul warns

that grievous wolves will enter into the church not sparing the flock. Even from the eldership will **"men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"** (Acts 20:29, 30). Therefore, as shepherds, they are to feed the church (Acts 20:28) holding fast the faithful word (Titus 1:9) speaking the things which become sound doctrine (Titus 2:1).

It is obvious, therefore, that an elder must not be a novice, but have a good knowledge of the word of God that he may differentiate between sound and false doctrine. This is of extreme importance when it comes to selecting a preacher for their congregation. There are many qualifications to consider in hiring a pulpit man. But no prerequisites are more important for a preacher to have than to have a love for the truth, to be sound in doctrine, and to proclaim it boldly.

Since the preacher is perhaps the most visible representative of the congregation to the community and since he is the principal disseminator of the word to the congregation, it is absolutely imperative that he be faithful to the word or else apostasy will take place.

Unfortunately, it seems that many elderships are seeking those men who make a good appearance in the pulpit and who have the proper social skills so they can relate with the congregation and the community. And it seems to be believed that the more degrees they have behind their names, the greater credibility they will have with the flock and the community. Now certainly these are desirable and important qualifications and should in no way be minimized—but the bottom line is, *how faithful to the word are they?* Many preachers are hired because of their eloquence of speech and their social skills, but who are unsound in doctrine. As too often is the case, the elders will hire such a



man and then say to this fox, (grievous wolf), "guard 'em Fido" Once in the pulpit, he waters down the pure gospel and preaches a social gospel leading the flock astray. He skillfully "devours" the flock with his false doctrine while entertaining their itching ears with smooth things and humorous stories. He gradually and persuasively "brain-washes" them with such false doctrines as:

1. Salvation by grace only,
2. It is okay for women to lead in the public worship,
3. Mechanical instrumental music is acceptable to God,

4. Solos and choirs are not contrary to the scriptures in corporate worship

5. There are faithful Christians in all the denominations,

6. All of life is worship.

Of course the list of present day departures from God's word goes on and on.

It is this fox (wolf—change agent) in the pulpit that is largely responsible for the apostasy that is seen in the church today.

We have many great elders in the church today and we are thankful for their devotion and faithful service to the Lord. It is their responsibility to feed the flock. Therefore, you who are elders must select preachers who stand in the old paths where is the good way (Jeremiah 6:16) and who will boldly and faithfully preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). If any preacher strays from the New Testament pattern and refuses to repent, he must be dismissed before it is too late.

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TO OBEY IS BETTER

Noah A. Hackworth

At least a thousand years before Christ, Saul, the son of Kish, was anointed as Israel's first king (I Samuel 9:1-2; 10:1). He was the first in a series of three kings to rule in the period of biblical history known as the "United Kingdom." David and Solomon followed Saul. Each of these kings ruled Israel for 40 years. The "United Kingdom" was actually the result of apostasy, a refusal on the part of Israel to be governed by God, and a desire to be like the nations around them (I Samuel 8:20). God tolerated the request for a king. He said, "I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath" (Hosea 13:11). Saul was basically a disappointment. As Purkiser said,

Saul is one of the great tragic figures in history. Blessed with natural graces and talents, selected by God, enjoying the confidence of the people, he degenerated into a psychopathic condition in which his powers were sapped and his kingdom weakened. Rejection, defeat and suicide were the inevitable and historic results.

On an occasion Saul was instructed to "utterly destroy the Amalekites" (I Samuel. 15), but he did not follow through; he saved the best (15:9) and later remarked, "I have performed the commandment of Jehovah" (15:3). Saul was consequently rejected as king (15:26), having been previously told, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (15:22). This statement remains unchanged even to this day. It has always been better to obey rather than sacrifice. Unfortunately, there is the case of Adam and Eve who sacrificed the truth for a lie (Genesis 3; John 8:44) and were consequently driven out of the Edenic paradise. Then comes Cain and Abel (Genesis. 4:1-5; 1 John 3:11-12). These two men brought offerings to the Lord who accepted one offering but rejected the other. The answer is relatively simple. One offering was made in faith, but the other was not (*cf.*, Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:4). Then there is Moses who suffered the loss of the promised land, the land searched out by God, flowing with milk and honey, and the glory of all the lands (Ezekiel 20:6) because he smote the rock instead of speaking to it as authorized (Numbers 20:7-12). The list goes on and on. Today, in many instances, truth is sacrificed upon the altars of compromise, while error is entertained in the courts of Satan. The Lamentations of Jeremiah over Jerusalem are here appropriate:

How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! She is become as a widow, that was great among the nations. She that was a princess among the provinces is become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night and her tears are on her cheeks; Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: All her friends hath dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies. Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude; She dwelleth among the nations, she findeth no rest: All her persecutors overtook her within the straits. The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn as-

sembly; All her gates are desolate, her priests do sigh: Her virgins are afflicted, and she herself is in bitterness. Her adversaries are become the head, her enemies prosper; For Jehovah hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: Her young children have gone into captivity before the adversary. And from the daughter of Zion all her majesty is departed: Her princes have become like harts that find no pasture, And they are gone without strength before the pursuer. Jerusalem remembereth in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that were from the days of old: When her people fell into the hand of the adversary, and none did help her, The adversaries saw her, they did mock at her desolations. Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is become an unclean thing; All that honored her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward. Her filthiness was in her skirts; she remembered not her latter end; Therefore is she come down wonderfully; she hath no comforter: Behold, O Jehovah, my affliction; for the enemy hath magnified himself. The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things: For she hath seen that the nations are entered into her sanctuary, Concerning whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thine assembly. All her people sigh, they seek bread; They have given their pleasant things for food to refresh the soul: See, O Jehovah, and behold; for I am become abject. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by...? (Lamentations 1:1-12).

GOOD BROTHERS ARE CONCERNED

There are many good brethren who are as concerned with the welfare of the New Testament church as Jeremiah was with the condition of ancient Jerusalem. These brethren know that in many cases truth has been sacrificed for error. The line of demarcation between Christianity and denominationalism has been eradicated in some instances because many "went out from us," and gave themselves over to sacrifice rather than obedience (*cf.*, I John 2:19). They tell us we are too "strait-laced." If this means we are trying to live a disciplined life in religion and morality, we admit it because we know it is better to obey than sacrifice.

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First Annual Lubbock Lectureship Schedule

THE FAITH Once for all Delivered

Tommy J. Hicks, Director

Sunday, October 11, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Hatcher "By What Authority?"
10:00a.m. Gordon Brewer "The Faith Once for All Delivered"
11:00a.m. *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Eddie Whitten "The Sect Spoken Against"
3:00p.m. R.L. Popejoy "Forsake Not The Assembly"
4:00p.m. Bob Berard "God Does Answer Prayers"
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Curtis Cates "The Church of Christ"
8:00p.m. Marvin Weir "According to the Pattern"

Monday, October 12, 1998

9:00a.m. Ken Free "The Lord's Supper"
10:00a.m. Don Walker "Hell and Eternal Punishment"
11:00a.m. Kevin Rhodes "Prove All Things"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Bob Sweeten "Love and Tolerance"
3:00p.m. David Brown "How the Holy Spirit Works Today"
4:00p.m. David Brown DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Terry Hightower "Legalism and Liberalism"
8:00p.m. Lindell Mitchell "Faith and Works"

Tuesday, October 13, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Light "Preach the Word"
10:00a.m. Robert Dodson "The Unity of the Spirit"
11:00a.m. Daniel Denham "Traditions of Men and of God"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Gary Summers "Ye Shall Know the Truth"
3:00p.m. Jerry Moffitt "Women, Worship and Work"
4:00p.m. Jerry Moffitt DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Buster Dobbs "Law and Grace"
8:00p.m. Oran Rhodes "The Love of God"

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Wyatt "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"
10:00a.m. Joseph Meador "Teach and Admonish One Another"
11:00a.m. Don Tarbet "Ascertaining Bible Authority"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Lester Kamp "Satan and His Origin"
3:00p.m. Dub McClish "Shall We Join 'Promise Keepers?'"
4:00p.m. Dub McClish DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Tommy J. Hicks "Our Common Salvation"
8:00p.m. Stephen Wiggins "The One Baptism"

Thursday, October 15, 1998

9:00a.m. Roelf Ruffner "Mark Those Causing Divisions"
10:00a.m. Eddie Parrish "Repent: The Forgotten Command"
11:00a.m. Jesse Whitlock "Have No Fellowship"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Kent Watson "Halt Between Two Opinions"
3:00p.m. Garland Elkins "What Are Salvation Matters?"
4:00p.m. Garland Elkins DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Gary Colley "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage"
8:00p.m. Darrell Conley "The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"

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—California—

Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist. (303) 344-4050 or (303) 369-0423. Publishers of *Matters of THE Faith*.

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Pensacola—Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

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—Michigan—

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—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, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist.

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“THE CURSE OF MEROZ”

Jerry C. Brewer

The only reference in Holy Writ to the inhabitants of Meroz is the single curse pronounced against them in Deborah's song of victory.

Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. (Judges 5:23).

Like Chorazin, Meroz's fate was to be preserved from oblivion only by this curse. The indictment was **“because they came not to the help of the Lord.”** By turning a deaf ear to the plight of Jehovah's people in their battle against the oppressive Jabin and his military chieftain Sisera, the Merozites turned from the cause of Jehovah himself.

The bitterness in the treatment of Meroz, not found in the references to any of the other delinquents, must be due to the special gravity of her offense. Reuben, Gilead and Dan were far away. This, however is not true of Asher who was also absent. Perhaps Meroz was near the field of battle and, at some stage of the conflict, within sight and hearing of the strife. If, when Zebulun **“jeoparded their lives unto death, and Naphtali, upon the high places of the field,”** they turned a deaf ear and a cold heart to the dire straits of their brethren, this might explain the fierce reproaches of Deborah. (*“Meroz,” International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, The Howard-Severance Co., Chicago, 1915, Vol.3, p.2037.*)

The spirit of Meroz lives in brethren today who turn aside from spiritual conflict. Some brethren believe the **“unpardonable sin”** is speaking the truth plainly. They want to tiptoe around and sneak up on the blind side of others with the gospel and never take a stand against anything. Refusing to aid those who bear the heat of battle, they refuse to **“come to the help of the Lord”** thereby aiding the cause of unrighteousness and sinning in their neutrality. (Matthew 12:30).

When **Joe Beam** held a meeting at Weatherford, Oklahoma in 1997, several faithful brethren mailed a letter to the Weatherford membership warning of Beam's Holy

Spirit heresies. One brother who signed the letter went before the Weatherford church in April, 1998 to apologize for what he called **“lash(ing) out at your meeting with Joe Beam... This was wrong... Christians CAN NOT and MUST NOT (his emphasis) be enemies.”** But Christians *can be* and *sometimes are* enemies of those within and without who preach false doctrines. Fellowship is ruptured when one refuses to **“walk in the light,”** (I John 1:7). Apostates like Joe Beam are **“enemies of the cross of Christ”** and that makes them enemies of Christ's followers. Jesus said, **“If a man love me, he will keep my words.”** (John 14:23). Those who do not keep the words of Christ are **“enemies of the cross,”** (Philippians 3:18), and enemies of the cross are enemies of Christians. If not, why not?

Israel prosecuted the war against Jabin and Sisera by God's authority. The enemies of God were the enemies of Israel and that principle obtains in Jesus' words to the seventy. **“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.”** (Luke 10:16). Enemies of unrighteousness are enemies of Christians, whether they are heretics like Joe Beam and **Max Lucado**, or atheists and agnostics. It is not a sin to have enemies. Jesus had them. It is a sin to mistreat them. (Matthew 5:44). Did Paul become the enemy of his brethren because he dared to tell them the truth (Galatians 4:16)?

Meroz was cursed for its failure to aid Jehovah's cause by aiding his people in their battle against his foes. That is exactly the ground occupied by today's spineless apologists who refuse to prosecute spiritual warfare against the enemies of unrighteousness. Christian soldiers who fail to unsheathe the sword of the Spirit and meet the enemy on the field of battle deserve, and will receive, God's curse, as surely as Meroz of old.

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

RICK ATCHLEY'S KEYNOTE SPEECH AT JUBILEE '98

(Will The Holy Spirit Bring Something To Your Mind If You Are Sincere?)

Gary L. Grizzell

[Editorial Note: In an article in the July issue of this paper Gary Grizzell mentioned Rick Atchley's keynote speech of Jubilee '98. In the following article he develops his examination of Atchley's speech and exposes the error therein.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

In the recent 1998 Nashville Jubilee, Rick Atchley, spoke on "Resurrecting the Power of Prayer." He told of a sermon he once preached in a "gospel meeting" wherein he encouraged his audience, saying, "Let's ask God to do miracles among us today." He said an older preacher tried to correct him after the sermon concerning the difference between miracles and providence. Atchley then asked his 1998 Jubilee audience, "You ever heard of that word? Providence? It's a good word. Never in the Bible, but it's a good word. We've invented it because it makes God seem safer." I wonder if Atchley has ever read Acts 24:2 where the word "providence" is found (KJV)? He admitted that perhaps he should have used a different expression in place of the word "miracles" such as "God is active" or "God is alive." However, he left his Jubilee devotees with no other thought than that the Holy Spirit works miracles in the lives of Christians today.

ATCHLEY INSTRUCTS JUBILEE DEVOTEES TO EXPECT THE HOLY SPIRIT TO "BRING SOMETHING TO MIND"

Atchley concluded his lecture with these words:

Let's close with prayer. Bow your heads, please. Let's go before the Father and I want to give you some time to pray personally for your church. Ask God to put on your heart right now something for your church, some plans that are so big that only he could do it. The Spirit will bring something to mind if you are sincere in your asking. Let God right now put something on your heart and it may be weeks and it may be months and it may be years in coming but if it is from God don't stop asking. What will you claim for your church, whose answer's so big only God will get

the glory?

Take it to the Father, right now." (Paused for a moment of prayer). "Father, hear, hear the cry of our heart this morning, and Father, give us a dream that's from you. Because our faith is so weak, and our, our plans and our dreams are so puny, that I'm afraid we will settle for something that is insulting to you. Give us, Father, give us Father, a, a vision of your plans for us..."

In his closing comments, what did Atchley encourage and instruct his audience to do? First, he said, "Ask God to put on your heart right now something for your church, some plans that are so big that only he could do it." Thereby Atchley instructed his audience to request a direct operation of deity upon their minds. For what reason did he give this advice to his auditors? So that they could know that by prayer to God there would be divinely originated information (knowledge) given them regarding the future plans of their local congregation. Such foolishness! This is sheer modern-day Pentacostalism. It may be trite and boring to Atchley to hear that the New Testament is the complete and final authority in matters pertaining to salvation and the work of the church, but it is true! [Atchley, there are no latter-day revelations (Jude 3, Galatians 1:8,9; 6:2; Colossians 2:14).]

How does an eldership/leadership then know what practical plans to make in evangelism as it pertains to expedient matters? Respect the authoritative word of God, study it, rightly divide it and then use the intellectual ability God has given in order to think and reason in optional matters (John 12:48; II John 9; Matthew 28:18; II Timothy 2:15; Galatians 5:1; Hebrews 13:7,17). Such may not be exciting

(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

Volume XXIX, No. 9

September/1998

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Editorial...

HOGAN, WINSTON ARE STILL REMEMBERED IN SINGAPORE

Although almost a quarter of a century has come and gone since then, the gospel campaign that R.N. Hogan and J.S. Winston conducted in Singapore in 1974 is still remembered here with much appreciation and thanksgiving.

It was necessary for me personally to return to Singapore late in June, 1998. Many—perhaps most—of those who participated in that noble effort are now dead. However, when I come across some who are still living who were there then, they recall it as one of the most important undertakings in the whole history of the cause of Christ in Singapore.

HOGAN/WINSTON CAMPAIGN MOST OUTSTANDING

For instance, today (July 10, 1998), I was talking with sister Baby Tan, the esteemed widow of brother Tan Keng Koon, who was largely responsible for the preparatory work leading up to Hogan/Winston gospel meeting here.

I asked sister Tan, of all the campaigns and gospel meetings conducted across the years in Singapore, which one does she consider the most outstanding of all? Without pause, she exclaimed,

“The one preached by that black preacher, brother Hogan; it was marvelous!”

She recalled that her husband, brother Koon, had taught and trained the local members *how* to do—and to *do*—personal evangelism. They had gone door-knocking on more than 7,000 homes before Hogan and Winston arrived. Of the best “prospects,” they had returned for a second visit to some 600 homes offering bus rides to the gospel meeting. When the meeting finally started, we had Singapore Chinese coming by the bus-load from all over the city. Brother Hogan himself said he never saw anything like it.

CHINESE RESPONDED TO HOGAN'S PREACHING

I told sister Tan that in the beginning I was not sure exactly how Chinese people would respond to Hogan's preaching. However, any questions I had in this regard were dispelled that very first night. People started obeying the gospel from the first invitation—and they continued responding every night throughout the week until 85 had been baptized and at least 20 or more restored.

When I asked sister Tan her impression of what caused brother Hogan's preaching to be so effective, she said it was his preaching *God's* word rather than *man's* word with such force and zeal. She said that

man can only plant and water, but it is *God* who gives the “increase.”

How right she was!

QUOTING AND READING GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

Another effective thing was brother Winston's *reading* of God's word, with Hogan quoting it verbatim simultaneously. They were astonishingly successful in doing this; and it made Hogan's preaching exactly what he said it was—God's word.

It may be too much to pray for someone to come along who can *ever* preach “like Hogan.” But it is not

too much to hope that we might all get back on the book—and stay there—like he did.

Probably the single most extraordinary highlight of my whole life was getting to be present for and to participate in the Hogan/Winston gospel campaign in Singapore. Not only do I still feel grateful to both of them for *coming*, but especially to the Figueroa Church of Christ, in Los Angeles, for *sending* them.

R.N. Hogan may now be gone; but he, being dead, yet speaketh. Singapore remains a better place for his coming!

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr. *Editor*

Associate Editorial...

WILL THE REAL TROUBLER PLEASE STAND UP?

Since its beginning some have charged *Contending for the Faith* with being one of the chief troublers of spiritual Israel. On the other hand we have routinely charged certain persons with being troublers of the Lord's church. Who is right? Does this paper “bind where God in his word has not bound?” By the things taught herein do we “loose men from what God in his word has bound on us?” Do we treat matters that do not make any difference to man's salvation as though they did? I firmly believe that one can learn from the Bible the things necessary to answer the previous questions (II Timothy 3:16,17; Colossians 3:17; James 1:25; I Thessalonians 5:21; Romans 15:4).

ELIJAH AND AHAB

In I Kings 18:17,18 Israel's King Ahab said to the faithful prophet Elijah, “**Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?**” Elijah answered the king in the following manner. “**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.**” Which man was telling the truth? Let us continue with our study and learn which man falsely accused the other. At the time Ahab and Elijah charged and countercharged one another with being troublers, a terrible drought prevailed in the country. God had authorized Elijah to pray that it would not rain. This he did and it did not rain for three and one half years. God had Elijah do this that the people might come to grips with their sins and repent of them. Hence, Ahab accused Elijah of being a troubler of Israel. Now, who was the real troubler of Israel: he who forsook the commandments of God or the one who rebuked the commandment breaker (John 14:15)?

Today, are those who stand for the absolute objective humanly attainable truth of the Bible troublers of the church? Are those who reprove and rebuke sin, as well as denounce and hate evil the troublers of the family of God? When we uphold the New Testament as a divine blueprint or pattern (sound doctrine) we are called troublers of Israel. Moreover, when we emphasize that one must have New Testament authority for everything one believes and practices we are charged with being troublers of the body of Christ. When we deal with deviations from the word of our Lord in the plan of salvation, along with the beginning, worship, work, organization, and destiny of the church of Christ, we are labeled troublers of the church. Indeed, to point out that all the saved are in the church of Christ causes many to declare that we are troublers of the Lord's people. When we extol the church of Christ and expose sectarian denominationism in and out of the church we are said to trouble the saints. Furthermore, when we call the names of those who teach false doctrines regarding love, grace, law, obedience, works, baptism, music whereby God is worshipped, the Lord's supper, marriage, divorce, and remarriage we are labeled troublers of Israel. As we strive to obey Jude 3 our more “spiritual” brethren tell us that we are hateful, mean, harsh and unloving.

All of these criticisms from those who claim to oppose criticism. Amazing that there can be so much negativism from those who claim to extol the virtues of being positive. *There has never been more hate displayed, mean criticism given, and negativism projected than that from the liberals (those who by their doctrines loose men from what God in his word has bound on them). And, these are they who claim to be so loving, tender, merciful, caring, positive, and free of criticism.*

THE LIBERAL ATTACKS THE PERSON AND HIS MOTIVE

In most criticisms launched by the liberal mind against those who believe and live as I do, there is no real effort made to deal with a doctrine that they per-

ceive to be false. There is a good reason for this approach by the liberal; he does not like the idea of anything being labeled false doctrine. Hence, in most instances liberals attack the person and/or his motive.

Unless there is adequate evidence and/or credible witnesses to establish that a person is hypocritical there should be no attacks on the person and his motive. If the objective evidence proves that one is a hypocrite, then the door is opened wide for one to deal with that person's motive and intent (Matthew 23; Acts 7:51-53; John 7:24; James 1:8). The liberal mindset cares for none of these things. When opposed, the liberal has but one goal, to destroy his opposition. Such persons do not believe in an absolute objective standard of authority (the Bible). Hence, when those of this mindset see their aspirations and goals threatened, their subjective selfish feelings are highly offended. In the relative subjective thinking of such self-willed and selfish persons one all-encom-

passing thought rises higher than any other: it is compulsion to destroy "by hook or by crook" anyone who presents a danger to their plans. Shades of Ahab!

Do you now see why Ahab charged Elijah with being a troubler of Israel? It certainly was not because Ahab loved God and his word, but because he did not care for either one. When Elijah exposed Ahab and his wife Jezebel's sinful plans and actions the prophet found himself in the cross hairs of the wicked pair's vengeance. They blamed Elijah for the very things of which they were guilty. Their spiritual descendants always operate by the same motive. These characters are walking mean and selfish tempers looking for a place to tantrum. Such always characterizes those who rebel against God (Jude 10-25). "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20).

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

RICH ATCHLEY...

(Continued from Page 1)

enough to the silly and shallow, but it is the thrilling plan of God for those who walk by faith.

Second, Atchley said, "The Spirit will bring something to mind if you are sincere in your asking." In this faulty assertion he again was advising his Jubilee devotees that the Holy Spirit of God was about to operate directly upon their minds provided they were not hypocritical in their hearts. Where is the New Testament authority for him to make such a statement? The truth of the matter is that whether sincere or insincere, the Spirit will bring NOTHING to the mind of the Christian today as Atchley described. The Spirit speaks through his sword today, the written word of God, not directly in a miraculous manner (Ephesians 6:17). (A tract I recommend on sincerity which has just been published is "Sincerity And Your Salvation" by Lynn Parker. It may be ordered from *Contending for the Faith*, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357.)

Third, he said, "Let God right now put something on your heart and it may be weeks and it may be months and it may be years in coming, but if it is from God don't stop asking." By this statement again he implied that deity could perform directly (miraculously) upon one's thought patterns in revealing truth not formerly known to him. His audience was instructed to pray for God to give this mental illumination "right now" (immediately). Notice, however, that he also said that God may choose not to give that mental illumination (revelation) until years later. Are we to suppose that the Christian who did not receive a revelation from God immediately was not sincere in his expression of his request according to Atchley's instruction.

Fourth, Atchley's question, "What will you claim for your church, whose answer's so big only God will get the glory?," is denominational to the core! Where is his termi-

nology or the concept found in the New Testament for a Christian "claim[ing]" divine thoughts as they are being miraculously dropped from deity during one's sincere act of praying? (Colossians 3:17). This pernicious doctrine comes directly out of the denominationalist's handbook on the work of the Holy Spirit.

When, oh when, will Atchley and his kind (those who love the trappings and glitter of man-made religion) repent or openly disassociate themselves from the "churches of Christ?" The sooner they remove church of Christ from their buildings the better the Lord's church will be for it. When, oh when, will gullible and naïve brethren cease supporting such religious charlatans (Matthew 15:7-9; I John 2:19; II John 10-11)? Let us learn to take up the New Testament and discern damnable error from gospel truth when it is taught. Having done so, let us reject it with all of our might.

READ HEBREWS 1:1,2

Fifth, regarding the power of prayer, Atchley publicly prayed at *Jubilee* and over the worldwide net, "Father, give us a dream, that's from you." Of course, God will not give to anyone (Christian or otherwise) a miraculous dream. (What other kind of dream [message] would proceed to a human directly from the throne of God?) In an attempt to defend his words Atchley answered that he was not advocating his listener pray for a miraculous dream (or a dream miraculously). To such an effort I would answer: 1) In the New Testament the use of the word, "dream," as it relates to receiving a divine message is a miraculous use or connection (Matthew 1:20; 2:12,13,19,22; Acts 2:17). 2) While praying over concrete, practical plans for work in the area of evangelism is to be encouraged (we all know that!), those practical plans in the area of expediency are not revealed directly from God in prayer today. God does not miraculously pop (inject) thoughts into a man's mind today in prayer. However, that is what Atchley would have

us believe. If his chosen words did not express what he was thinking regarding praying for dreams, then what words would he choose to say what he had on his mind?

Though he was no doubt unaware of it, according to New Testament usage of the word, "dream," Atchley was actually instructing his followers to pray that in their sleep God would have them dream and in that dream they would have a vision whereby God would impart unto them the answer to their prayer. Just as a foreigner in a strange land may use the wrong word in communicating a message, no matter what good intentions would cause one so to do, he could suffer harm for his wrong usage of the language. Words mean things. Preachers are in the business of words. Of course, Atchley might protest at the previously stated inference, but his words imply such in New Testament teaching. In the context of his speech Atchley was using the word "dream" to be equivalent with "a divine message." Either way, his usage of the word was unscriptural (I Peter 4:11).

Some dreaming is unauthorized (Jude 1:8). God's people in the Old Testament were warned to beware of false dreams (revelations) which appeared to be from God but were actually of man's own imagination (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Jeremiah 23:25-32; 27:9; 29:8; Zechariah. 10:2).

Sixth, Atchley rambled on saying, "Give us, Father, give us Father, a, a vision of your plans for us." Herein, he now petitions God for a "vision." One cannot but wonder if such speakers as Atchley have ever read Colossians 3:17. Therein the Holy Spirit-inspired apostle Paul directly stated that all who speak in religious matters are to have divine authority for their expressions (in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord). The miraculous vision which the apostle Paul received revealed to him information wherein God directed him to go into Macedonia to preach the gospel. That vision was limited to the miraculous period of the church and it was FOR the apostle Paul and NOT for Rick Atchley, any of his fellow *Jubilee* devotees or anyone one else today (Acts 16:9-10). Certain Christians (not all) of the first century were to have visions prior to God's completed, written New Covenant (Acts 2:17; I Corinthians 13:8-10). If Atchley or anyone else in or out of the church desires to know God's plans for himself, let him look long into the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25). It is that written revelation from heaven given to men (in case Atchley has forgotten) that is the permanent deposit of truth for man's salvation. It is that book that reveals the mind of God in regard to the worship and work of the church (Jude 3; II Peter 1:3; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 8:6). The eternal purpose of God is revealed in it. (Is that sufficient information for Atchley?) Hence, there is no reason for him, his fellow *Jubilee* devotees or anyone else to pray for the reception of a vision (revelation, message). God has revealed all he is going to reveal regarding his great scheme of redemption. He, along with the rest of us, may look into that covenant revealed and given to man after much divine preparation, prophecy, persecution of apostles, martyrs and the death of the testator (Jesus Christ). What is God's plan for the local congregation? It is to preach the gospel publicly and privately (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:5, 35; 20:20). The meth-

ods used to accomplish the task are in the realm of options. Which option(s) to use is a matter of expediency (that which gets the obligation discharged in the quickest and best manner possible). In rightly dividing the word of truth one will examine its direct statements, examples and implicit teaching of the same (II Timothy 2:15). Thereby one may know what God has authorized the church to do. Regarding the spreading of the gospel which the church is obligated to do, churches may discharge that obligation through radio, television, internet, Bible correspondence courses, tract evangelism program, and by other means of communication (II Timothy 2:15). Pray—before, during and after—the decision-making process. Pray without ceasing. God answers prayer today through his chosen means (Romans 8:28). However, do not ask God for a dream, a vision, or for factual information—that is, a message directly from God—in prayer. Do not expect God in prayer to give you a revelation about any subject. My advice for Rick Atchley and his fellow *Jubilee* devotees is:

1. Use your God-given intellectual faculties to determine which option(s) expedites the discharging of the thing authorized.
2. Put prayer in its scriptural place.
3. Quit expecting (and asking) the Holy Spirit directly to tell you something during the act of prayer.
4. Then get about the work of preaching the pure gospel of Christ.

In brief, Atchley, the *Jubilee* crowd, and anyone else who erroneously believe that God speaks to man in the way that Atchley taught at the 1998 Nashville *Jubilee* desperately need to repent.

FAITHFUL BRETHREN BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF PRAYER

It is typical of those of the liberal stripe to accuse those who deny the miraculous, direct operation of the Holy Spirit in prayer today of believing in a distant and disinterested God. However, faithful brethren who oppose such

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Jubilee antics as reviewed in this article do not hold to such a false view of God. They know that God hears and answers prayers through his providential means (James 5:16; Hebrews 4:16; I Pet. 3:12; Matthew 7:7-11; Romans 8:28; Philemon 15; Esther 4:14). It is nothing short of meanness to accuse consecrated, dedicated, children of God who fully trust in their heavenly Father of believing in a cold, lifeless God. It is untrue and mean. Yet, such was done at Jubilee '98. According to Atchley, *if you do not believe in a God of modern-day miracles, you do not really understand or believe in the true God. The false view is the rotten, unfair attitude of speakers like Atchley.* Atchley and his fellow Jubilee devotees are just mad because faithful brethren do not agree with their reception-of-answers-in-prayer-by-miraculous-means theory.

If everyone in the world (except for the Jubilee devotees) believes in a disinterested and distant God, that would not prove their modern direct-operation-of-the-Holy-Spirit theory. Let them divert the issue all they want, but it will not serve as a substitute for their responsibility to **"prove all things"** (I Thessalonians 5:21). Their habitual accusation is reflective of their Gnostic-like attitude of knowing more than conservatives when it comes to biblical subjects such as love, justice, kindness, spirituality, devotion and prayer. (Incidentally, Joe Beam accused faithful brethren of having a Gnostic attitude in one of his speeches in Jubilee '98.)

THE WATCHWORD

May those who upheld Jubilee '98 see the false teaching by Rick Atchley and others and repent of supporting such. When false prophets and doctrinal compromisers such as

Rick Atchley, Rubel Shelly, Joe Beam and Jeff Walling have few or no supporters they will find it harder and harder to poison the minds of men with their spiritual concoctions. Perhaps then they will openly disassociate themselves from the church of Christ. Then, outside the church, they may form a denomination to their own liking (which they are rapidly doing anyway) and party with the rest of those who have **"a form of godliness but deny the power thereof:"** (II Timothy 3:5). If they must embarrass and humiliate the Lord and his pure bride let them do it in their own religion and not in the Lord's church. The quicker they are cut off from the body of Christ the better things will be for the faithful remnant. Hence, to all soldiers of the cross, the watchword is: **"Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on eternal life"** (I Timothy 6:12).

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IT'S THE HIT DOG THAT HOWLS

Jodie Boren

We are all familiar with the old adage that if you throw a rock into a pack of dogs, it will always be the dog that gets hit that will let out a howl. This reminds me of the pack of false teachers in the church today who are perverting the word of the Lord. When one obeys Paul's command of Romans 16:17 to "**mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine**" of Christ you have thrown the rock of truth into the pack. It is the self-professed change agents who are the first to set up a real loud howl. They howl that they should have been contacted personally before being publicly criticized. They continue to howl claiming they have been misquoted or that their statements have been taken out of context.

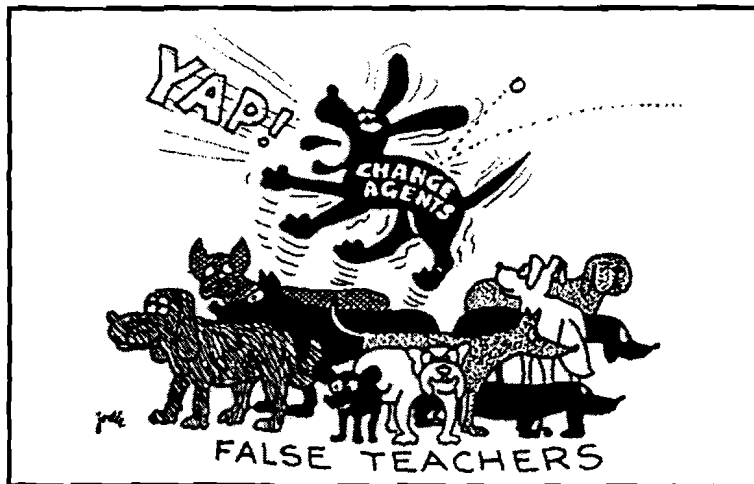
Upon examination these yelps of outrage are nothing more than cover-ups for their false teachings. They grossly misuse Matthew 18:15-17. Our Lord, in this context, is speaking of a controversy between two individuals. Jesus is not speaking of those who bring shame and reproach to his church with their false doctrines.

Paul did not know the man of I Corinthians 5 who was guilty of having his father's wife. This sordid affair had only been reported to him. He did not go see the man personally but wrote a strong condemnation of this man's fornication, exhorting the brethren there to take the proper discipline that he might be saved.

Did Paul call names? Absolutely! In I Timothy 19:20 he mentions Hymenaeus and Alexander. He says they had made shipwreck of their faith and he has turned them over to Satan. He adds Philetus to those who have erred from the truth (II Timothy 2:17-18). It is unfortunate that some of the change agents were not around when Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, named names. They could have told him he was not supposed to do that!

In a radio broadcast in late 1996, Max Lucado taught the Baptist doctrine, that all you have to do to be saved is to pray to God and accept the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart.

Shades of **Billy Graham!** After a couple of announcements the preacher came back on the air and said to the radio audience that they should be baptized—but *not for the remission of sins*—because they had already been saved after they had prayed and accepted Christ! You can listen to the tape over and over and even a grade school student can understand what has been said. There is just no way it



can be misunderstood. It can not be claimed of those of us who are sickened by such departure from God's word that we have taken it out of context. He was talking about being saved—that was his context. When he plainly states that baptism is not necessary unto salvation, is he not wresting the scriptures to his own destruction (II Peter 3:16)?

This Calvinistic doctrine and other changes being advocated are not just cosmetic changes but are fundamental doctrinal changes. Women preachers—women elders—instrumental music—confirmation of babies—claiming the Lord's church is just a denomination—that we ought to fellowship all who believe in Christ regardless of what is taught—are just a few of the changes being advocated. These things ought not so to be.

A few years ago, a convicted serial killer **Randy Kraft** filed a \$60 million lawsuit against Warner Books and author **Dennis McDougal** arguing that their book, *Angel of Darkness*, defamed him. Kraft, who was on death row for the sexual torture-murder of six men, said the book is unfair in its portrayal of him as a "sick and twisted man." If a person guilty of such heinous crimes is not a sick and twisted man, then what would one have to do to be so labeled? I am not comparing the change agents with Randy Kraft, except to say, that as Kraft howled loudly when exposed for what he was—so do these false teachers howl loudly when exposed by the truth. We must hold fast the faithful word, that we "**may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers**" (Titus 1:9).

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First Annual Lubbock Lectureship Schedule

THE FAITH Once for all Delivered

Tommy J. Hicks, Director

Sunday, October 11, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Hatcher "By What Authority?"
10:00a.m. Gordon Brewer "The Faith Once for All Delivered"
11:00a.m. *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Eddie Whitten "The Sect Spoken Against"
3:00p.m. R.L. Popejoy "Forsake Not The Assembly"
4:00p.m. Bob Berard "God Does Answer Prayers"
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Curtis Cates "The Church of Christ"
8:00p.m. Marvin Weir "According to the Pattern"

Monday, October 12, 1998

9:00a.m. Ken Free "The Lord's Supper"
10:00a.m. Don Walker "Hell and Eternal Punishment"
11:00a.m. Kevin Rhodes "Prove All Things"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Bob Sweeten "Love and Tolerance"
3:00p.m. David Brown "How the Holy Spirit Works Today"
4:00p.m. David Brown DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Terry Hightower "Legalism and Liberalism"
8:00p.m. Lindell Mitchell "Faith and Works"

Tuesday, October 13, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Light "Preach the Word"
10:00a.m. Robert Dodson "The Unity of the Spirit"
11:00a.m. Daniel Denham "Traditions of Men and of God"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Gary Summers "Ye Shall Know the Truth"
3:00p.m. Jerry Moffitt "Women, Worship and Work"
4:00p.m. Jerry Moffitt DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Buster Dobbs "Law and Grace"
8:00p.m. Oran Rhodes "The Love of God"

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

9:00a.m. Michael Wyatt "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"
10:00a.m. Joseph Meador "Teach and Admonish One Another"
11:00a.m. Don Tarbet "Ascertaining Bible Authority"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Lester Kamp "Satan and His Origin"
3:00p.m. Dub McClish "Shall We Join 'Promise Keepers?'"
4:00p.m. Dub McClish DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Tommy J. Hicks "Our Common Salvation"
8:00p.m. Stephen Wiggins "The One Baptism"

Thursday, October 15, 1998

9:00a.m. Roelf Ruffner "Mark Those Causing Divisions"
10:00a.m. Eddie Parrish "Repent: The Forgotten Command"
11:00a.m. Jesse Whitlock "Have No Fellowship"
12:00noon *Lunch Break*
2:00p.m. Kent Watson "Halt Between Two Opinions"
3:00p.m. Garland Elkins "What Are Salvation Matters?"
4:00p.m. Garland Elkins DISCUSSION FORUM
5:00p.m. *Dinner Break*
6:30p.m. Singing
7:00p.m. Gary Colley "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage"
8:00p.m. Darrell Conley "The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"

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HOW TO HIDE SIN IN THE CHURCH

Bob Berard

Men have discovered numerous ingenious ways to cover their mistakes. In construction a bit more paint is used; in beautifying the face, a dab more powder; in writing errors, a spot of "white-out" fluid. Often these touch-ups are of no problem to anyone. Those who cover the flaw are pleased that the appearance is favorable, and given time may even forget the mistake that they have concealed. Those who never see the blemish remain blissful in their ignorance. Should it not be the same in the church? Certainly some would have us think so, as they offer "reasons" for concealing the sins of others and of themselves. Consider a few of the suggestions recently heard.

1. *The sin of some is no longer practiced.* These brethren do not do this sin anymore as they once did. True, they have not repented and confessed publicly these public sins as I John 1:9 and James 5:16 require, but their sin was committed at a place and time other than here and now. They do not commit the sin in our presence, so why should we trouble them with the rebuke required by II Timothy 4:2. Sure, the Bible says that it is profitable for correction of sin, but why correct the sin if it is invisible to most in the church? (II Timothy 3:16).

2. *The sin considered is small when compared to other sins.* It does not show its ugly results—at least at the moment—to the members of this congregation, but if we were to confront those guilty of it and insist that correction be made to attain (or maintain) fellowship with God's elect, surely a scene would be created, feelings would be hurt, and babes in Christ would be disturbed to learn that such sin problems exist and that the biblical remedy at times requires a confrontation. Probably the disturbance caused by Paul's public rebuke of Peter caused hard feelings which lasted for months. Imagine Paul saying that an apostle of Christ "**stood condemned**" (Galatians 2:11, *ASV*). Had Paul been as sensitive and delicate as we are, this could have been avoided.

3. *The sin in question will just have to be left alone since its exposure and correction would necessitate the admission of wrong of the part of those who seem "to be somewhat" among us for their initial mishandling of the sin.* For these men of considerable influence to confess their faults might diminish their standing among brethren. This being too demeaning to consider, the sin will have to receive a coat or two more of gloss-over paint.

4. *Hiding this sin is imperative because those with the knowledge and opportunity to stand up and make it known and to call for their brethren to join in requiring the biblical correction are themselves divided over what to do.* Some will definitely not go along with doing what is right in calling for correction. If those who would otherwise like to correct the sin act with courage and God's approval, those opposed to doing the right thing will resist and cause trouble and may even split the church. Division must be suppressed at all costs, even if it requires that all take the cowardly, sin-abetting approach of leaving the sin alone.

Yes, we know the Bible says that a brother "**overtaken in a fault**" should be restored, but that passage is addressed to those who are "**spiritual**" and it is obvious from our efforts to conceal sin that we are far from fitting that description (Galatians 6:1).

5. *The sin which now confronts us is not the only sin which has been allowed to remain at least partially concealed and uncorrected.* If we act as we should in this case, some may object that we have not acted as we should have in other cases. On the other hand, if we keep this sin covered up as we have done in other cases, the several wrongs will all remain neatly where we have swept them, that is, under the rug, and brethren can continue to live together and worship God in peace.

6. *The sin should remain concealed, because, after all, all church members sin from time to time.* The Bible clearly says that "**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves**" (I John 1:8). We are just unable to see the difference between this sin in which men persist without repenting and correcting and the occasional sins committed even by the faithful for which they do repent and correct.

7. *Those accused of committing this sin, may be innocent.* They say that they no longer hold the sinful views which "**condemn the just**" contrary to Proverbs 17:15. Though it is suspected that they are still in fellowship with brethren elsewhere who do condemn the just, this, if true, would only involve them in "**justifying the wicked,**" which is only half of what God says he considers to be an abomination (Proverbs 17:15). If we ask them directly about their fellowship, we are afraid we will offend them and nothing could be worse than that, not even losing our souls.

8. *Those accused of committing this sin need a place to worship where faithful brethren worship God.* Everyone has that right, do they not? Why should we bother them about the false brethren they fellowship, if they are only hurting themselves?

If you think the foregoing are entirely fictional you have just not listened to all of your brethren who refuse to correct sin by the Bible's dictates. Unlike the treatment of minor mistakes in many secular matters, sin is to be corrected, not just covered up. Sin's wages are death, spiritual death which is a separation of one's spirit from God, a separation that becomes eternal if not corrected (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). This sorrow is multiplied by the horrendous affect that sin "**leaveneth the whole lump**" (Galatians 5:9).

Assuredly the most carefully covered sins are not hidden from the all-knowing God (Proverbs 15:3). "**Be sure your sin will find you out**" (Numbers 32:23). All the liberal palaver in the world will not obscure the divinely-enacted principle of men reaping what they sow (Galatians 6:7-8).

If you happen to be one who has suggested one or more of the previous points or other shameful excuses for covering up sin and if you are angered by this correction, may God help you to get over being mad and do what you ought

to do. **“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”** (Galatians 4:16).

—Post Office Box 39
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“...GOD GAVE THEM UP UNTO VILE AFFECTIONS...”

(Romans 1:26)

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

According to **Dr. Paul Cameron**, 1.4% of homosexual males die as murder victims, a rate 21 times higher than black males and 116 times higher than white males. Homosexual males commit suicide at a rate 30 times that of black males and 24 times that of white males. They die violent deaths at a rate 17 times higher than that of black males aged 24 to 44, and 28 times the rate of white males in the same age group. In San Francisco, 31% of the homosexual population is addicted to drugs or overuses them.

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control reported that among homosexuals the median number of sexual partners during a lifetime was 1100.

Seventy-three percent of the male population as a whole lives to age 65, while a mere nine percent of male homosexuals live to that age. For a homosexual with AIDS the average age at death is 39. For a homosexual without AIDS it is 42. (*The New American*, Vol. 14, No. 12, June 8, 1998, page 28-29).

[Live in sin and you pay for it. —Mark]

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A study published in 1970 reported that 84% of male homosexuals changed their sexual orientation at least once, 60% twice, 32% three times, and 13% at least five times. Among lesbians, 97% changed at least once, 81% twice, 52% three times, and 29% at least five times. As Dr. Paul Cameron puts it, “Immutable traits like eye and skin color don’t change once, much less two, three, four, or five times... Where is the ‘biologic inevitability’ or ‘immutability’ in these findings?” (*The New American*, Vol. 14, No. 12, June 8, 1998, page 28).

[Homosexuality is not an inherited condition. It is a learned behavior. Even if one is predisposed, the choice is readily available to make. —Mark]

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“I’ve said somewhere that promiscuity has always been good to me. I think one of the losses to H.I.V is the easy way we used to meet people of all races, all classes. It’s one of the few avocations that cuts across class and race lines. What I really learned about people in the Walt Whitman sense is how alike we are—a Spanish aristocrat or a house painter in Harlem or a TV personality or the guy who’s delivering the milk—the plumbing is essentially the same, the impulses are essentially the same, what works on one works on the other. What’s beautiful is the democracy of beauty and the democracy of sexuality which says in the baths that the dock workers outrank the stockbrokers—it’s

a beautiful reordering that I tried to bring to bear in the book in the final vision of an erotic paradise.” —**Allan Gurganus**, gay author of the *Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*, *White People* and, now, *Plays Well with Others*, to The North Carolina Review of Books, Spring 1998 (*NewsPlanet* e-mail service, June 10, 1998).

[Another example of the fact that these folks do not just want to be accepted. They want to change American society toward degradation. —Mark]

• • • • •

“If many of our [gay] spokespeople are to be believed, equality with straight America is best won by demonstrating that we can be monogamous spouses, tidy neighbors and loyal soldiers. ... True gay liberation is not about gay people conforming, but rather about the whole world transforming” (Editorial in the national gay magazine *The Guide*, May issue. From the June 12, 1998 internet news service).

[There you have it. The editors of this magazine state that they want the world to change to their animalistic sexual activity. And they do not want to be good neighbors! —Mark]

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SUMMARY: Lesbigan colors will be flying over Orlando, despite a national anti-abortion group’s efforts to “evangelize” them out of town.

Operation Rescue, the venerable anti-abortion activist group that has more recently taken aim at gays and lesbians, kicked off its 1998 national campaign June 1 in Orlando, Florida, where it plans to “evangelize” at the unofficial Gay Day at Disney World later this week. The group was able to muster only 60 - 100 activists to demonstrate outside an abortion clinic in the morning, and then about 50 moved on to Orlando City Hall to protest plans to decorate the town with rainbow flags for June in observance of Gay and Lesbian Pride Month.

Staff of the local gay publication “Watermark” had raised \$15,000 to purchase 720 flags (of the now-traditional six stripes, with no text) and to cover city workers’ salaries for hanging and removing them from 363 poles; all that remained was for the city to approve it. City Hall had received about 1,000 citizen calls on the subject, and some 300 people overflowed the hearing room. About 30 people contributed public testimony at the meeting, more of them supporting the flags than opposing them. Approval was given for the rainbow flags, which should be in-

stalled June 8, but the City Council also determined that no further flag requests will be considered until a task force has examined the city's policy on the matter; The only Commissioner opposing the flags was Don Ammerman, who felt that "a symbol of a particular political cause" should not be publicly displayed on public property. His office had received no messages of support for the flags. Other opponents primarily cited religious and Biblical concerns.

The "Orlando Sentinel" ran an online poll asking, "Should Orlando allow gay-pride flags on its light posts?" and as of 3pm EST June 2, an overwhelming 91.8% (15,727) had answered "yes," compared to 8.2% (1,409) "no." (NewsPlanet Staff, Friday, May 29, 1998, internet news service).

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FROM THE PRESIDENT— A CONFESSED LIAR AND FORNICATOR

"Today I have signed an Executive Order entitled Further Amendment to Executive Order 11478, Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government. The Order provides a uniform policy for the Federal Government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal civilian workforce and states that policy for the first time in an Executive Order of the President.

"It has always been the practice of this Administration to prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation in the civilian workforce, and most federal agencies and department have taken actions, such as the issuance of policy directives or memoranda from the agency heads, to memorialize that policy. The Executive Order I have signed today will ensure that there is a uniform policy throughout the Federal Government by adding sexual orientation to the list of categories for which discrimination is prohibited in Executive Order 11478 (i.e. race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age).

"This Executive Order states Administration policy but does not and cannot create any new enforcement rights (such as the ability to proceed before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Those rights can be granted only by legislation passed by the Congress, such as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. I again call upon Congress to pass this important piece of civil rights legislation which would extend these basic employment discrimination protections to all gay and lesbian Americans. Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work."

[With the previous directive President Clinton has taken a bold step toward making it illegal for a businessman to refuse to hire a person because he is homosexual. We must pray fervently that Congress will not go along with this. Making this the law of the land would severely hamper the ability of a Christian to own and grow a small business in America. Of course, the most important thing is that as a society we would be making sin a legally acceptable thing to do (the same as abortion). This is not to be taken lightly. —Mark]

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The Tenth Annual FOUR STATE LECTURES LIBERALISM

October 2

6:30 P.M. SINGING
7:00 P.M. Legalism, Liberalism and Truth Defined David Brown
8:00 P.M. I Sought for a Man to Stand in the Gap David Baker

October 3

9:00 A.M. Is There an Absolute Stand? Joseph Meador
10:00 A.M. Christian Homes in an Immoral World Russell Haffner
11:00 A.M. Liberalism/Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage David Brown
LUNCH
2:30 P.M. SINGING
3:00 P.M. Liberalism in Our Educational System Joseph Meador
4:00 P.M. Liberalism in Our Bible Class Material James Rennaker
5:00 P.M. Will God Always Bless America Sam Dilbeck
DINNER
7:00 P.M. Recognizing a Liberal Church/Preacher Mark Miller
8:00 P.M. Come Ye Out From Among Them John Moore

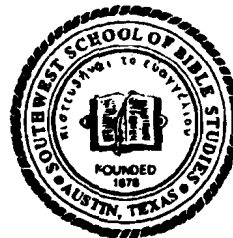
October 4

10:00 A.M. The Problem of Legalism Joseph Meador
11:00 A.M. Situation Ethics Everett Chambers
LUNCH
2:30 P.M. Compromises on Scheme Redemption Jeff Blanton
4:00 P.M. Compromises on True Worship Scott Mitchell
5:00 P.M. Charismatic Movement and Its Effects John Moore

Ladies Class: October 3

10:00 A.M. Christian's Use of the Tongue Dela Blanton

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ADULT

8:45- 9:00 A.M.SINGING
9:00-10:00 A.M.WHERE ARE THE DEAD?.....David Costello
10:00-11:00 A.M.THE 1000 YEAR REIGNKeith Mosher
11:00-11:15 A.M.BREAK
11:15-12:15 P.M.FALSE DOCTRINES.....Glenn Hitchcock
12:15-1:45 P.M.BARBECUE DINNER/FELLOWSHIP
1:45-2:15 P.M.SINGING
2:15-3:15 P.M.THE ORDER OF EVENTS AT THE END OF THE WORLDB.J. Clarke

YOUTH (12-19 YEARS)

9:30- 9:45 P.M.SINGING
9:45-10:45 A.M.WORKS OF THE FLESHB.J. Clarke
10:45-11:00 A.M.BREAK
11:00-11:15 A.M.SINGING
11:15-12:15 P.M.WHAT CAN I DO FOR THE LORD?David Costello
12:15- 1:45 P.M.BARBECUE DINNER/FELLOWSHIP
1:45- 2:00 P.M.SINGING
2:00- 3:00 P.M.FRUIT OF THE SPIRITGlenn Hitchcock

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—California—

Seal Beach—Leisure World Church of Christ, Northwood Club House, 3 room 8, Sunday: 11:00 a.m., Bible Study 10:00 a.m., Don Foslien, Evangelist.

—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, Evangelist. (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, Evangelist, 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 Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526, tel. (904) 455-7595. Evangelist, Michael Hatcher, Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

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Garden City—Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), tel. (734) 422-8660. Dan Goddard, Evangelist. Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed: 7:00 p.m.

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—Tennessee—

Crossville—Lantana Church of Christ, 7004 Lantana Rd., P.O. Box 2686, Crossville, TN 38557, (615) 788-6404. Sun.: 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., 5:30 p.m. Jimmie B. Hill, Evangelist.

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Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444 or Steve Ellis, Evangelist, (901) 366-6005.

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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, Evangelist, tel. (615) 758-7406.

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Houston area—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, Evangelist. Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures each third week in June.

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Portland—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Evangelist.

—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.,

RUBEL SHELLY CONDEMNS HIMSELF!

O.B. Porterfield

Read what **Rubel Shelly** wrote for the July 13, 1972 issue of the *Gospel Advocate*. TODAY Rubel Shelly does exactly what he condemned THEN.

THE DANGERS OF LIBERALISM

There is a rising tide of liberalism in the church today. Some liberals are very open about their modernistic beliefs and practices and are avowedly intent on "restructuring" the church. Others are modernistic in their tendencies and sympathies simply because they have let themselves be ruled by subjectivism (which is the spirit of our time) without having thought critically about the issues involved. In this latter category are to be found a great many young people who are highly susceptible to emotionalism.

One of the great dangers of liberalism is its inherent dishonesty! False teachers in generations past would exclude themselves from the fellowship of the faithful people of God and seek to destroy the truth by a frontal assault. But not so with the liberals. They go about their insidious work of destruction from within.

They use pulpits, magazines, lectureships and publishing houses to win people to themselves and their false doctrines.

It is time that Christians generally know what is going on in the church. It is time for the marks of apostasy to be pointed out so that false brethren can be recognized and dealt with according to scripture.

Note that Shelly says, "One of the great dangers of liberalism is its inherent dishonesty." His teachings of today prove his dishonesty. Shelly is one of the "top papas" of the *Nashville Jubilee* whose speakers and teachers are a "Who's who" of false teachers.

Now, here in Montgomery, Alabama congregations such as LANDMARK, VAUGHN PARK and the F.O.G. (Family of God) were a part of this error-filled event. I know many at these congregations who have been

disturbed by the error taught there, but there are still plenty, including the leadership, who want to have it so.

Do you suppose that if men like **Benny Hinn**, **Paul Crouch** or **Billy Graham** were invited to be a part of the Jubilee, that these congregations would still support it? I believe they would. In 1997 they supported **Max Lucado** as the keynote speaker at Jubilee even after it was proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that he teaches that one does not have to be baptized in order to be saved and that an alien sinner can be saved by praying the so-called "sinner's prayer." What is next?

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY and FAULKNER UNIVERSITY have people holding positions of influence who are members of these congregations. What do you suppose it will take for these two universities (and individuals) to take a public stand against the error that is being brought into the church today?

—541 Seibles Road
Montgomery, Alabama 36116

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

THREE "DERRIDEAN-DECONSTRUCTION" ESSAYS

J.E. Choate

I hold in hand three "deconstruction" essays; a copy of the 1901 corporate charter of the Nashville Bible School located in the Tennessee State Library archives; and the deed of **David Lipscomb** and **Margaret Lipscomb** who gave their farm to the Nashville Bible School. The Nashville Bible School is regarded as the "mother" all such schools established by our brethren.

It is imperative that members of the churches of Christ be made knowledgeable of the 107 years of Lipscomb school traditions. It is equally important that a knowledge of the state charter incorporating the Nashville Bible School in 1901 and the Lipscomb farm deed (1904) be in mind. It is as much the school of Lipscomb *patrons* as those in control of the institution. Woe be to them who would stifle their voices and tell them that it is a sin against God even to whisper the names of the troublers of Israel. We may not be believed until the facts support our contentions.

A new generation of church and Lipscomb University leaders has arisen who know little and care less for a century of Lipscomb school traditions. A reality check of the facts shows a picture shaping up with the chilling and frightening dimensions of a Greek tragedy.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF LIPSCOMB HISTORY AND TRADITIONS

Without documented facts from oral and written traditions, it is impossible to trace the antecedents of genealogies and history of human events. We do not really know who and what we are unless we know from whom and from what we came. The verbatim text of the 1903 NBS charter is printed:

STATE OF TENNESSEE CHARTER OF INCORPORATION

Be it known David Lipscomb, W. H. Dodd, J. R. Ward, C. A. Moore, and W. R Chambers are hereby constituted a body politic incorporated by the name and style of the NASHVILLE BIBLE SCHOOL for which charter is sought in order that it may maintain and conduct a school for the purpose of teaching the Word of God and the various other branches of useful knowledge commonly taught in the institutions of learning, and for the following general purposes, support of any literary or scientific undertaking, as a college or university with power to confer degrees, an academy, a debating society, lyceum, the establishment of a library, the support of a historical society, the promotion of painting, music in the fine arts, the support of boards of trade or chambers of commerce or other objects of like nature, the support of public worship, the building of churches of Christ, and the maintenance of all missionary undertakings.

RESTRICTIVE CLAUSES IN THE DEED OF CONVEYANCE

Charters may fade with time, and their institutions perish. But the land given by Lipscomb to the Nashville Bible School will be here when God sets the world on fire. David Lipscomb specified the conditions for the use of his land gift to the Nashville Bible School.

The Nashville Bible School, not as yet incorporated, owned its own grounds and buildings for the school year 1896-1897 on South Spruce Street. David Lipscomb, W. H. Dodd, and J. S. Ward held the property as trustees. Thereafter, all subscriptions and contributions to the school in money, real, etc., were restricted solely for the use of the NBS. The purpose of the NBS is set forth in prior

(Continued on Page 4)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

ARE NASHVILLE JUBILEE RANKS IN PROCESS OF BREAKING UP?

When Rubel Shelly—and those who have stood with him through all the exigencies of the so-called “Nashville Jubilee” over the last ten years—had Max Lucado as chief speaker for the 1997 Jubilee a year ago, did they miscalculate that he would deny that baptism has any connection with one’s salvation?

By stating this publicly (as he did in one of his main speeches—and I heard him in person), Lucado, for all intents and purposes, severed doctrinal connections with the churches of Christ. Even some of the liberal churches helping to finance the event were so disturbed by what he said that disillusionment was palpable.

ATTENDANCE WAS ‘WAY DOWN THIS YEAR

To hear “them” tell it, they had close to 14,000 present for the ’97 Jubilee. (The Arena front office estimated 12,500.) To say the least, the floor of the Arena was filled and a fair-size crowd was in the bleachers.

But that was *last year*. What about *this year*? Though they had Jeff Walling as chief speaker this year, attendance was ‘way down from the year before. The Arena floor was scarcely filled and few indeed were in the bleachers. Experienced estimators said if attendance was more than five or six thousand over all this year, they would be surprised.

Some tried blaming Walling for the precipitate drop. We do not hold with Walling in his false views—but, having heard them both, we judge Walling to be a better speaker by far than Lucado.

IF NOT THE SPEAKERS, THEN WHAT?

Could it be that the hearts of some of the major sponsors of Jubilee are just *not in it anymore*? Could be. After all, did not Jesus say, “...where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21)?

On the front page of the *Madison MARCHER* for July 29, 1998, word-for-word, comes the following shocking announcement:

MADISON DISCONTINUES FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF JUBILEE

The Madison Eldership has decided to discontinue financial support and leadership participating in the summer-time *Jubilee* gathering in Nashville.

Madison was one of the founding organizers and co-sponsors of *Jubilee* which has been held each July for the last 10 years.

The Eldership issued this statement: “We have decided to concentrate on the many areas of missions and spiritual growth of our congregation.”

LET NONE BE DECEIVED BY THIS STATEMENT

Although great numbers of the Madison Church of Christ left the congregation in disillusionment over the many unreliable teachers, such as Lucado and Walling, brought in as Jubilee speakers, not one word of repentance can be seen in the previous statement by the Madison elders.

Evidently, with such a drop-off in participation these unreliable elders now clearly see the handwrit-

ing on the wall. Rather than admitting that the Jubilee *itself* was ill conceived and doctrinally wrong from the beginning, they are not willing to keep on putting good money after bad in a losing proposition.

Since their *hearts* are no longer in Jubilee neither will their *treasure* be. It remains to be seen when and whether others will follow suit.

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Associate Editorial...

THE OLD PROPHET THAT LIED

In I Kings 13 we have the record of God sending a young prophet to Bethel to speak against the idolatrous practices of Jeroboam. When he had faithfully performed his work, Jeroboam desired for the young prophet to come to his home for the purpose of resting and receiving a reward. The young prophet, however, had been commanded of God to “...eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel” (I Kings 13:1-10). Thus, the young prophet answered Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.

From his sons an old prophet who lived in Bethel heard of all that the young prophet had done. Learning from his sons the way that the young prophet had taken in returning to Judah, the old prophet went after him. Having found the young prophet the old prophet invited him home. The invitation was rejected with the same words the young prophet had spoken to Jeroboam. All was well with the young prophet until this time.

In order to get his way the old prophet lied to the young prophet. After revealing that he, too, was a prophet, he said that an angel had told him God wanted the young prophet to return with him to his home to “...eat bread and drink water” (vs. 18). *Alas, the young prophet believed and obeyed the old prophet's lie.*

WHAT WAS THE OLD PROPHET DOING?

I have pondered why God sent a prophet from Judah to cry against the wickedness of Jeroboam; for the scripture says “... there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel.” Why did this old prophet so strongly desire to meet and have this young prophet visit and eat in his home? Why would he be so persistent in his desire that he prophesied falsely to the young prophet? We cannot know all the answers, but I think that we can

understand some things. In doing so we may learn some valuable lessons for the church today.

Upon hearing of the faithful and courageous action of the young prophet the old prophet may have been reminded of the neglect of his prophetic office. Maybe he remembered the by-gone days of his youth when, burning with the cause of righteousness, he had not shunned to declare without fear or favor the mighty and complete will of Jehovah. Could it be that the old prophet felt the prick of a shamed conscience? Possibly he knew that he should have been standing before Jeroboam fearlessly declaring God's truth. If any of these possibilities, or others are true, why would such a man resort to a lie in order to persuade the young prophet to come with him thereby, tempting the young prophet to disobey God?

WHEN SILENCE IS A SIN

In the very presence of apostasy, had the old prophet sought to save his life by remaining silent? Had this old prophet digressed to the pitiable state of lying in the name of God in order to stay in favor with the hierarchy? Had lying become so common place that he gave no thought of lying to the young prophet in order to get what he desired?

For whatever the reason the old prophet lied to the young prophet and the young prophet died because he believed a lie (I Kings 13:20-24). Prophets, yes, even some old prophets lie. Because a person occupies the position of a prophet (in our day a preacher, elder, deacon, editor, college president or professor) does not mean that, for whatever the reason, he is beyond telling a lie! They may even lie in order to get you to sit at their dinner table with them. And, regardless of how much they lament your death because you believed their lie, you still will be *dead* (I Kings 13:26-32)!

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

“Derridean-Reconstruction”

(Continued from Page 1)

school documents and in the 1904 Granny White farm deed:

The supreme purpose of the School shall be to teach the Bible as the revealed will of God to man and as the only sufficient rule of faith and practice, and to train those who attend in a pure Bible Christianity, excluding from the faith all opinions and philosophies of men, and from the work and worship of the Church of God all human inventions and devices.

It was further set forth in the legal instruments and the 1904 farm deed that all properties conveyed to the NBS shall be:

used for maintaining a school in which, in addition to other branches of learning, the Bible as the recorded will of God and the only standard of faith and practice in religion excluding all human systems and opinions and all innovations, and devices of men from the service and worship of God, shall be taught as a regular Bible study to all who shall attend said School. [Daily chapel is not mandated.]

And the 1901 farm deed likewise states, and I read from the deed itself:

All directors of said Corporation or trustees of the school and faculty shall be members of the Church of Christ, in full sympathy with the teachings above set forth and desirous to carry them out. Anyone failing to have these qualifications shall resign or be removed.

It is recorded in Restoration history that the school heads from **James Harding** to **Willard Collins** have honored these mandates set forth in the charter and deed. History also records that this changed when **Harold Hazelip** became president of David Lipscomb College.

One of his first priorities was to *change the wording* of the *purpose* of the college to a *general statement* which would fit any school with Christian affiliations. A *second* priority was to change *daily Bible* to *three days* and *chapel* to *twice a week*. The board rejected the proposal after a year of arguing the matter. [I have a copy of those board minutes in my possession.]

Dr. Hazelip has radically succeeded in changing the purpose and direction of Lipscomb University. He has put in place a majority liberal Bible faculty modeled after the

liberal theologies in such seminaries as the University of Iowa where he earned his doctorate.

We think that **Steve Flatt** will find his most formidable challenges within the Bible faculty whose major commitment is to modern liberal scholarship put in place over an eleven year period. The Southern Baptist Convention is replacing liberal professors in their colleges and universities with conservative biblical scholars. Why do not the trustees in our schools from kindergarten to graduate school screw up their courage to higher levels and do the same?

Dr. Michael Moss, Lipscomb University Bible department chairman, has handed down the policy that all future Bible faculty must hold the Ph.D. [not the D.M.] from a prestigious theological seminary. Several such LU tenured professors are already secured in the Bible faculty on the undergraduate and graduate levels.

We are hearing more and more the refrain “give Steve a chance to turn things around at Lipscomb.” A chance to turn what around? The Lipscomb board members and faculty can read what David Lipscomb wrote about trustee and faculty qualifications. They know what to do!

TENNESSEE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

This is the title of a recent publication of the Tennessee History Society. There are three essays in the publications which tell unique stories written by Chancellor **Harold Hazelip**, **Dr. Robert E. Hooper**, retired history chairman, and **G. David England**, spokesman for the Lipscomb News Bureau, in which are told bald-faced stories.

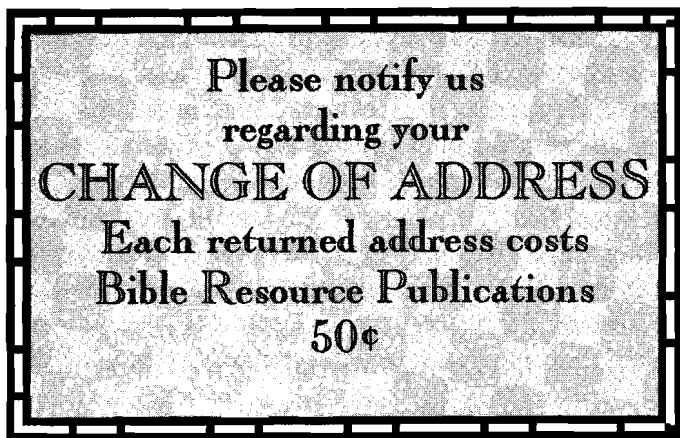
The essays do not reflect the history of the traditional churches of Christ, David Lipscomb, nor his school. The essays do a calculated number in the obviously concealed sublimated inferences just below the surface.

Churches of Christ: This is the title of the Hazelip essay. He writes: “Churches of Christ are a primitivistic body of Christian believers, ideologically related to some extent to the German and Swiss Anabaptist.” He writes that their purpose is to reproduce the beliefs and practices of the earliest Christian in their assemblies and lives. Dr. Hazelip says that historically these churches are the “more conservative heirs of the American Restoration Movement.”

Does Dr. Hazelip care that there are those Christians who believe as an article of their personal faith and as a matter of conscience that they are indeed members of the blood-bought church of Christ instead of a postmodern Church of Christ denomination.

David Lipscomb: Dr. Robert E. Hooper’s essay denigrates the worth and position of David Lipscomb in the Restoration Movement. Dr. Hooper can never be a good Restoration historian because he is prone to “blind side” the facts to make a pre-conceived case. He wrote that Lipscomb was a “second generation Stone-Campbell Movement leader.” [Dr. Hooper, why do you so dishonor the man whose biography you wrote with this patent piece of fiction?]

Dr. Hooper would pull off the same kind of rhetorical ploy on **Tolbert Fanning**. What he wrote is a calculated insult to the life and work of Tolbert Fanning. Dr. Hooper



wrote that Tolbert Fanning spent the last years of his life within the Disciples of Christ and a seceding fellowship, the Churches of Christ.

What a travesty on Restoration scholarship!

Lipscomb University: G. David England is the public relations spokesman for Lipscomb University. His historical correct essay does not identify even in a remote way any connection of Lipscomb University with the churches/churches of Christ. [David, as a trained journalist, how could you deliberately do this?]

These three essays are calculated to diminish the honor due Fanning, Lipscomb, and the Lipscomb schools with

those out side the churches of Christ. None are so blind as they who will not see. Why do the likes of doctors Hazelip and Hooper so despise the churches of Christ who have honored them so?

POSTSCRIPT

This is an unfinished manuscript because the story is ongoing and will not be dropped because it is a significant part of a much, much larger story which demands telling.

—3714½ Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37215

"IN TOUCH" WITH WHAT?

Tracy Dugger

On a recent "In Touch" TV program (July 1998) Charles Stanley, popular Baptist preacher, delivered a lesson entitled, "Baptism—Obligation or Option?" This of course, caught my attention. As I listened, I was amazed at some of the things I was hearing.

In his introduction, Stanley likened the *rejection* of God's command to be baptized as one who goes through a buffet dinner line, picking and choosing what he likes and leaving what he dislikes. He zealously exclaimed that one is not permitted to do this with God's commands because God would never place a single command in the Bible that was not for our own benefit. Stanley then quoted Matthew 4:4 "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." To Charles Stanley, baptism, is especially one of those commands we cannot ignore. He says that baptism is "an issue which is vital in the life of the believer." He then makes a statement that he repeats numerous times: "Baptism is not an option. It is a divine obligation."

STANLEY AND BAPTIST BAPTISM

Stanley is a very likable and intelligent man with an impressive knowledge of God's word. He tells the truth when he contends that baptism is by immersion. He is also correct when he argues that baptism is for believers only and not babies. However, just as with so many religious leaders he does not go far enough with what God says. Stanley is not "in touch" with the truth because he fails to rightly divide it (II Timothy 2:15). I have nothing against Charles Stanley personally. I am not questioning his sincerity! I am concerned for his immortal soul and the souls of those he is instructing. However, he is mistaken on some very vital and necessary aspects about baptism. I want to compare some of the things he teaches with what God's word teaches.

Stanley holds that baptism is something one does after he is saved. He erroneously tells us:

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change in our life. Baptism is a public declaration that the person being baptized has received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior through faith in him and his death at Calvary

for atonement for their sins. Baptism is a commitment that a person makes on the basis of the fact that they have been transformed by the grace of God.

Such statements are not only devoid of biblical authority, but they lead souls astray from God's truth. Where is his scripture for such statements? Where is the passage stating that baptism is an outward sign following one's being saved? He is very quick to provide his hearers scripture for many of the things he does say, but when it comes to the previous statements he provides none.

The apostle Paul explained explicitly that reconciliation to God takes place in the church (Ephesians 2:16). Stanley contradicts this when he states: "You can baptize hundreds of thousands of people and make them church members. It will get them into church membership. It will not get them into the kingdom of God."

Stanley implies that church membership is non-essential. How does this compare with the inspired words of Luke in Acts 2:38-47, where we are told that the saved are inside the church?

THE BAPTIST CHURCH IS NOT NEEDED

Amazingly, he then admits that his own denominational body is unneeded in responding to the question, "Why do you Baptists have to put them under the water?"

Stanley replies, "It has nothing to do with being a Baptist. It has to do with being obedient to the word of God. It has to do with the meaning of baptism." The implication is clear—being a Baptist has nothing to do with being obedient to God's word.

NECESSARY TO OBEY GOD, BUT NOT NECESSARY TO GO TO HEAVEN?

I am bewildered that Charles Stanley adamantly argues that baptism is an obligation. Notice how "Webster's Dictionary" defines the following words:

Obligate—"Bound; restricted. To bring or place under moral or legal duty or constraint."

Obligation—"The agreement, promise, contract, oath, or the like, by which one is bound. A conditional bond with a penalty for nonfulfillment; in a larger sense, a formal and binding agreement or acknowledgment of a liability."

Obligatory—"Required."

Thus, I understand that for something to be *obligatory* it is necessary and essential. If baptism is an obligation, then how can one refuse such and go to heaven? He continues his discourse on the obligatory nature of baptism by saying:

When you put off a command of God; when God tells you to do something; when he says we are to be baptized and we refuse...what we have done is we have acted in rebellion. You see, Jesus Christ is Lord.

Baptism is not an option; it is an obligation. It is a command of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if I deliberately refuse to acknowledge and to be obedient to him in what he calls me to do, do you think God is going to fill you with the Holy Spirit, anoint you with some kind of power in your life when you deliberately, willfully disobey a specific command of something which should have followed very immediately or quickly after your salvation? It is not going to happen and friend you are deceived.

You cannot boast of being filled with the Holy Spirit when you deliberately refuse to be baptized whatever the excuse may be.

Why be baptized in the first place? Because Jesus commanded it, period! That's enough!

So therefore, if I refuse baptism, whatever excuse I have... now I say this as loving and gently as I know how, whatever my excuse may be, it is unacceptable, it is an act of rebellion. You are living in rebellion toward God.

It is your responsibility to be baptized.

With these things said of obedience, may a person refuse an obligation that God gives them and still expect forgiveness? The Bible says that we cannot (I Peter 1:22). May one act in rebellion to God, refuse Christ as Lord by disobeying his word, deliberately refuse to obey God's commands, willfully involve one's self in unacceptable activity, live in rebellion to God, refuse one's responsibility toward God, and still go to heaven? Again, the Bible says that this is impossible:

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry (I Samuel 15:22-23a).

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

"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).

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6:46)?

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with ever-lasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

"BAPTISMAL REGENERATION"

Stanley is "out of touch" with the necessity of obedience when he says of baptism, "*No it is not necessary to get to heaven but it is necessary to be obedient to God*" Do you see the implication? Stanley believes obedience is not necessary to get to heaven. This obviously flies right into the face of the previous passages.

Stanley, in rejecting what the Bible says about baptism being necessary to salvation calls, such teaching "*baptismal regeneration*." He defines baptismal regeneration in the following words:

Which means people believe you have to be baptized in order to be saved. That you express your faith in Jesus and then in order to really be saved you express your faith in Jesus and then you are baptized.

I understand "baptismal regeneration" to mean that there is some kind of saving power in the water. We do not so believe. In II Kings 5, Naaman was commanded to dip in the waters of the Jordan River. Was there any power in those waters? Absolutely not! When Naaman was healed of his leprosy after he complied with the water-connected command, could anyone accuse Elisha of teaching water salvation? Could anyone accuse Naaman of trying to work his way into God's favor? When Jesus told the blind man to wash in the waters in the Pool of Siloam in John chapter nine, was he teaching water regeneration? The power was not in the water, but in obedience to God's commands! So it is with water baptism under the New Covenant. Peter stated in no uncertain terms:

which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Peter 3:20-21).

PROOF OF ONE'S LOVE OF GOD IS OBEDIENCE TO HIS WILL

We are asked by Stanley, "*Where is the love of God? Where is the atoning death of Jesus Christ?*" What is the connection between these questions and the purpose of baptism? When Stanley condemns the Jew or Muslim who refuses to believe in Jesus as the Christ, could some not also ask him, "Where is the love of God?" Stanley's question does not answer the argument! John told us where the love of God is! He said that it was in obedience to God's commands (I John 5:3; John 14:15)! Baptism is one of those commands (Acts 10:48; Acts 2:38).

In attempting to demonstrate that baptism is not necessary to salvation, Stanley points out two cases where Jesus and Paul would not baptize. First, in John 3:22 and 4:1-2, Stanley shows that Jesus did not do the baptizing in John's day. Second, he comments about what Paul taught in I Corinthians 1:14-17, "That's not what God sent me to do. Baptism is not the thing I am to major on." Stanley then asks, "Would Jesus or the apostle Paul not baptize if that were a part of salvation?" In I Corinthians 1:14-17, Paul is not discussing the necessity or purpose of baptism. Let us look more closely at these passages.

In verses 12-13, we learn that two things must be true in order to be of or belong to Paul: (1) Paul must be crucified for us. (2) We must be baptized in the name of Paul.

Neither of these things were true. In order to belong to Paul or to be of him, Paul would have had to be crucified for us and we would have to be baptized in his name. Baptism in the name of Paul would make you and I belong to him. The same could be said of Apollos & Cephas—to belong to Apollos or Cephas, they would have had to be crucified for us and we baptized in their name. So it is with Christ! In order to belong to Christ the same two things are necessary: (1) Christ must be crucified for us. Was he? Absolutely! (2) We must be baptized in the name of Christ. Is this what happens in order to be a child of God and to get into Christ? Absolutely! (See Galatians 3:26-27 and Romans 6:3.) These passages in I Corinthians do not show that baptism is unessential to salvation, but just the exact opposite. They clearly show that baptism is an essential condition in salvation. Men who have not been baptized in the name of Christ do not belong to him—they are not as Paul puts it!

Verse 14 reads: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name." Did Paul state, "I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had believed baptism was essential to salvation?" No! This is the position of those like Stanley who use these verses to teach that baptism is unnecessary for salvation. Paul's whole point is that the administrator of baptism is not what is important. He is trying to get them to see, "Since you put so much stock in who it was that baptized you, then, I'm glad that I didn't baptize you. You would have said that I did so in my own name."

WHAT DOES MARK 16:16 MEAN?

Stanley then tries to deal with Mark 16:16. In listening to his comments, I was honestly awaiting some type of attempt at telling us what Mark 16:16 meant. It never came! He said of Mark 16:16:

Anytime you interpret scripture; you can pluck a verse of scripture out of the Bible and make yourself believe most anything. What you have to ask is, What does the scripture teach from Genesis to Revelation.

The emphasis here is not on being baptized to be saved. In the New Testament days baptism was extremely important in order for people to make a public declaration of what they've done. No being ashamed, no secret discipleship.

Therefore, there is no way to prove in the Bible that you have to be baptized to be saved. It is not there. That is a twist of that verse of scripture.

The apostle Paul, many places when he talks about salvation, no place does he say that a person must be baptized in order to be saved.

How does this answer the argument made from Mark 16:16? It is clear that Stanley did not deal forthrightly with the actual words of Jesus in Mark 16:16. Actually, the only explanation he gave was that some twist them. Mark 16:16 still reads, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Charles Stanley notwithstanding!

It grieves me to see one with such ability and seeming dedication to make the mistake of his lifetime by disputing what God has affirmed. Stanley is clearly "out of touch" with God's word. My prayer is that he will see his error before it is eternally too late!

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IS THERE ANYTHING TO A NAME?

Jodie Boren

An Associated Press report from Ocean Springs, Mississippi, in January revealed that restaurant owner **Kikone Unknown**, 40, acquired that name when he immigrated to the United States from Laos in 1979 and feared revealing his real name to American officials, who simply listed his last name as "unknown." He remains "unknown" and it matters little to the world. There is one, however, who has changed the world with his message of salvation and hope. Almighty God has **"highly exalted him and given him a**

name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..." (Philippians 2:9-11). Contrary to the teaching of many (in an effort to justify the wearing of denominational names) names are important. God obviously places much importance in the name of Jesus. It was to Jesus and to Jesus only that all authority in heaven and on earth was given (Matthew 28:18). In his name—or by his authority—are we to follow God.

It is in the name of Jesus that we are to pray (John 14:13 and 16:23). It is in the name of Jesus that the apostles performed miracles (Acts 3:6). In his name, the name of Jesus, we are to preach the gospel (Luke 24:47). It is in his name that we are to have faith (Matthew 12:21; John 1:12; 2:23). It is through his name that we receive the remission of sins (Acts 10:43). Paul sums it up succinctly in Colossians 3:17 where he says, **"and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."** So, all that we do religiously must be by the authority of Jesus.

When a woman marries a man, she takes his name. For her to profess her love for him by marrying him and then to wear the name of an old boyfriend is unthinkable! By her actions she would deny her words. In the spiritual realm, the church is the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:23 and II Corinthians 11:2). When we "marry" our Lord through our love for him and by our obedience to his commands, we take his name. Can anyone honestly believe that as the bride of Christ, we would be pleasing to him when we wear the denominational names of men?

The name Christian means an attachment to Christ. In this attachment we become one spiritually in Christ (Galatians 3:28) just as a man and woman become one flesh (Matthew 19:5) in a physical marriage. Some would have us believe that the name Christian was given in derision by the Romans. How ridiculous! That is blasphemy to say that God's people wear a name given to them by the enemies of



God! In Isaiah 62:2, we are told that the righteous will **"be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."** Not the Romans or anyone else, but by the mouth of the Lord was the name Christian given (Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16). In verse twelve the righteous are identified as the redeemed of the Lord. The name Christian has to be the fulfillment of this prophecy because only Christians—the children of God—are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:6,7).

Is there anything to a name? The answer is an emphatic YES. As we live our daily lives, may we wear the name of Christ proudly and do all things to his glory (I Corinthians 10:31)

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SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8

9:00 AM James Gravelle
10:00 AM Dub McClish
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK
2:00 PM David Wilson
3:00 PM Gospel Music
4:00 PM Michael Hatcher
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK
8:00 PM Lester Kamp
8:00 PM James Meadows

The Books of 1, 2 Peter and Jude—An Introduction
The Christian and Persecution (1 Pet. 1:3-7; 2:12; 2:12; 2:12; 2:12)
Watchfulness Concerning the Devil; Closing Comments (1:5-8-14)
Ungodly Men and Their Destiny (2:2, 12-22)
Difficult Passages: How could angels sin unless temptation and sin were able to invade Heaven (2 Pet. 2:4, Jude 6)? Will the earth and its works be "burned up" or "discovered" (2 Pet. 3:10)? How is the close parallel between some of Peter's and some of Jude's words explained (2 Pet. 2:1-16; Jude 4-11)? Where and when did Enoch prophesy, and does Jude's statement show that he borrowed from the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* (Jude 14-15)?

Warnings About False Teachers (2:2, 1-11)
Answering False Doctrines: Does the Holy Spirit directly oppose on the hearts of men to sanctify them (1:12)? Will God so guard the children of the faith, cannot be sin (1:12)? Are some false teachers to be God's people (1:2-4-9)? Does God call people to Him by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in which he has an experience of irresistible grace (1:2-8; 5:10)?

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Difficult Passages: Is the "kiss of love" a permanent obligation or a cultural option (1:5; 19)? In what sense and when do saints become "partners of the divine nature" (2:14)? Can a Christian reach a spiritual plateau at which he will no longer sin (2:1:10)? How can the "word of prophecy" be "made more sure," and to what do "the day dawn" and "the day-star" refer (2:1:19)?
Dealing with Persecution; Salvation and Baptism (1:3-13-22)
Difficult Passages: When, how, and where did Christ preach to the "spirits in prison" and who are these "spirits" (1:3-19-20)? How does suffering in the flesh cause one to "cease from sin" (1:4:19)? How and by whom was the Gospel preached to the dead (1:4:6)? What is the "end of all things" that was "at hand" when Peter wrote (1:4:7)?

Answering False Doctrines: Could God still be giving additional revelation now since His people some (1, 2, 3 John, Rev) after Peter and Jude said that "all" had been given (2:1-3; Jude 3)? Can the ordinary person read and understand the Bible, or must there be a professional "exegesis" to interpret it for him (2:1-20)? Does the "day of the Lord" refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (2:3:10)? Will God guard us from stumbling so that we cannot be lost at last (Jude 24)?

Will the Wicked Really Be Punished with Eternal Fire (Jude 7)?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
Redemption from Sin Through Christ's Blood (1:1:13-25)
The Lord's Coming and Its Accompaniments (2:3:10-18)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

9:00 AM Noah Hatchworth
10:00 AM Gary Colley

Exhortation to Live Above the Lusts of the Flesh (1:4:1-11)
Wife and Husband Duties; General Tenderness Urged (1:3-13-12)

11:00 AM Tommy J. Hicks

12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK
2:00 PM Garland Elkins
3:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM
Curtis A. Cates

3:45 PM Curtis A. Cates
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK
7:00 PM Lindell Mitchell
8:00 PM Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Answering False Doctrines: Are women forbidden to braid their hair or wear jewelry (1:3:3)? Do a wife's subjection to her husband and a reference to a woman as a "weaker vessel" imply the inferiority of women (1:3:7)? Do those who have died in disobedience have a second chance to obey Christ in Hades (1:3:19-20; 4:6)? Do elders have no actual authority in their local congregations, leading only by their good examples (1:5:3)?

Answers to Skepticism Concerning the Second Coming (2:3:1-9)
Does Daily Strengthen the Christian in Some "Supra-Literary" Immediate Way (1:5:10)?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
Content Earnestly for the Faith (Jude 1-11)
Exhortation to Elders and Others (1:5:1-7)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Difficult Passages: What is the "sprinkling of the blood of Christ"? Is this a reference to baptism (1:1:2)? How are Christians guarded "by the power of God" (1:1:5)? In what sense was Christ "foreknown...before the foundation of the world" (1:1:19-20)? In what sense will the "ungodly, glory God" in the day of visitation due to our good works (1:2:12)?
Salvation and the "Christian Graces" (2:1:1-11)
How to Face Fiery Trials (1:4:12-19)

Subject to Rulers and Masters Enjoyed (1:2:13-25)
The Nature of Biblical Inspiration (1:1:23-25; 2:1:20-21)
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
3:45 PM Joseph Meador
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK
7:00 PM Bobby Liddell
8:00 PM Gary Summers

10:00 AM Eddie Farnish
11:00 AM Richard Massey
12:00 PM LUNCH BREAK
2:00 PM DISCUSSION FORUM
Joseph Meador
3:45 PM Joseph Meador
5:00 PM DINNER BREAK
7:00 PM Bobby Liddell
8:00 PM Gary Summers

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Christ, the Chief Cornerstone and Our Foundation (1:2:1-12)
Descriptions of the Ungodly and Exhortations to Faithfulness (Jude 12-25)
God's Great Mercy and Our Living Hope (1:1:1-12)

Difficult Passages: Whose sins are covered by love, and who does the covering (1:4:8; cf. Jam. 5:20)? What is the "judgment" that is to "begin at the house of God" and why does it begin there (1:4:17a)? In what sense will the righteous be "scarce saved" and how is this harmonized with the "richly supplied" entrance into Heaven for faithful saints (1:4:18; 2:1:17)? In what sense does the promised perfecting, establishing, and strengthening refer, and how and when would Christ accomplish this (1:5:10)?
Does God Really Hear and Answer Prayer? (1:3:12; 4:7)?
Questions from the floor on Discussion Forum topic
The Hoax of Premillennial Theology
The Books of 1, 2 Peter and Jude—A Summary

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CHARACTER: IT DOES MATTER

Jason R. Roberts

It is not uncommon, especially within our nation's current administration, to hear individuals erroneously suggest that the character and private life of a person has nothing to do with his or her job performance. Some also suggest that what a person does "behind the scenes" should never be used to assess that individual's character. It is the purpose of this article to prove the foolishness of such ridiculous reasoning.

The proponents of this kind of twisted thinking, whether they realize it or not, really do not believe this when it comes to other walks of life. And if this is true, which it is, then why should we apply this type of ludicrous thinking to the office of the presidency, tolerating the sordid behavior taking place therein? Consider the following illustrations and ask yourself whether or not the character of a person is relevant to his performance on the job.

CHARACTER MATTERS

Would the character and trustworthiness of your dentist matter to you if in the privacy of his home you found out that he enjoyed molesting little children? And, in view of this, would you have no problem dropping off your twelve-year-old daughter at his office while you went to the grocery store? After all, some suggest what he does in his private life has nothing to do with his profession as a dentist. Suppose your dentist were a homosexual, but only "after hours?" Would you take your son or daughter and commit them to the care and trust of this dentist, knowing the possibility of what might be taking place behind closed doors?

Would the character and trustworthiness of a day care center matter to you if it became known that the employees had a history of abusing their children at home? Would you gleefully hand these individuals your precious children and, as you drive away, think to yourself, "Well, what they do to their children at home has nothing to do with how they will be treating mine because, after all, the character of a person has nothing to do with a person's job performance in a day care center."

Would the character and trustworthiness of your physician matter to you if it became known that in the privacy of his home he was injecting illegal drugs into his arms with needles? Would you keep your next appointment with him? After all, some say what he does in the privacy of his own home has no bearing on his ability to be a competent and qualified physician.

Would the character and trustworthiness of the lawyer, whose services you just acquired, matter to you if in the privacy of his own home it became known that he had an illegal operation of embezzling money; even if this operation was a side job? After all, some think what he does in the privacy of his own home has nothing to do with his ability to practice law honestly.

Would the character and trustworthiness of your preacher matter to you if he had an adulterous relationship with another woman which became public, and the follow-

ing Sunday he announced that his private life is not the church's business? What if he declared that this is only a matter between him and his wife? Could you listen respectfully while he preached a sermon entitled, "Marriage As God Would Have It"?

HAS AMERICA ABANDONED OBJECTIVE TRUTH?

To even suggest that the debased behavior of our President in the Oval Office has nothing to do with how our country is governed clearly shows just how far the American people have abandoned the very platform of truth and righteousness upon which our great country has rested for 222 years. You mark it down, 100 years from now (if our world still stands) when the history books are written, people will be reading about how repulsive our current, corrupt administration really was and reflecting upon the absolute insanity of the people who put them there! Need we be reminded that it is the inward corruption of a nation that is more threatening than her external enemies. "Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a life. Sow a life, reap a destiny?" Character: It does matter!

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**"Be not deceived; God is not mocked:
For whatsoever a man soweth, that
shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).**

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“AND THEY...ROSE UP TO PLAY”

(Exodus 32:6)

Lester Kamp

The passage serving as the title of this article describes the sinfulness of the people of Israel at Sinai when Moses had gone into the mount to receive the law. Today, at least in the Denver area, the “Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16) is again rising up to play. The Israel of God today, the church, does not want to follow the perfect law of liberty and do those things that God authorizes; many prefer to play.

“FIDDLER” IN THE CHURCH

In Denver on March 15, 1998 the “University Church of Christ Youth Ministry” presented “the full musical production of Fiddler on the Roof.” The advertisement which I received in the mail stated:

Cost is free for Sunday March 15 but please RSVP your approximate group size by March 5 to the University church office at (303) 758-8280. Friday March 13 and Saturday March 14 there will be a dessert theater. Cost for either of these evenings is \$5.

Also stated on the advertisements was: “Presented for area youth groups but anyone is invited!” Is this not interesting? I wonder at the cost of putting on such a production. I wonder where the money came from, the church treasury? I wonder how much time went into the preparation for this project. I wonder how much work went into making the costumes, the scenery, the practice, the makeup, the lights, and so on. I wonder what spiritual value they saw in this project. *I wonder what authority they had for this play!* If the time, effort, and money given to this play had been given to something that God authorized, what great good could have been accomplished for the kingdom. But many are not interested in doing what God has authorized; they would rather devote themselves to entertainment by rising up to play.

THE PLAYWRITES—WALLING AND GILL

On May 9, 1998 “A Time To Stand” was presented at a high school building in the Denver area by the Arvada Church of Christ. The poster advertising this “musical drama” read as follows: “Come enjoy this dramatic presentation that looks at the life of Esther. This drama was written by Jeff Walling and orchestrated by Randy Gill.” Admission for this play was free. The cover letter included with the poster contained these paragraphs:

We would appreciate you announcing the play information at next Sunday’s services to remind your members and ask them to use the musical as an outreach effort to their friends and co-workers. Hundreds of hours of work have gone into making this musical and will greatly appreciate your support.

The cast of “A Time to Stand” is willing to take this production on the road. If you feel that this full-length musical story of Esther could benefit your community and provide an outreach opportunity, please contact the Arvada Church of Christ office at....

Notice carefully a few of the items mentioned above. This is a full-length play written by Jeff Walling. Jeff Walling was the featured speaker for 1998 *Jubilee* and the author of the book *Daring to Dance With God*. You can be sure, therefore, that he has taken great liberties with the book of Esther. Also note that the play took “hundreds of hours of work” according to their own admission in this letter. Such dedication to entertainment is remarkable. I wonder how many hours they devoted to such things as edification, benevolence, or evangelism. I realize that they have suggested that the play was intended as an outreach opportunity, but where in the New Testament are we told to go out into the world and “play” the people to Christ? Are we not supposed to teach (preach) the gospel to the world? Is it not true that God has chosen to save those that believe through “the foolishness of preaching” and not through foolish plays? Notice also that this play was “orchestrated.” Here is an orchestra in the work of the Arvada church. Where is the New Testament authority for the church to be producing and sponsoring plays? *There is none!*

THE “ALARM CLOCK THEATRE”

The 1998 Rocky Mountain Summit for Spiritual Growth at Estes Park, Colorado, included according to the brochure “a dynamic and moving drama and music group ‘Alarm Clock Theatre.’ They were given ‘four stars’ by Michael Medved, chief film critic for the New York Post.” This “Summit” was designed for “elders, evangelists, deacons, small group and ministry leaders.” According to another of their advertisements,

The special programs during the Summit make it a great time for everyone. There are special classes and activities for children of all ages as well as for teens, college students, and singles. The worship times will bring you to the very throne of God and the music and drama presentations by Alarm Clock Theatre will impact you in a deep and meaningful way. (Emphasis theirs, LK).

In light of all of the previous information, some of my brethren would be very interested in a “The 15th Annual Creative Ministries Seminar” sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Magicians.” According to the brochure which I received in the mail recently, my brethren can learn from this Denver meeting sponsored by this interdenominational organization how to use “Balloons, Clowning, Chalk Art, Juggling, Ventriloquism, Gospel Magic, (and) Puppetry” to “reinforce scriptural truth in ways few things can.” Then, they can look over their “large resource area, offering everything from simple illusions to puppets to clown supplies, and a whole lot more!” I do not know, but perhaps some of my brethren in this area have already sent in their \$20 registration fee so that they can “rise up to play” in yet other

ways. What is to be learned on such occasions is not “illusions” but “delusions” (II Thessalonians 2:10-11) because those involved love not the truth, but rather love to “play.”

HOW FOOLISH THE BRETHREN

The world is lost in sin and is steeped in the love of pleasure. The world cannot be saved by entertainment, by “playing” them in. The world must be taught the gospel (Romans 1:16). God has chosen the “foolishness of preaching” as the means by which the world can be saved (I Corinthians 1:21); he has not chosen “plays” and other forms of entertainment to convert the world. Entertainment is not going to keep the church saved either. What is needed in the church is “all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). God’s word is able to build us up and give us a home in heaven (Acts 20:32)—not plays and other forms of entertainment. We need to stop “playing” and return to “preaching.” Brethren we must wake up!

—13605 E. Alameda Avenue
Aurora, Colorado 80012

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA WERE LEGALLY ACCURATE

Tim Nichols

It appears that accuracy is divided by some into new categories these days. In the old days accurate things were things that were conforming to what is true, right, exact, genuine, and honest. Nowadays some accuracy’s are merely moral matters. Some are legal. In order to properly understand history we will need to view the events of the past and consider the past actions of God and man in light of these new standards.

Ananias and Sapphira come to mind right away. They sold land that they privately owned. The amount they received is none of your business, so the Holy Spirit did not record it. What they did with the money was, in a sense, their own business and no one suggested that they ought to have done anything in particular with it. As far as I know, and my knowledge is limited, there were no Roman laws prohibiting them from bringing some of the money to church, giving it to the apostles for distribution to those in need, and pretending that they were giving all of the proceeds of their sale. Many would say that no one had any right to ask them about it. It was, legally, no one’s business. When Peter confronted the husband with his deception, God took the life of poor Ananias before he had had a chance to explain that his duplicity had been “legally accurate.” About three hours later Sapphira, not knowing that God’s death sentence had already been carried out upon her husband, came in and gave her own detailed and “legally accurate” testimony. God judged her “legally accurate” statement according to his moral scale and she was buried right next to her husband (Acts 5:1-11).

Can you bring yourself to think that God would have changed his mind if he had waited to hear their “legally accurate” argument? If they had possessed the time to sit down with the finest speech-writers and damage-control experts in all Jerusalem, do you think they would have been able to convince the perfect judge, who needs no help from juries, to alter his judgment? I think not. Quibbling that would have induced the most gullible guys back on my High School debate team to roll their eyes in derision would not have checked the hand of our omniscient God.

The truth is rather simple before it is blurred by double-talk. While the laws of our land may not impose consequences for all lying, those lies that are legally overlooked are not accurate. Uttering a thing that is not true is not any species of accurate, although it might be a non-illegal lie. Accurate things are still things that conform to what is true, right, exact, genuine, and honest. Hold on to your old dictionary and to your awareness that God is watching. He does not judge on the basis of whether or not men will prosecute (John 7:24; 12:48).

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...the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also—II Timothy 2:2

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IF I WERE THE DEVIL

Bob Berard

If I were the devil, I would count myself a glowing success, an undeniable, phenomenal, expanding influence near the end of the twentieth century in America. I would look at the declining moral standard and rejoice in my conquests. I would pat myself on the back for the inroads into evil made in the past few decades and I would exult further in that a multiplying evil effect seems now to be at work.

If I were the devil, I would cheer on the teeming multitudes who work so feverishly as my agents that I can rest assured that most men will soon forfeit any effort to conscientiously resist my wooing or threats of woes. If I were the devil, I would be confident that the prospects of a full house in hell to share my horrendous eternal misery grows brighter day by day (Matthew 25:41).

If I were the devil, I would rejoice in evil and again I would rejoice at what I had been able to do to the offspring and grand offspring of those who once so tenaciously held to biblical morality. I would take special glee in the fact that I have managed to subdivide denominational religion so much that its total picture is more repulsive than ever to religious seekers. Furthermore, I would count it a victory that denominationalism has many more of its proponents thoroughly persuaded that there is no such thing as absolute truth to be found, believed, obeyed, and taught. It would tickle me that even the suggestion of there being only one approved church would bring a chuckle from most sectarians.

If I were the devil, I would be impressed with my accomplishments in the highest seat of national power. Already it has been shown that the one in the highest of secular positions is void of highest principle. Still, I would keep pressing the matter with the intent of showing the world that some men are indeed above the law and can do whatever they please with impunity. This would be a crowning accomplishment in that it would likely introduce another multiplying effect for evil. If I could show that one man is above the law and that he can pervert the good designs and safeguards of America's governmental checks and balances, I am confident that millions of eager onlookers would follow suit in basing their aspirations and "rights" for doing the same on his precedent.

If I were the devil, I would be enjoying the scandalous current events which so shame a nation once noted for its moral stand, but which is now hardly able to blush at the vilest of deeds. It would please me no end, that the nation once called "Christian," now better wears the title "The United States of Sodom and Gomorrah."

If I were the devil, there is almost no limit to the fun I would be having, but I would do anything but rest on my laurels (I Peter 5:8). I would have enough sense to know that any significant and enduring victory depends upon vigilance. While knowing and applying this axiom, I would be doing my best to insure that others not know it and I would be encouraging the ones who do know it to forget it (II Corinthians 4:4; II Peter 1:9; Revelation 12:9).

However, with all the fun I would be having as the devil with this nation as a whole, my keenest interest would re-

main focused on tearing up churches of Christ. After all, the worsening of lost men will not increase my companions in eternal misery a twig. If I were the devil, I would be as I know he is, especially interested in stealing the souls of the saved (I Peter 5:8).

If I were the devil, I would keep the great liberal digression aflame by multiplying the false teachers as well as the churches and "Christian" schools that produce such unscrupulous characters (Matthew 7:15). I would keep parents as best I could ignorant about what is being taught to their sons and daughters in places like Abilene Christian University and David Lipscomb University (to mention only two well-documented cases of apostasy). I would endeavor to bias their thinking by warning them of the immorality of secular schools while keeping them ignorant of the professors who are "masters of spin" regarding anti-nomian attitudes and doctrinal error in the so-called Christian schools. I would be doubly delighted that parents are so gullible, who ignore the warnings about such schools, and who apparently are oblivious to the fact that false doctrine will send the youth of America to hell as effectively and quickly as fornication and drunkenness.

If I were the devil, I would also keep the anti movements alive and busy in sowing their abominable discord (Proverbs 17:15). After all, what is more deceptive than those who argue strongly for Bible authority and then introduce and bind on the church doctrines of men (Acts 15:1)?

If I were the devil, I would do my very best to disrupt things among those who are holding the doctrinal line and doing their best to please God. I would keep playing one good brother against another (Acts 20:30). I would encourage brethren to bite and devour one another. I would encourage division over non-obligatory matters and then encourage subdivision and sub-sub-division among the divided parties. I would provide all the old excuses and invent some new ones, if possible, for disregarding the truth of the Bible and for following men rather than Christ. I would do my best to get brethren to act contrary to the Bible doctrine of love and in so doing I would win their souls (I Corinthians 13:3-7). Particularly, I would encourage brethren to be unquestioningly confident of their own motives and super suspicious of the motives of others in contrast with verses 4 and 5.

If you do not think the devil has accomplished what is stated above and much more, you are one of the victims of his deceit. The devil is doing his best to worsen your spiritual condition! If you are in sin, he is happy, but he would be happier if you would go even deeper into forbidden waters. If you are a faithful follower of Jesus, you are his prime focus. Though he will flee when you resist him, he will not cease and desist for any great while in his pursuit (Luke 4:13; James 4:7). Your salvation hinges on your being as persistent as he.

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“He Lied, He Cheated...And We Don't Care!”

Pat McIntosh

The long-awaited day has finally arrived. After months of accusations, lies, speculation, and political jockeying, **President Clinton** has admitted to having had an “inappropriate sexual relationship” with **Monica Lewinsky**. This came as no big surprise.

This admission was met with a variety of responses from a cross-section of society. Some of these responses helped paint a vivid picture of just how far this country has slipped from its moral moorings. Several of the news reports which followed the national broadcast of his admission were from various sites throughout the country. The responses from that group were relatively indicative of others which I have seen nationally. Some voiced their obvious displeasure and their opinion that he should resign for various reasons. Those reasons ranged anywhere from the fact that his position is that of being a role model to the embarrassment of having had his “dirty laundry” aired on a worldwide level. Other responses were more reserved in their judgment, but they did agree that this situation was, at the very least, one with which we should be concerned.

“WHAT A GREAT JOB HE HAS DONE!”

The responses which caused me the greatest concern were those in defense of his actions. There were some who admitted his actions were wrong, but remained supportive because of the “great job” he was doing as our President. Others excused his “inappropriate” actions by indicating he was “merely human” and simply failed to control himself in a time of temptation. A final response was worded by either a congressman or senator who simply stated, “We will support him no matter what happens.”

These responses and the lack of objective support for them are indicative of the immoral nature of the vast majority of society today. I find it sad to see that many in our country have reached the stage that such actions are viewed as being commonplace. What are we, both collectively and individually, as children of God to do in such a situation?

THE JOB WE MUST DO

1. We must continue both to proclaim and live the powerful standard portrayed in God's word. There has never been more of a time when God has needed “**earthen vessels**” (II Corinthian 4:7) to “**stand in the gap and make a wall on behalf of the land**” (Ezekiel 22:30). So many of the viewpoints presented by society today manifest either an ignorance of (Hoseah 4:6) or a total rejection of God and his will for man (Romans 1:28). We must strive to promote those spiritual truths and the power of which they are comprised (Romans 1:16; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3).

2. We must be those who draw upon the power of prayer. In such areas, prayer serves at least a two-fold purpose. God, through scripture, has assured of the effectiveness of fervent prayer on the part of faithful believers (James 5:16). These prayers should include our families,

government officials and all who can be participants in turning things around. Another purpose of this prayer is for our own comfort and peace while living in an evil generation (Philippians 4:6-7).

3. We must be reminded that God is both just and sovereign. It would be easy to look around us and see so many worldly people with great wealth, position and influence and develop misconceptions as to who is in control. Looking at the events of the past few decades could cause some to become depressed in the world's apparent success. However, the popularity, prestige, wealth and position of the world will not be the final standard by which all things will be judged. God's word will judge (John 12:48). All men will stand before God at the judgment (II Corinthians 5:10). True “success” will be seen in the faithful of our day taking their place with the faithful of all ages in our eternal rest with God.

NO ROOM FOR COMPROMISE

We cannot compromise in the face of these concerns today. Yes, the vast majority today are satisfied with our secular leadership. Yes, the morals of today have dipped to a depressingly low depth. Yes, there are those who laugh in the face of those who uphold the moral standards portrayed in the Bible. In the face of these sad truths, we must continue to be diligent with our mission. The majority of the world is lost and has little time for or concern with God's saving message. We must continue to be his light-bearers in the face of these concerns. The true day of reckoning is yet to come.

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

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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, Evangelist, tel. (615) 758-7406.

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Houston area—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, tel. (713) 353-2707. Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, Evangelist. **Home of Houston College of the Bible and the HCB Lectures**, beginning the last Sunday in February.

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POLYGAMY

Gary W. Summers

With society on the verge of accepting homosexual marriages (repeated endorsements have been given by **Ann Landers**), I have wondered, yes, even predicted that it would not be long before the idea of polygamy would be revived. Well, the idea has now been suggested—and in a public way.

Mike Leavitt, the governor of Utah (where else?), is not only in favor of the practice, he argues that polygamy should be allowed as part of religious freedom. According to an article in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*, there are tens of thousands believed to be practicing polygamy in Utah. The governor does not consider the practice a serious threat of any kind, and prosecutors do not prosecute polygamists there even though it is clearly against the law (July 28, page 2A).

The average person might think that this is Utah's problem, but such is not the case. *The Denton Record-Chronicle* was quick to publish an editorial in favor of the governor's position. One marvels that this endorsement appeared only one day after the news story was published. Observe the rationale expressed in the editorial, "More Than One Wife?":

Laws against polygamy were adopted because a majority of its citizens believed Christian morality demanded faithful, monogamous marriages....

...our neighbors are increasingly Muslim, Buddhist, atheist, Sisters of the Goddess, Vegans, agnostic and a host of other non-Christian faiths and non-faiths and we have to find a basis for our civil laws that will accommodate this growing diversity (10A).

This "multi-cultural" argument fails on two grounds. *First*, it is an oversimplification (at best) to say that Christian morality inspired laws against polygamy. It would probably be more nearly accurate to say that the laws were inspired by the evils of polygamy.

Second, why is it assumed that a nation founded upon Christian principles must be so generous as to throw out all of the moral values that made her great in the first place? Whether we deserved it or not is certainly debatable, but God has blessed America. Shall we render our thanks by destroying even further the little morality that remains?

Perhaps, the editor should reflect upon how open-minded Muslim countries are toward Christianity or any other religion. They have not exactly opened wide their arms. We have a far better policy; those in the minority here are free to worship as they wish. Most do not complain about the heavy influence of Christianity on this society, nor should they. Americans who travel in other countries do not expect them to give up their dominant views just because we are there.

Did anyone ever think that in our time a newspaper editor would write:

If an adult man wants to be married—at the same time—to three adult women who want to be married to him, what is our basis for denying them the right to live their private lives as they wish (10A)?

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

TODAY, WHO DO MEN SAY THAT I THE SON OF MAN AM?

J.E. Choate

What "our scholars" say about Christ today is the major focus of this article. The subject came to mind after reading an informative and substantive essay written by **Allen Black** and **Richard Oster** in the Harding University Graduate School of Religion bulletin titled "The PBS Program On Jesus: A Review." The four-hour PBS Special was a documentary titled "From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians."

The purpose of the PBS presentation was to show the evolution of a Mediterranean peasant, as **John Dominic Crossan** et al. picture Jesus of Nazareth, who was transformed from an obscure Galilean Jew named Jesus into a mythical divine being whom his disciples accepted to be the long-awaited Jewish Messiah.

This article does not propose to be a review of the Black-Oster article, but was prompted by it. The "demythologizing" theology of **Rudolph Bultmann** continues to be a controlling factor in postmodern theology. This is especially true in the case of John Dominic Crossan and the Jesus Seminar.

WHAT DID YOU SAY JESUS WAS?

The current theology of the Westmar Institute/Jesus Seminar is a construct of semi-historical Christian fiction which rejects traditional Christian theology in much the same way as did the Neo-orthodox theologians until the late 1950's. But there are radical differences. The **mythically** enshrouded Jesus of Bultmann and the pale historical Jesus of **Paul Tillich** becomes a "flesh and blood" Nazarene Jew in the hands of Crossman.

Jesus is pictured by Crossman, a major spokesman of the Jesus Seminar, as a Jewish cynic critical of the Jews and their religion. The Jesus Seminar reconstruct of Jesus is patched together from the "odds and ends" of first cen-

tury Eastern Mediterranean cultural history. Jesus is pictured in graphic language as a bona fide Palestinian Jew who became a victim of Jewish and Roman systems.

Bible scholars in our schools fully understand the century-old Graf-Wellhausen Documentary Hypothesis of the Pentateuch, and "Form and Source Criticism" of the New Testament. They fully understand that this piece of hypothetical fiction about the "Q" document, the fifth gospel, exists only in man's imagination, and not on a fragment of a scroll the size of a postage stamp.

They also know that "synoptic gospels" tradition is solely dependent upon the speculative existence of the "Q" document. Do the professors introduce the "Q" document as the lost "fifth gospel"? They write that the "'Q' document is fancifully interpreted...." *How could a document possibly be interpreted which never existed except in imagination?*

The professors describe the PBS program that the viewing public was caught in to be a one-sided, left-of-center presentation. Nobody was caught. It was not intended to be a piece of propaganda to promote the "Jesus hypothesis" conjured up from the fertile imaginations of the Jesus Seminar. I learned little from the PBS program which is not generally known.

WHAT I AM CRITICIZING

The PBS special was dealing with a field of postmodern theology widely publicized in recent years by *Time*, and other national publications. Twelve postmodern world-class liberal scholars in prestigious universities and seminaries participated in the PBS documentary. *My criticism is not of the PBS program, but with my brethren positioned in the ivory towers of academia who seem incapacitated to meet this postmodern heresy.*

(Continued on Page 7)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Editorial...

Why Christians, Congregations Need To Keep On Replenishing Our "Special Mailings" Fund

It has been quite some time since we let our readers know that our "Special Mailings" Fund is in need of replenishing. When sister **Nell Eddy**, of Lansing, Michigan died, she had understood the importance of these mailings enough that she left practically her entire estate in her will for such use. This, of course, helped greatly our ongoing battle for truth among the churches of Christ. However, by now, even this has been used up and our need to replenish the fund once again is imminent.

In this issue we are publishing another of brother **J. E. Choate's** magnificent, cogent, scholarly, incisive articles, entitled, "**Today, Who Do Men Say That I the Son of Man Am?**" Please read and study carefully what he has to say that you may more fully grasp why these "Special Mailings" continue to be so important and necessary.

SENDING "SPECIAL MAILINGS" JUST TO FAITHLESS ELDERS, PREACHERS WILL NOT HAVE NECESSARY EFFECT

Some of those supporting our "Special Mailings" effort reason that if they are sent just to elderships and preachers, this should be sufficient to get the job done.

It won't. Why? Simply because a large majority of elderships and preachers among churches of Christ today already have departed from the faith and will no longer themselves be warned, nor will they warn the congregations which they oversee or serve.

Mailings to such faithless elders and/or preachers, instead of being spread among the members, are put in File 13. The result is the rank and file of the members never hear of what is actually happening to lead disciples away after the perverse things being spoken and taught by almost all our colleges and/or universities.

"SPECIAL MAILINGS" TO INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES IN OFFENDING CHURCHES HELPS SALVAGE THE FAITHFUL

It was not until we began these "Special Mailings" to individuals and families under the oversight or influence of offending elderships and/or preachers that faithful members were sufficiently warned either to demand correction or to leave those offending churches and place their membership with faithful congregations elsewhere.

Such has been done with telling effect in Nashville, Tulsa, Dallas/Fort Worth and other metropolitan areas. Recent such efforts in Houston, Abilene, Lubbock and Midland need to be extended. More such efforts are needed in major cities like Detroit, Indianapolis, Memphis and Los Angeles.

For all this to happen, however, we need the continued prayerful, financial support of concerned brothers, sisters and congregations—brotherhoodwide. Please make such contributions for this purpose payable to **Spring Church of Christ**, clearly earmarked "**Special Mailings**" Fund, and address them to **Post Office Box 39, Spring, Texas 77383**. Tax-deductible receipts are available as needed.

[P.S. While you are at it, why not take a chapter from the life of sister Nell Eddy and name this work in your will? It is now clear that this battle for truth is nowhere near over. If you do this, you can have effect for the truth, as she did, not just while you live but long after you are gone.]

—Ira Y. Rice, Jr., *Editor*

Associate Editorial...

A Medley of Matters

PRESIDENT CLINTON—HUMANISM IN ACTION

For many years faithful gospel preachers have pointed out the grave and impending dangers of those who believe that truth is subjective and relative. Such persons hold that there is no objective truth and, therefore, no absolute humanly attainable standard of right and wrong. Having rejected objective truth one must have some kind of standard to guide one's thinking and conduct. Hence, truth and right become whatever works to accomplish one's goal. Error and wrong are whatever thwarts that goal. This is a *pragmatic* view of life, the atheist humanist's guiding philosophy through which he or she filters every decision made.

For many weeks we have been treated to the sad spectacle of immorality and lies in and from the highest elected office in the country. All of the president's activities may be attributed to the fact that he is a humanist in liberal Baptist clothing (whatever that is). To him truth is relative and subjective. Truth is whatever he desires it to be in order to reach his goals (pragmatism). Whatever he needs to say or do (or not say or do), however he needs to act and speak, he will so conduct himself. Why is this the case? Because the president has but one goal—keep his position of power whereby he may encourage and promote his humanism. Furthermore, whatever may be said of him may be said of his wife. They are nothing less than a modern-day Ahab and Jezebel.

"IS ALL OF LIFE WORSHIP?"

In this year's August issue we asked and (from the Bible) answered the question, "Is all of life worship?" The distinction the Bible makes between worship and service was clearly defined and delineated. The biblical principle is, "All worship is service to God, but not all service is worship to him." Evidently the interest in the subject of worship and service was widespread for we have received more requests for that issue of CFTF than any other in recent months.

Do not be too surprised to see more efforts made to promote the false doctrine that except for sin, all of

life is worship. Also, do not be overly startled when you learn who believes, advocates, and attempts to defend it. Furthermore, do not be too shocked when in the attempt to define and explain this doctrine the advocates of it come through sounding like the president when he said, "It depends on what 'is' is."

"MISTER, YOU CAN GET GLAD IN THE SAME BRITCHES YOU GOT MAD IN!"

When I was growing up one of my mother's sayings (she had a number of them) is the previous quote. When I was wrong and had to suffer the consequences of my actions sometimes my displeasure was obvious to mother. At such times she did not relent. It was then that she would declare the words comprising the above heading.

There are times when people get caught in their false teachings and compromises. Unable to refute the truth exposing their duplicity; too arrogant, proud and haughty to admit wrong (indeed, they are "*legends in their own mind*"); too full of spite to repent, they simply get mad and hate the one(s) who told them the truth. With Paul we would ask, "**Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth**" (Galatians 4:16)? All too often the answer is "Yes, and I will destroy you for so doing if I can."

When I learn of such unChristian responses I am always reminded of my mother's comment when I was upset at being caught with my hand in the proverbial "cookie jar." My response to such persons is her chiding, "*You can get glad in the same britches you got mad in!*" [You know, when you think about it, the President's recent attitude and actions are not too far removed from those of certain editors, college presidents, professors and the like. Do spiritual fornicators take their cue from the physical variety?]

CORRECTION

In an article by **Wayne Coats** (CFTF, May, 1998) it was reported that **Fred Stroop** and his family left Granny White Pike Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee, because **Steve Flatt** was a speaker in their June 1998 seminar. We have since learned that Steve Flatt's appearance on the seminar was not the reason Stroop left. We apologize for giving the wrong reason for his leaving.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

"BROTHERHOOD WATCHDOGS"

Michael Hatcher

[EDITORIAL NOTE: The following editorial appeared in the September, 1998, Defender, Volume 27, Number 9, pages 2, 3. We are reproducing it herewith because of its special relevance concerning the subject with which it deals. It is not an attack on someone's person. It does forcefully attack an erroneous viewpoint employed and propagated by certain persons. There is a difference. As far as I know, the person named in the following article (Todd Clippard) is a young, faithful gospel preacher. Moreover, he wrote an excellent article exposing error. Clippard's article follows Hatcher's. Thereby, one may judge for one's self as to whether his exposure of false teachers and their doctrines differs from what is routinely done in Contending for the Faith.

Twice, I personally e-mailed Clippard in an attempt to get him to see his inconsistency, but he never acknowledged it. He evidently does not understand that he is practicing the very thing he condemns. Moreover, after a considerable amount of e-mail exchanges by various persons, Clippard proved he had not learned his lesson when he declared that a certain person had been misrepresented (Guy N. Woods' position on female translators) in CFTF. He then declared that when such was called to our attention by another editor he "doubted" that he ever did anything about it. The problem with his unfounded charge is that the correction of which Clippard wrote appeared simultaneously with the charge from the other editor in his publication. He too doubted that the correction would be made. However, to this day there has been no acknowledgment from that editor that CFTF made the necessary correction. I guess only certain people need to make corrections. If Clippard had researched his material before writing, he would have found that this was corrected approximately two years ago. Furthermore, the information necessary for making the correction was found in private correspondence and was not in the public domain. When it was made public and thereby we learned of it, we corrected our mistake. Will others do the same? Moreover, from its inception CFTF has promised to make such corrections and we have stayed true to our promise.

We do not take lightly charges made against us that we are not in harmony with the conduct authorized by the New Testament in exposing false doctrine and teachers. I trust that Clippard and other young (and some old enough to be his father) gospel preachers will learn the way of the Lord more perfectly in this area of service to Christ, and that he will continue to expose error and false teachers as he did in his article. We need men such as Todd Clippard. Hence, I suggest that Clippard learn to base his views of another person on adequate evidence and credible witnesses rather than on hearsay, gossip and tale-bearers.

All need to learn that as far as false teachers are concerned, there may be 40 different approaches for truly exposing them, but like the different methods for skinning a cat, there is no way the cat is going to like it. As the late Franklin Camp stated (which statement I e-mailed to Clippard): "The Lord was not crucified for saying, 'Consider the lilies', but he was crucified for saying, 'You have made my father's house a den of thieves.'"—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

On the Internet there are lists of e-mail where individuals can write a message and it will be sent to all individuals subscribed to that particular list. Recently, on one of the lists, an individual (Todd Clippard, whom I understand is a faithful gospel preacher) made a comment concerning "watchdog publications." He said he did not "want to [be] pigeon-hole[d] with Ira Rice and others for whom I have little or no respect." It was interesting to me that the only name used in this regard was Rice's. I do not need to try to defend him. He does not need to be defended, as his actions speak for themselves. Moreover, the majority of responses I received were in defense of Rice. I do know that I have profited from his writings (having read *Contending For The Faith* since the late 1970's) as he obeyed God's command to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). I want to consider some of what Clippard wrote trying to explain why he has "little or no respect" for Ira Rice, especially since he made "no apologies for what was contained in the post."

PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF

Notice some of the words that he used to condemn Rice. He wrote that,

I have found the articles exposing false teachers to be quite caustic and unkind in tone and content... have gone beyond the boundries [sic] of decorum and good taste... 'heretic detectors' who spend most of their energy turning over every stone and investigating every hint of heresy...extremists to the right of the brotherhood...I will always try to maintain my dignity and respect the dignity of those with whom I disagree

My first reaction to Clippard is that it is obvious the legs of the lame are not equal. He has the right to condemn Rice and others for being this way, yet that is the very thing he is doing in his post, along with a couple others who made similar statements.

HARSH BIBLICAL LANGUAGE

If we are to determine our respect, or lack of it, based upon the terms a person uses, surely we should also apply

this standard to the writers of the Bible. I believe most people agree that Stephen was speaking by inspiration of God as the beloved physician (Luke) records his sermon in Acts 7. Stephen called the Sanhedrin **“stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears”** and then added that they were **“betrayers and murderers”** of the just one (Acts 7:51-52). He then tells them that they had received the law but they did not keep it (Acts 7:53). I guess some would consider this **“caustic and unkind in tone and content.”**

ARE PETER AND JUDE HARSH?

Next consider Peter and Jude (especially since II Peter 2 and Jude use many of the same terms). We will consider the specific words of Jude. First look at Jude 4 and view how Jude sees the false prophets Peter mentioned.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Is the language of the Holy Spirit shameful? However, it does not stop there. In verse 8 he adds that they are **“filthy dreamers”** who **“defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”** He continues in verse 10 to tell us that they **“speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.”** In verse 11 he places a woe upon them. Then in verse 12 he begins describing them with the following words.

...clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

He continues in verse 16 adding that they are, **“murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.”** In verse 18 he then adds that they are **“mockers”** who **“walk after their own ungodly lusts”** and then tells us in verse 19 that they **“separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”** Obviously, since Jude’s entire book concerns these individuals, he must have been one of the first century church’s **“heretic detectors”** who [spent] most of [his] energy turning over every stone and investigating every hint of heresy.”

SHOULD WE HAVE “NO RESPECT” FOR PAUL?

We could also mention Paul’s referring to the Judaizing teachers as dogs, evil workers, and mutilated ones (Philippians 3:2) who are enemies of the cross (Philippians 3:18). He also said they were deceitful (II Corinthians 11:13). However, let us (for space sake) consider Jesus in this regard. In Matthew 15, Jesus calls the scribes and Pharisees **“hypocrites”** because they **“draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me”** (Matthew 15:8). He then told them that their worship was vain (Matthew 15:9), then called them blind leaders of the blind (Matthew 15:14). Later in Matthew 23 Jesus calls them hypocrites seven times. Additionally, he tells them they do not allow people

to enter the kingdom and when they do make a proselyte they **“make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves”** (v. 15). He again calls them blind guides (vv. 16, 24) and adds fools (v. 19). Regarding their life he says, **“ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess”** (v.25). He tells them they are **“whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity”** (vv. 27-28). He then calls them serpents and a generation of vipers and asks them **“how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”** (v. 33). Surely Jesus was **“quite caustic and unkind in tone and content”** in his remarks to these religious people. He surely went beyond the **“boundries [sic] of decorum and good taste.”** Jesus must be one of those **“extremists to the right of the brotherhood”** who are simply **“heretic detectors”** who spend most of their energy turning over every stone and investigating every hint of heresy.”

UNFAIR AND INCONSISTENT JUDGMENT

I hope that you see how unfair it is to condemn someone based simply upon the words a person uses. If we do so, by what standard do we do it? It is certainly not the standard employed by the inspired writers of the Bible. If one is defining words based upon their own subjectivity, certain words might be **“quite caustic and unkind”** while they would not to another person. If we lose or **“have little or no respect for a person based upon this, then we must lose all respect for Peter, Paul, Jude, and even Jesus and the Holy Spirit (for he inspired the writers of the New Testament).** To make judgments based upon this is also unfair because we do not know the heart of the person and we might not know the fights and battles the person has been through. If what they say is false, then expose (prove) that it is false. However, men such as Ira Rice, and many others like him (the Wallaces, Coats, Brown, Cates, Elkins, and others of like faith) are fighting the battles that many others would not fight. Because of their work possibly many Christians will be saved from the apostasy that is among us. Instead of criticizing, let us uphold their hands in this great work of **“earnestly contend[ing] for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”** (Jude 3).

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A DISTURBING CONVERSATION

Todd Clippard

I hesitate to write this, but conscience, and more importantly scripture, necessitates it.

As many of you are aware, the **University Church of Christ in Tuscaloosa, Alabama** has invited **Baptist preacher Tony Campolo** to speak at this year's **Youth in Action (YIA)** in Birmingham, Alabama. The date is the weekend of December 27. Many false teachers and other apostates have been invited in years past, including this year's lineup with **Jeff Walling, Buddy Bell** and **Acapella**, just to name a few.

IS IT THE UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH?

I called the University church on three occasions in an attempt to speak with someone about the lineup, and about Campolo in particular, what follows are some of the responses I received during my inquiry.

I talked with two different ministers of the University church (one on Friday and one today) and each was asked this question: Are you aware that Tony Campolo is not a Christian?

Reply from the first: "He's not affiliated with the churches of Christ. I think he's a Baptist, but more non-denominational than Baptist. I don't know what he teaches in regard to the plan of salvation."

This was as far as I got with the first minister. He requested that I call the youth minister on Monday (today 8-25-98) and speak with him. So I did exactly that.

The second minister was the organizer of YIA. when I asked him if he was aware that Tony Campolo was not a Christian, I received the following reply: "You mean he's not a member of the Church of Christ." To which I replied, "what's the difference?" His response, "I believe God is a lot bigger than the Church of Christ. A person does not

have to be a member of the Church of Christ to be a Christian." (I realize God is much bigger than the church, but this is not what he meant. He meant the church was a lot bigger than the Church of Christ.)

I asked him if Campolo was going to extend the invitation, and if so, what would he say? Reply: "He is only going to tell people that if they want someone to pray with them, they can go to designated prayer rooms outside the auditorium." (The event is being held at the civic center in Birmingham.)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE BAPTIZED TO BE SAVED?

After a lengthy discussion regarding the essentiality of baptism, I asked him if he would defend this statement, "All accountable individuals must be baptized in order to be saved." He refused, and tried to use the thief on the cross as an example to prove his point! He then told me that a young girl (about 14 he said) came to him earlier this week and desired to become a Christian, but since her parents could not come that night, would it be OK to wait until Sunday. He then asked me, "Are you telling me that if that girl dies before Sunday, that she will be lost?" My reply: "I do not have to tell you that. Mark 16:16 already tells you that. Just because I want something to be true does not change the word of God." To which he replied, "I am not willing to go that far. Anyway, I have heard someone explain from the Greek that Mark 16:16 can be translated "because you are already saved." I pulled every modern translation I could get my hands on and told him I could not find a single one that so translated the text. He was not satisfied. (I suspect, in his confusion, he was referring to Acts 2:38 and the Baptist explanation of the phrase "for remission of sins.") He then said, "I just have a lot more faith in Jesus than in baptism." I replied, "How can you separate Jesus from what he taught? Jesus commanded baptism." At that point he said he was very busy and thanked me for calling. He offered to meet me in Hamilton to discuss this further. I told him there was no need, since I was going to stand by Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38 and 22:16, and Galatians 3:27, no matter if he is in Hamilton or Tuscaloosa, and that he could not disprove what they teach no matter how hard he tried.

WATCH OUT FOR THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH IN TUSCALOOSA!

We then concluded our conversation. I was satisfied I fully understood what he believes and he had no doubts about what I believe. I do not intend to pursue this any further, since I do not think anyone at University, at least in the leadership, cares about what God's word has to say.

The only reason I presented this information to you is to warn you about the University church in Tuscaloosa and any congregation that supports YIA. You may contact me further at the address and location below should you desire more information.

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“WHO DO MEN SAY...”

(Continued From Page 1)

I propose to take this PBS Special and the HUGSR article and to push the package to raise some fundamental questions about the influence of postmodern theology in the Bible departments and schools of religion in “our” colleges and universities.

How is it to be explained that venerable Christian papers have so little to say to churches of Christ who purchase their literature about the Jesus Seminar, Willow Creek Community Church, and the Third Wave “church growth” models. Why is it that “our scholars” in “our schools” are so reluctant to address these malignant cancerous growths of postmodern theology in their Bible classes?

Postmodernism is not confined to one area, but to others. We have witnessed the “death of God” theology (modern theology); the end of the ideologies of Freudianism and Marxism; the rise of Derridean philosophy of post structuralism, and so on. Neo-orthodox theology identified with Barth et al. has not been discarded, just re-shuffled and given new names in postmodern theology.

HAZELIP AND POSTMODERN THEOLOGY

I read with considerable interest a featured announcement in the *Lipscomb News* of a new book titled *Theology Matters: Answers for the Church Today* which will be released by the College Press (Independent Christian Church publishing company) this fall. The idea came from Lipscomb University Bible faculty to honor **Harold Hazelip** following his retirement from Lipscomb University.

The book includes essays from 30 of Hazelip’s former students. The book is edited by **Gary Holloway**, **Mark Black**, and **Randall Harris**. They say that “they are faithful servants of Christ and his church, and all have been greatly influenced by Harold Hazelip.”

Why would the College Press identified with the Christian Church print the volume in the first place? The Digressive churches know nothing about the person and career of Hazelip and could not care less. The only interest which the Christian Church leaders could possibly have in the churches of Christ is to milk them dry to serve their own selfish interests.

In my opinion, Dr. Harold Hazelip, who is the apotheosis of postmodern theology, has done more irreparable damage in this generation to lead the churches and schools into the slough of postmodern Church of Christ digression. He has been strategically positioned to do so as dean of the HUGSR and president of Lipscomb University.

PARADIGMS AND PARAMETERS OF POSTMODERN THEOLOGY

The *paradigms* and *parameters* concept first began to appear as new words for members of the churches of Christ in *Image*, and the Christian Scholars Conference papers in the late ’80s and early ’90s. Our “scholars” became enamored with paradigms (models) while rejecting what is

called “pattern theology” as alleged by **Michael Moss**, Lipscomb Bible chairman.

Paradigm is meaningless academic lingo for the brothers and sisters who sit in their pews. The term was first introduced by **Thomas Kuhn** (1970) into the scientific community. His professional purpose was to show that intellectual paradigms (models) shift and take on additional meaning with the discovery of new fields of knowledge.

A scientific *paradigm* is a model with moving parts like a model of our planetary system. Kuhn’s paradigm concept has become a useful and meaningful tool in the service of modern science, history, philosophy, theology, and the liberal arts.

We remember the statement of **Thomas Olbricht** in his CSC (1989) paper that the churches of Christ are now in a paradigm shift which is taking place at the “grass roots” level of the churches. [The shift indeed is taking place at the “grass roots” level in the minds of our liberal intellectuals.]

A GLOSSARY OF THEOLOGICAL POSTMODERN TERMS

Very few in churches of Christ have ever heard the name **Jacques Derrida**. However, this is not the case in our schools. ACU’s **Daryl Tippens** presented an informative CSC paper in which he explained the alarming signifi-

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cance of Derrida's philosophy of "deconstruction" in the exegesis of scripture. The big word in Derridean philosophy is *deconstruction*, or *post structuralism*. The philosophy of Deconstruction/post structuralism knows no neutral grounds. It is the latest and most significant destructive methodology to invade the area of postmodern theology.

The historical/critical methodology is legitimately employed in responsible biblical scholarship to establish the original text, its date, history, and meaning. But in the hands of liberal theologians it becomes a destructive means to introduce the latest positions of postmodern theology into the religious psyche.

Post-critical/Deconstruction/post *structuralism* has become the virtually accepted method of research and writings in specific mercurial areas such as literature, philosophy, and theology with no fixed boundaries. It is a great temptation to "dress up the facts," or to misrepresent them. The Jesus Seminar provides, by far, the best examples of the distortions of history.

HARDENING OF THE CATEGORIES

From Tillich, who thought of Jesus as a pale historical figure to Crossan, who pictured Jesus a dead Jew with crows croaking over his cross, and wild dogs digging his body from a shallow grave on the crucifixion ground, the

fiction just changes. This picture and all the rest of the wresting of scriptural history by the Westmar Institute is an accurate representation of the philosophy of deconstruction and post structuralism by Jacques Devida for the purpose of rewriting biblical history.

It is now clear that the postmodern Church of Christ denomination is aligning, in addition to other denominations, with the liberal Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Their acceptance of postmodern trends from the genderless Bible, gays in the pulpit, and such like, is rivaled only by the Episcopalians.

This is due to the influence of a few brethren, e. g., **Rubel Shelly**, **Bill Humble**, and **Calvin Warpula** who are pushing the package to promote fellowship with both Dignitaries churches.

ADDENDUM

I raise other crucial fundamental questions. Did Christ build his church identified with churches of Christ today? Or, did **Barton W. Stone** and **Alexander Campbell** crank up a Restoration sect which has become the Church of Christ denomination as **Douglas Foster** and **Richard Hughes** contend? "What say ye?"

—37141/2 Belmont Boulevard
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DENOMINATIONALISM'S CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICA'S IMMORALITY

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

There is probably no hope of ever convincing the majority of the morally good people who are members of Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish groups that they are not complying with biblical precepts or that they have never had their sins remitted. (I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:38-47; 22:16). The myriad pleas for Bible authority for all beliefs and practices in things religious usually fall upon deaf ears with the consequence, especially in America, of the reply that: "You are judging me!" New Testament Christians are never surprised by such response for their Master, Christ, was rejected by the majority of his hearers:

Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them (Matthew 13:13-15).

EDUCATION, DENOMINATIONS, AND VALUES

A major contributor to "dulling" the eyes and ears of Americans to truth is public education. With the full support of governmental statutes, most public educators teach that "alternate life-styles" and "choosing one's own value standards" are valid goals. Children, generally, are thus no longer aware of the absolute truths held dear by their grandparents (not most of the children's parents who, since the 1960s, are also subjective in morals). A youngster, today, can sit in a Bible class, smile at the teacher, and even "agree" that what is being taught is "good" but at the very same moment the child can be thinking that the Christian "alternative" may not be "good" for him. Everyone today, every boy and girl in America, is subjected to some form of relativism concerning truth and most are doing "what is right in their own eyes" (Judges 21:25). As a result the sound of immorality in America is so loud that the din from lust, lewdness, lasciviousness, and laziness mutes the Bible proclamation of obedience to God, integrity, absolute morality, and ethics in work (Hebrews 5:8-9; Philippians 2:5; Ephesians 4:17-5:18; Titus 3:1; Matthew 5:13-16; et al.).

However, public education is not the only contributor nor solely to blame for the subjective morass evident in the morals and religious practices in this nation. Protestant denominations have also defended the idea that truth is *not* absolute. Such religions also teach children “alternate religious styles” and “choosing one’s own church” as valid ideals. Such a child can also smile and say, “Well, your religion is good, too!” The evidence for making such a charge against Protestantism is overwhelming. Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Mormons, Episcopalians, and a host of other sectarian groups have vehemently stated: “We are all trying to get to heaven; we are just going by *different* roads!” It is, thus, amusing and amazing that Protestant groups are hypocritically decrying the breakdown of morals in America while simultaneously remaining enemies of truth! The Bible records but one truth, one church, one faith (Ephesians 4:4-6; Christ built only one church, Matthew 16:18). Protestants, on the other hand, admit to *many* truths, *many* churches, and *many* faiths. These sects thus contribute to the cacophony of lies that undermine the absolute unity of truth in things religious (Matthew 15:9-17). Bible students are well aware, however, that the enemies of God’s people and God’s truth have always tried to deceive by stating, “we seek your God as ye do” (Ezra 4:2).

Roman Catholicism cannot escape blame, either, for being a major contributor to moral decay in this country. Her “make it up as we go along” approach to truth in religion also teaches children that there are no absolutes in life. Just recently the “Pope” decided that there is much evidence for evolution and so Catholics may accept such teaching; but, man still has a soul, or so the “Pope” declared! So many “convenient” doctrines have been added to Catholicism to appease the masses that the religion little resembles its original moorings nor is it even a shadow of the original, true church of Christ of the first century (Acts 2:1-47). Thus, the child, today, can hear Bible precepts, laws, and standards; but can smile and say: “Well, those are good, but there are so many other traditions, too. And, the ‘Pope’ said that his truth was right for today.”

JUDAISM’S CONTRIBUTION TO FALSE VALUES

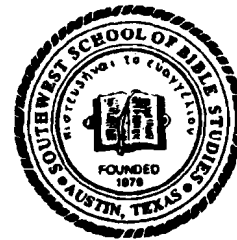
Judaism has added its own peculiar brand of lie to existential relativism’s hold on America’s thinking. The pre-millennial error of Protestantism, calling for *full* Jewish salvation in literal Jerusalem, has infiltrated the foreign

policy of America to the extent that Jewish oppression of Arabs within Palestinian borders (and sometimes without) is tolerated and even condoned by the American public. The child can think: “Well, Jesus taught to love one’s enemy, but only when that enemy is not opposed to Judaism!” The absolute truth is so clouded concerning the end of Moses’ law at the cross, and that only the gospel saves *anyone* today, that most Protestants and Catholics in America believe that the Jews are their “brethren” and are all right religiously (Romans 1:16; Colossians 2:12-14)!

It is recognized here that Protestants *believe* they are saved. It is recognized here that Catholics *believe* they are saved. It is recognized here that Jews *think* they are still God’s chosen people (Romans 9-II). The contributors to such irrational thinking are legion. The only hope for America is a return to the objective, absolute truth of the Bible. Then children can say, “I know whom I have believed” (II Timothy 1:12).

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free....Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 8:31-32; 17:17).

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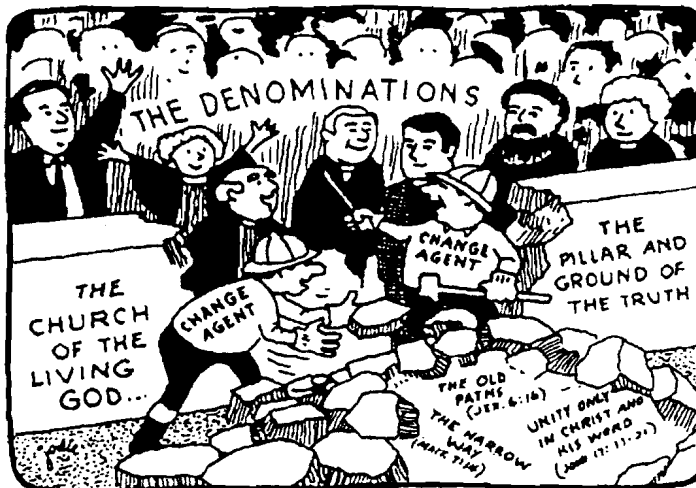
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“LET THE WALL COME DOWN”

Jodie Boren

When the Berlin wall came down, it was heralded as a great sign of peace. Of infinitely greater significance was when Jesus died on the cross and broke down the wall that had separated the Jews and the Gentiles, making it possible for all men to be reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:14-16). Now there is a clamoring by the “change agents” in the church to tear down the wall of truth that separates the Lord’s church from the denominations and to have unity, i.e., “unity in diversity.” They are saying, “Let the wall come down.”



THE BIBLICAL BELIEVER

One such preacher, well known in west Texas, delivered a sermon last year urging unity with all believers. To desire unity is certainly commendable, for Christ prayed for the unity of all believers (John 17:21) and with the apostles taught that we must speak the same thing (I Corinthians 1:10) and walk by the same rule or standard (Philippians 3:16).

There is, however, a world of difference in what this so-called gospel preacher means by a believer and what the New Testament teaches a believer is. One paragraph from this change agent’s sermon will show clearly what he means when he uses the term “believer.” I quote:

This past year, I guess it was after the first of the year—this year—Promise Keepers, the men’s movement many of you know about, had the largest gathering of ministers ever in the history of the Church as far as anybody knows about, in Atlanta.

Can you believe that he equates the denominations that make up the Promise Keepers, and their false doctrines, with the church? That is what he evidently means by a fellow believer—that is the devil’s “unity in diversity.”

The believers of the New Testament are those who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only begotten son of God (John 8:24) and who had “obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which” had been delivered to them (Romans 6:17). This doctrine was from God—not men! When one arises from the waters of baptism, Paul says that one should walk in the “newness of life” (Romans 6:4) for he is now a new creature in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17). Paul further exhorts Christians to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Ephesians 4:1). This is what John meant when he wrote that we, as Christians,

should walk in the light—or truth—of God’s word (I John 1:5-7). God gave us this great truth hundreds of years ago when through the inspired writer he said;

Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left (Joshua 23:6).

THE TRUTH THAT SEPARATES

In William Woodson’s powerful expose of “Change Agents and Churches of Christ,” there are listed some 15 departures from the pure doctrine of Christ. The false brethren he mentions are turning to the right and to the left of the old paths as they add to and diminish from the word of God. These things ought not so to be. As one brother said, we need to get back to the teaching, preaching, proclaiming, upholding, defending, and practicing the pure gospel of Jesus the Christ. Amen!

Men may try to tear down the wall of truth that separates the Lord’s church from the denominations, but truth will prevail. Their efforts will certainly please the devil and perhaps a lot of men, but we must never forget the words of Paul, in Galatians 1:10, where he writes that if one pleases men he cannot be the servant of Christ.

The church, which Jesus purchased with his precious blood, is the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). May we love it as Christ did and may we never be guilty of compromising its precious wall of truth with the teachings of men.

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Sunday, February 28

- 9:30 A.M. "A Review of the Woods-Franklin Debate on Holy Spirit Baptism and Miracles" Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
10:30 A.M. "The Design and End of Miracles" David P. Brown
4:00 P.M. "The United Pentecostal Church" Lynn Parker
5:00 P.M. "Romanticism—the Philosophy Behind Pentecostalism" Bob Berard
6:00 P.M. "What is the Meaning of 'that which is perfect'?" Bobby Liddell

Monday, March 1

- 9:00 A.M. "What is the 'Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, Inc.'" Roddy Covington
10:00 A.M. "Water Baptism—Not Holy Spirit Baptism—Is the One Baptism" David Baker
11:00 A.M. "A Review of the Wallace-Vaughn Debate on Miracles and the Godhead" Tom Wacaster
1:30 P.M. "Where is the Evidence For Miracles Today?" Pat McIntosh
2:30 P.M. "What Does I Corinthians 1:6-8 Teach?" Charles Collette
3:30 P.M. "Pentecostalism and the Godhead" Clifford Newell
DINNER BREAK
7:00 P.M. "Contradictions in the Various Doctrines of Pentecostals" B. J. Clarke
8:00 P.M. "The Doctrine of Direct Divine Illumination" Jesse Whitlock

Tuesday, March 2

- 9:00 A.M. "Miracles of Christ" Tom Hicks
10:00 A.M. "A Review of 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ Today'" Eddie Whitten
****10:00 A.M. Ladies' Class—"The Godly Woman, or True Spirituality—Part 1" Irene Taylor**
11:00 A.M. "Nashville Jubilee' and Pentecostalism" Gary Grizzell
1:30 P.M. "Experiences are not Authoritative" Billy Bland
2:30 P.M. "Miracles of the Apostles" David Jones
****2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class—"The Godly Woman, or True Spirituality—Part 2" Irene Taylor**
3:30 P.M. "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" Noah Hackworth
DINNER BREAK
7:00 P.M. "A Review of the Woods-Hicks Debate on Holy Spirit Baptism and Miracles" Robert Taylor, Jr.
8:00 P.M. "You Can't Have the Tongues Without the Snakes" Ronnie Hayes

Wednesday, March 3

- 9:00 A.M. "Biblical Spirituality Versus Emotionalism" Toney Smith
10:00 A.M. "Atheists and Pagans Can Speak Gibberish" Gary Summers
11:00 A.M. "What Do I Corinthians 13:9-13, Ephesians 4:8-14 and Romans 12:6-8 Have in Common?" Daniel Denham
1:30 P.M. "The Nine Miraculous Gifts" Lester Kamp
2:30 P.M. "Old and New Pentecostalism" Michael Light
3:30 P.M. "Pentecostalism Undermines the Authority of the Bible" Michael Hatcher
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“...GOD GAVE THEM UP UNTO VILE AFFECTIONS...”

RELIGION AND HOMOSEXUALS

Compiled by Mark McWhorter

SUMMARY: A regional Methodist Church conference in Texas considered “having no more union” with those who affirm unions for gays and lesbians, but instead voted for unity.

The Central Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church at its annual meeting June 2 rejected an attempt to separate itself from supporters of same-gender weddings and gay and lesbian ordinations. About 1,000 people meeting in Fort Worth, representing the churches of a 28-county area, voted down a resolution which would have urged members to “have no more union” with gay-affirming leaders, and adopted instead one which called for unity despite diverse interpretations of the Bible. Both measures covered a variety of topics under the heading of “Authority of Scripture,” with the resolution adopted by the conference essentially affirming the church’s current statement under that title. That resolution also called for dialogue in the coming year among those whose biblical interpretations differ.

The sponsor of the rejected resolution, First United Methodist Church of Bedford pastor **Dean Posey**, while not one of those threatening to leave the church over the

gay issues, told the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* that he felt a need “to stand up for the orthodox Christian faith.” He was in fact responding to the church trial earlier this year of Reverend **Jimmy Creech**, then pastor of Omaha, Nebraska’s First United Methodist Church, who presided at a ritual celebrating the relationship of a lesbian couple. (Creech’s contract is now ending without being renewed.) That trial fell one vote short of convicting Creech of disobedience because some of the jury of Nebraska pastors believed the rule he violated was not actually the law of the church. To Posey, this represented the way the church’s vague statements on “Authority of Scripture” have allowed non-biblical practices. His rejected resolution included the statement, “We call one last time for repentance by those who continue to practice these errors, and if no repentance, then we recommend that the General Conference ... take immediate steps to have no more union with them.” (Planet Staff, e-mail news service Thursday, June 4, 1998)

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Even *Catholic Charities* was able to find a way to square its morality to achieve compliance with San Francisco’s requirement that contractors extend registered domestic partners the same benefits as married couples, but the *Salvation Army* announced June 3 that it will give up \$3.5-million in city contracts for social services rather than recognize unmarried couples. The big bite out of the charity’s \$18-million San Francisco services budget will be reflected in scaled-back homeless shelter, drug rehabilitation, and meals for seniors programs, and in the layoff of 60 staff at summer’s end. Mayor **Willie Brown’s** office hopes to take one last stab at working things out with the *Salvation Army*, which had sought but was denied exemption from the domestic partners requirement as a “sole source” provider.

Salvation Army Lieutenant Colonel **Richard Love** told the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “We simply cannot agree to be in compliance of the ordinance. We do not view it as a matter of discrimination. We offer a full range of benefits to our employees.” But although the *Salvation Army* maintains that it does not discriminate based on sexual orientation, this is not the first time that the organization has been at odds with the city regarding gays and lesbians, including a 1996 scuffle over an anti-gay letter by an official of the group that almost lost it a city contract.

[At least the *Salvation Army* is sticking to biblical morality on this. Amazing that the Catholic Church was willing to cave in to this restriction. Also, it is amazing that San Francisco’s government leaders are willing to see people in need go without food or shelter so that people living in sin can have their “rights”! Now that is true compassion, is it not? This reiterates the fact that there is more to this

(Continued on Back Page)

DONAHUE-FOX DEBATE

There will be a public discussion between Pat Donahue and Marion Fox concerning the manner of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

DONAHUE: “The scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit personally dwells in the faithful Christian, and not just through the word.”

FOX: “The scriptures teach the Holy Spirit dwells in the faithful Christian only through the word of God.”

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GOD'S TESTIMONY AGAINST ISRAEL

God calls upon his witnesses to testify against his own people. Jehovah calls insensate nature as his witnesses. **"Hear, O ye mountains, Jehovah's controversy, and ye enduring foundations of the earth: for Jehovah hath a controversy with his people, he will contend with Israel"** (Micah 6:2). This is not the first time that Jehovah has used such witnesses against Israel.

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it but shall utterly be destroyed (Deuteronomy 4:26).

Notice again, **"Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth"** (Deuteronomy 32:1).

In Micah 6:3 we read of God's pathetic question: **"O my people, what have I done unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me."** These words show the pleading of a loving God. Even though Israel had forsaken Jehovah, he still loved her. We read these words of solemn earnestness, a cry of sorrow. The words contain an appeal of love, divine love that longs for the reconciliation of rebels. This language is one of desire, **"what have I done unto thee? Wherein have I wearied thee, testify against me"** (Micah 6:3). These words point out the painful fact that God's own people had grown tired of him.

WHERE ARE THE WITNESSES AGAINST GOD?

Before Jehovah passes sentence he permits himself to be regarded as the defendant. He allows his people to bring charges against him. Bring what accusations Israel may, she had better be careful, because God had his witnesses. Jehovah knew that he had never treated his people unrighteously. **"Thus saith Jehovah, what unrighteousness have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and walked after vanity, and are become vain"** (Jeremiah 2:5)?

Had God been too severe on his people? The psalmist knew that this was not the case. **"He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us after our iniquities"** (Psalms 103:10). Why then had God's own people grown tired of him?

Was Jehovah too quick to become angry with Israel? Certainly not! Notice what the Psalmist said in Psalm 145:8-9. **"Jehovah is gracious, and merciful; slow to anger, and of great lovingkindness; Jehovah is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works."**

As we look at this challenge of Jehovah, **"testify against me,"** can we conclude that God is justified in his judging? We can be sure he was! King David knew that his heavenly father was justified. **"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight; that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest"** (Psalms 51:4).

Before Israel brings charges against her God, he reminds her of all that he has done.

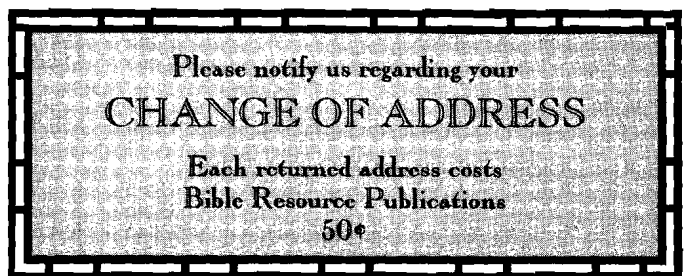
For I brought thee up out to the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him; remember from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteous acts of Jehovah (Micah 6:4-5).

HAS GOD'S CHURCH GROWN TIRED OF GOD?

Israel no doubt would remember all that God had done for her. He gave her freedom from the slavery of Egypt, the great leadership of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. **"Thou leddest thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron"** (Psalms 77:20). Surely God's people would remember how King Balak wanted Balaam to curse Israel so he could defeat her. They would remember how God delivered them across the Jordan and fought their battles. What more could God have done for Israel? Still, she had grown tired of him. Why?

It may be easy for us to look upon Israel with disgust and say shame on you! But what about the church today? Maybe Israel was not so bad after all. Many have grown tired of God's worship as given in the New Testament. As a result they are wanting to change worship by adding to what God has instructed. Many are wanting to mimic the denominations around us. Many have grown tired of serving God and just quit and gone back into the world. Why? Be careful of the charges we make against God! He has his witnesses to testify against us. Remember, the mountains, the hills, and the enduring foundations are still present.

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Farmington—Sunnyview Church of Christ, 2801 Hwy H, Farmington, MO 63640, tel. (573) 756-5925 or 3595. Evangelist, Sean Hochdorf, Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m.

—North Carolina—

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

—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, Evangelist.

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Memphis—Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun.: 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed.: 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444 or Steve Ellis, Evangelist, (901) 366-6005.

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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, Evangelist, 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 beginning the last week in February.

• • • • •

Portland—Church of Christ, 2009 Wildcat Dr., Portland, TX 78374, tel. (512) 643-6571, Jerry Moffitt, Evangelist.

—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.

“RELIGION AND HOMOSEXUALS”

(Continued From Page 12)

than homosexuals wanting the same rights as those who are not homosexual. —Mark]

• • • • •

Last October (1997) **Billy Graham** had a crusade in San Francisco. At the beginning Graham stated, “Whatever your background, whatever your sexual orientation, we welcome you tonight.” That sounds innocent enough but listen to other statements he made. “What I want to preach about in San Francisco is the love of God. People need to know that God loves them no matter what their sexual orientation.” “I have so many gay friends, and we remain friends.” **Brian Jackie**, a gay San Francisco Catholic, said, “Graham is a man of integrity”...and has a “positive message”. **Bill Byrd**, a homosexual preacher in San Francisco, agreed. “I have no problem with Graham’s preaching. Billy Graham brings people together.” (*Flashpoint*, May, 1998)

[I doubt seriously that these homosexuals would be so complimentary of Graham if he were teaching the truth regarding their sin. Graham continues to “broaden” his message as he gets older. He at least taught the truth on this issue 30 years ago. The liberals within the church also pride themselves on “bringing people together.” But unless they are brought together in proper doctrine, they are only together in union. They do not have the unity that is taught in the Word of God —Mark]

• • • • •

In an interview with **Robert Schuller** in May, 1997, **Billy Graham** made the following statements. “I think everybody who knows Christ, whether they’re conscious of it or not, they’re members of the Body of Christ... God’s purpose is to call out a people for his name, whether they come from the Muslim world, Buddhist world, the Christian world, or the non-believing world, they are members of the Body of Christ, because they’ve been called by God. They may not even know the name of Jesus... and I think

they are saved, and that they are going to be in heaven with us.” Schuller: “What I hear you saying is that it’s possible for Jesus Christ to come into human hearts and soul and life even if they’ve been born into darkness and never had exposure to the Bible. Is that a correct interpretation of what you are saying?” Graham: “Yes, it is, because I believe that. I’ve met people in various parts of the world ... that have never seen a Bible or heard about a Bible, and never heard of Jesus, but they’ve believed in their hearts that there was a God.” (*Flashpoint*, May, 1998)

[So, why bother preaching anything at all? Graham includes everyone except the brazen atheist as saved. This kind of logic from a so-called preacher is beyond comprehension. But for those who are unaware, Rubel Shelly made very similar remarks just a couple of years ago which were reported in a Nashville, Tennessee newspaper. Graham sounds like Rubel Shelly. Graham and Shelly would make some team. —Mark]

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FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

The "All Life Is Worship" Doctrine

Daniel Denham

Over the past thirty years there has been a movement away from the New Testament pattern of worship on the part of many brethren. One form of this departure involves the concept that for the Christian "all life is worship." **Ervin Bishop** in the *Firm Foundation* in the early 1970's during the editorship of **Reuel Lemmon's** espoused this doctrine in a series of articles. It was presented by **Lindsey Garmon** in a series of lessons at the Ayers Street congregation in Corpus Christi, Texas in the early 1980's. These lessons led eventually to the splitting of that church and the subsequent formation of the South Church of Christ in Corpus Christi. **David Hogan** also wrote several divisive articles promoting the notion and taught the doctrine, as well as other errors, at Four Seas Bible College back in the 1980's. His refusal to repent and correct these matters led to his dismissal by the board. **Jim McGuiggan** has been a popularizer of the doctrine through his commentary on the book of Romans. The text which he bases his case upon is that of Romans 12:1, which is the crucial "sugar-stick" to the theory. **Jack Reese, Max Lucado, Harold Shank,** and others have promoted various aspects of this doctrine. There have been several variations of it to appear. A somewhat less virulent form is found in a study guide on worship published by *Sweet Publications* back in 1973. It was penned by **Wendell Willis**.

The actual roots of this doctrine are embedded in the work of a denominational preacher and theologian **Ralph Martin**, who maintained in a commentary on the book of Philippians (originally published in the 1960's) the notion that all life is worship for the Christian. Martin's work is frequently cited by proponents of the theory.

A PRESENT DANGER

Some faithful brethren have used the word "worship" as a synonym for "service" within certain contexts and with specific limitations. The beloved **Guy N. Woods** in *Questions and Answers* Volume I, took a position on worship

and service that equates the two within certain parameters though he sought to emphasize that there were two different definitions that he was using for "worship." The first definition involved what he termed "broader aspects of the matter," while the second definition involved "a more narrow and restricted sense in which we are *commanded* to engage in specific *acts* in an assembled capacity" (page 336-337). Woods held that even in its "broader aspects" the word "worship" contemplated "acts of reverence, acts, of course, approved of God." One should also carefully read Woods fuller discussion of the importance, necessity, an nature of the latter ("more narrow and restricted") use of the word "worship" on pages 365-367. More recently, some are contending for "levels" of worship (See article beginning on page six). They opine that all life is worship and that every good action, especially those done consciously for the Lord's sake, constitutes an act of worship. They make definite distinctions between the specific actions in question. For instance, the act of performing some kind deed of benevolence is said to be worship, but not in the same sense nor to the same degree as partaking of the Lord's supper. This view holds that certain obligations take precedence over others at specific times and in specific locales. The major problem with this view is in its almost schizophrenic use of the word "worship," which is splintered asunder into a hundred pieces at one stroke by the adoption of the view. The denotative force of the word is reduced to virtual ashes, while one is compelled from passage to passage, from occasion to occasion and from situation to circumstance to determine just what level he is on in his worship! What the word comes to connote to the mind of the worshipper in each individual context in life becomes the deciding factor. "Worship" becomes a vague and nebulous term used to sift, sort, and store the sundry deeds of one's life under esoteric categories in some supernatural file. It makes the mistake of confusing a broader, more general definition of worship, which is possible un-

(Continued on page 18)

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Associate Editorial...

A STRAW MAN, ILL LOGIC, AND A NAME CALLER

When one is allowed to define his terms to mean whatever he desires them to mean he may teach any doctrine he pleases. The propagator of the error that "except for sin, all life is worship" makes no distinction in worship and service. (See article beginning on page six.) However, the Bible does make a distinction in the meaning of the two words. (See the August '98 issue, **Jim Dearman**, **Daniel Denham**, **Don Tarbet** and **Eddie Whitten's** articles in this issue of CFTF.).

THE IDEA OF "LEVELS OF WORSHIP" —WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

This defender of error regarding worship and service arbitrarily labels all service to be on some "level of worship." By levels he means "different circumstances and conditions of worship." He does this by abusing the meaning of the words and not reasoning correctly with the information supplied by the Holy Spirit pertaining to worship and service. Having done this the promoter of this doctrine introduces us to the novel idea of "levels of worship." Here are the levels.

1. The "first-day-of-the-week worship" in the corporate assembly of the saints is one level of worship.
2. The congregating of the Lord's church "to sing, or to pray, or to study, but not to eat the Lord's supper" is the second level.
3. "Private and individual acts of adoration to God" comprises the third level.
4. "Fasting" and "private alms-giving" makes up the fourth level.
5. The "committed life" is the fifth level.

Aside from his ignoring the differences in the meaning of the words worship and service, another very large problem with "levels of worship" is this. *One cannot find a direct statement, example, or implication in the Bible authorizing such a concept.* Only by these three means or avenues does any language instruct or authorize one to do anything. Hence, one cannot "speak as the oracles of God" when he advocates that for which there is no authority; in this case "levels of worship" (I Peter 4:11). Therefore, this whole business of "levels of worship" is made out of "whole cloth."

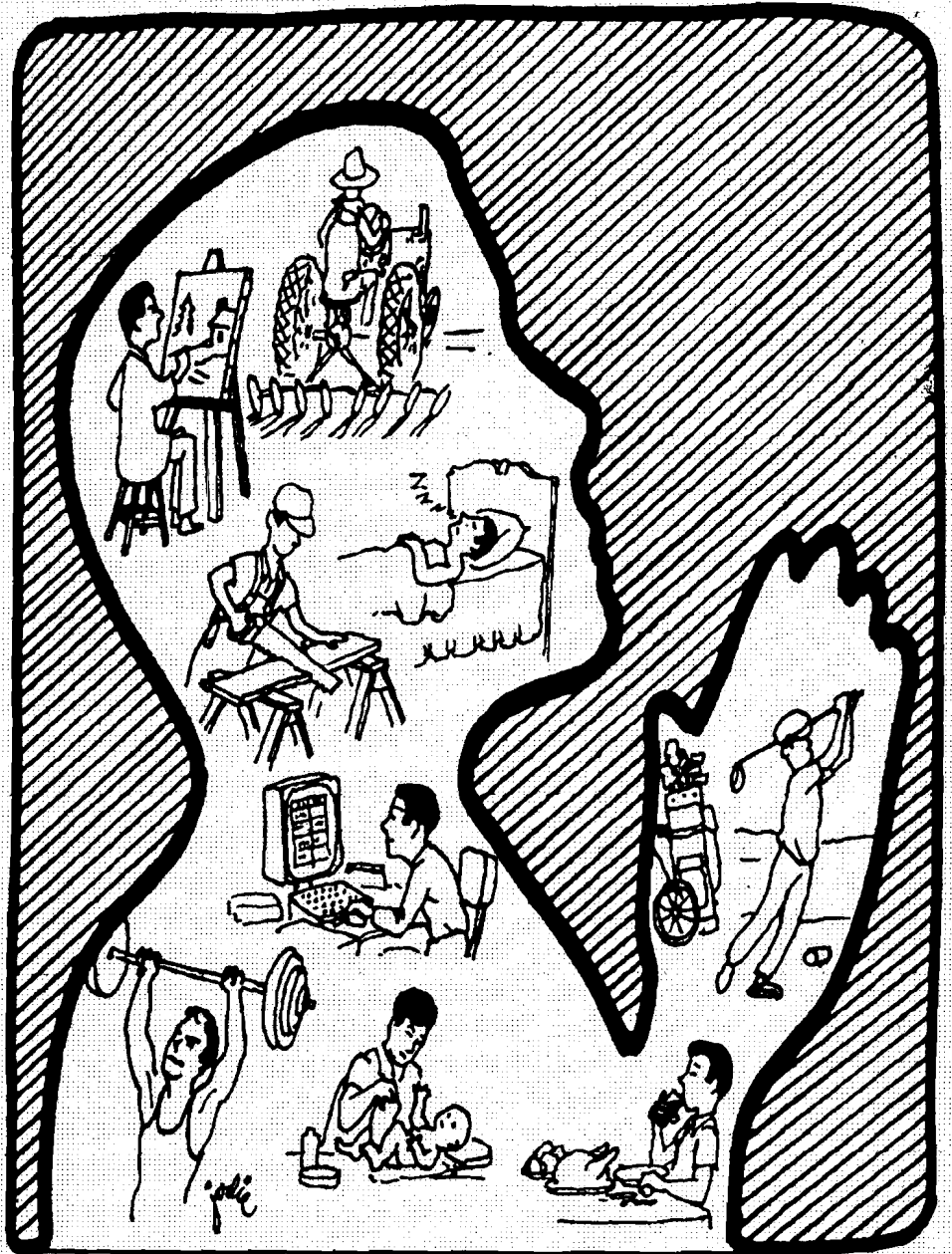
Having defined worship accordingly, the "except for sin, all life is worship" advocate then uses his definition of worship as a standard to criticize anyone who does not conform to his definition. Therefore, when we speak of ending worship to go about other activities he declares that we are attempting "to switch sacrificial-worshipful-life on and off." He says

this “results in the confusion of thinking we are spiritual at one moment and unspiritual at another.” I would like to know what faithful members of the Lord’s church have ever advocated such a view as set out in the preceding two sentences? When we correctly point out *that all worship to God is service, but not all service to God is worship*, we are doing so on the basis of the meaning of the words employed by the Holy Spirit to set out the differences in worship and service (See the word studies in this issue and the August, ’98 issue of CFTF.).

To cease worshipping God is not to cease serving God. One begins and ends any and all of the five acts of worship (singing, praying, studying God’s word, and on the first day of every week the observance of the Lord’s supper and the contribution of one’s means in the corporate assembly of the saints). However, as long as one is faithful to God he does not cease his service to God. Faithful worship to God is a part and grows out of faithful service to him.

THE “STOP AND GO” PATRIARCH

Most of us have heard of the country western song “Achie Breakie Heart.” However, I doubt that we ever thought of the father of the faithful as “Herky— Jerky” Abraham. According to the “except for sin, all of life is worship” view, Abraham was a “herky—jerky” person. In obedience to God’s will to offer up his son Isaac, there was considerable preparation involved. It is obvious that the poor old befuddled father of the faithful did not know when he “**rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him**” that he was engaged in worship on some level or the other (Genesis 22:3). After reaching the place where God directed him to go, Abraham did not have any better sense than to say to the young men who had traveled with him: “**Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship,**



EXCEPT FOR SIN, IS ALL LIFE WORSHIP?

and come again to you” (verse 5). Did the poor old confused fellow not know that he had been on some “level of worship” from the beginning to the ending of his journey to Moriah? There was the (1) rising up early in the morning “level of worship”; (2) the saddling of the ass “level of worship”; (3) the taking of the two young men with him “level of worship”; (3) the wood cutting “level of worship”; and, (4) the three day journey to Moriah “level of worship” (Who knows how many “different circumstances and conditions of worship” were involved in the three day journey.). No, Abraham told the truth when he said, “**I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.**” Please notice: At one point they were not worshipping. They went to a certain place. While

at that place they worshipped. They ceased worshipping at that place. They left the place where they had worshipped and returned to the young men. Indeed, all of Abraham's preparation was done in obedience to God's will. Hence, he was serving God. However, the Bible does not describe such service as worship. *It was when Abraham actually engaged in the act of offering Isaac that he was worshipping God.* Such worship started and ended at a certain place, but Abraham continued his service to God as he had done prior to the act of worship, which was the act of offering Isaac.

I would like for any self-labeled thinker to tell this "unthinking" person just how a servant of God is advocating a "Stop and go—a herky—jerky existence" when he is day by day serving God according to his will. There is no accidental service or worship to God.

ILL LOGIC

In an attempt to prove that "except for sin, all of life is worship" one "thinker" has set up the following syllogism.

1. All sacrifice offered to God is worship.
2. Christians are to continually offer their bodies as a sacrifice to God.
3. Therefore there is a sense in which worship is continual.

The first sentence is the *major premise*, the second sentence is the *minor premise* and the third sentence is the *conclusion*. Three questions must be answered in the affirmative if a syllogism is sound. They are: (1) Is the syllogism valid? (2) Are the premises precisely stated? (3) Are the premises true? [Also, please remember that anything that implies a false doctrine is itself false. Truth does not imply error.]

IS THE SYLLOGISM VALID?

If one has not studied the rules of logic the manner by which the validity of a syllogism is determined will be technically strange. However, when someone attempts to set out his argument in syllogistic form he should know the rules of logic well enough to correctly do it. Suffice it to say, if anyone has enough interest in such things there are many logic text books that can verify the criticisms I am making of the author of the aforementioned attempt at putting his argument into a three line syllogism. My criticisms are:

1. The three sentences of the syllogism under consideration are not related.
2. The major and minor premises are not found in the conclusion.
3. There is no middle term in the minor premise.
4. The minor premise is not in the correct form.

The syllogism is, therefore, invalid. Simply put, it does not say, "If this, then that."

ARE THE PREMISES PRECISELY STATED?

The proposition to be proved is, "All sacrifice offered to God is worship." That sentence becomes the major premise in the syllogism. The word "All" in the sentence is a "quantifier." "All" is universal in scope and inclusive. Hence, no kind of sacrifice (scriptural or otherwise) is omitted.

Knowing that the person who formed this major premise does not believe that sinful acts (unauthorized conduct) is acceptable to God (Colossians 3:17), it is immediately obvious that the major premise of this syllogism is not precise enough to express what the person believes. He should have affirmed that, "All *scriptural* sacrifice offered to God is worship." Therefore, the syllogism should read:

Major Premise: All scriptural sacrifice offered to God is worship.

Minor Premise: All changing of baby diapers is a scriptural sacrifice offered to God.

Conclusion: All changing of baby diapers is worship.

In the minor premise one may substitute fishing, golfing, yard mowing, eating, sleeping or any other function authorized by the New Testament of Christ in the place of the phrase "changing of baby diapers." *However, it must be emphasized that the major and minor premises must be proved, which cannot be correctly done.*

What about the meaning of the following scriptures? Romans 12:1; I Peter 2:9; I Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:17; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6; I Corinthians 10:31 and like passages are all teaching the same thing; namely, every part of a faithful child of God's life is under the control of Jesus Christ. A part of that consecrated living is worship. This is developed in the articles in our August '98 issue and the articles in this issue of CFTF. Why attempt to make any thing else out of these scriptures?

PURR WORDS AND SNARL WORDS

Recently a certain preacher from Livingston, Texas has labeled those of us who oppose the false doctrine of "except for sin, all life as worship" with terms he usually employs when he is preaching about the sins of ACU. This preacher had every opportunity to state his criticisms to me personally or write them to me, but he chose to write them to someone else about me and everyone else who is opposing this false doctrine and one of its propagators.

In the presence of witnesses, in answer to my direct questions, he admitted orally that the following terms (his own words) applied to me in particular and in general to all those who oppose the doctrine, of "except for sin, all life is worship." Moreover, in a second letter he repeated the same words. I have copies of the

letters wherein he does this. He describes us as: "mean-spirited," "underhanded," "wrong-headed," "shallow," "bullies" and guilty of "political maneuvering." We would ask of him, did you think of these words all by yourself or did you borrow them from a real "thinker?"

Having labeled us, he then condescendingly declares, "I have worked with these brethren and still will, but I will not participate in a lynching..." When the paper that prints his and others' articles exposing persons for their false doctrine, does this southern gentleman label such articles to be "mean-spirited," "underhanded," "wrong-headed," "shallow," and so on? Moreover, how does he see himself when he preaches in living color against error and false teachers? I suppose it depends upon who is being lynched. Why would one desire to work with such low brows and base fellows as he declares us to be? Moreover, to say the least, it is a bit presumptuous of him to think that we would want him in our "lynch mob" (Amos 3:3). Indeed, as he sometimes preaches, just give him a box of twenty-two shorts and he could stop this lynching faster than Sherman marched through Georgia. However, it would be nice if he could hit something besides his own feet.

This light from Livingston also wrote,

Policy is not set by lectureship directors, preaching school directors, "Christian Scholars," or "leading brothers" in God's church. Yet, this is exactly what I see developing. It is the beginning of denomination-ism. I will have not part in it.

By the way, should not at least one editor be added to his list of would be "policy" setters? What proof does he have that anyone of whom he speaks is seeking to set "policy" for the church? Whatever alleged proof he thinks he has regarding who is attempting to set "policy" will include at least one person he had rather leave out. Indeed, I am quite sure that their will be many parts of which he shall have none.

He also says in his kind letter that one who has adamantly advocated "except for sin, all of life is worship" "...is being badly misrepresent. People from all over the country are reporting that he is being charged with beliefs he does not hold." Personally, I have heard two sermons from the person, read one of his e-mails, and visited with at least five persons who have discussed his worship doctrine with the alleged misrepresented one. Because he has advocated and defended his position publicly in a number of places we are printing an editorial that he wrote (see page six). *Until now it has not been published.* In it he says just exactly what he believes. *Now, who has misrepresented him and what are the misrepresentations?*

A WORD TO THE WISE FROM A GENUINE SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

At some point between the end of the War Between the States in 1865 and his death in 1870, **General Robert E. Lee** was approached by two men of the worldly variety. They sought the use of the General's name to promote and hopefully validate the Louisiana Lottery. General Lee's reply stands in contradistinction to the base characters of those he stood to address. He answered, "Gentlemen, I lost my home in the war. I lost my fortune in the war. I lost everything I had in the war except my name. My name is not for sale, and if you don't get out of here at once I will hit you in the head with my crutch" [*The World Book Encyclopedia* (World Book Inc. Chicago, London, Sydney, Toronto, 1987) Volume 12, p. 156]!

General Lee's response was calculated, intelligent and responsible. He was righteously indignant at the disreputable proposition put to him. This means that his anger was with purposeful action.

Friends and family are very important to me, but not at the expense of the wise practice of the truth. I would be ashamed to claim friendship with a man and defend him in his error. May God deliver me from such friends.

—David P. Brown, *Associate Editor*

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IS ALL OF LIFE WORSHIP?

H.A. "Buster" Dobbs

All of life is not worship in the sense of formal first-day-of-the-week worship in which five prescribed acts are observed in a prescribed manner. The saints are commanded to meet each Sunday to pray, sing, give, commune, and study. This worship service has a beginning and a closing time, and cannot in its very nature be continuous. It may be thought of as assembly-worship. The assembly is commanded and may not be forsaken (Hebrews 10:25). Because worship can take place out of the assembly, it does not therefore follow that it is not necessary to assemble for worship, or that an attempt to worship "out at the lake" exempts from the first-day-of-the-week assembly.

Incidentally, when we engage in any of the five prescribed elements of worship, it must be done in the prescribed way, whether we are in or out of the assembly. Prayer is a part of assembly—worship. Specific instructions are given regarding prayer. Those commands must be obeyed whether we pray in the assembly, or worship in private prayer outside the assembly. If God tells us to do certain things in a specified way, then those things must always be done in the way God tells us to do them. Music, for instance, in praise of God, whether in or out of the assembly, must always be singing because specific instructions include what is explicitly stated (singing) and exclude everything else. Music in worship of God whether public or private must be offered in the required manner. When the local church comes together in one place to worship, the participants give undivided attention to him who

sits upon the throne of the universe, which precludes even the possibility of it being perpetual.

Again, all of life is not worship in the sense of the disciples gathering to participate in some, but not all, of the five acts of Sunday worship. The local church may congregate to sing, or to pray, or to study, but not to eat the Lord's Supper. This is still worship but is not the same as first-day-of-the-week worship. Christians may assemble on any day of the week, or on every day of the week, for a season of devotion, which is worship of God. This type worship also has a time to begin and a time to close.

Still again, all of life is not worship in the sense of private and individual acts of adoration to God. The believer is permitted to set aside some special day or time when he may engage in fasting, prayer, singing, and study. He may enter into his "inner chamber and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret." In the closet of his heart he gives to God an offering of ardent, selfless affection through prayer and mediation. This is worship, but is not continuous, because there comes a time when the exercise ends.

Fasting is not one of the five acts of Lord's Day worship, but it is still worship. Before Paul and Barnabas went out on their first missionary trip, they "ministered to the Lord, and fasted" (Acts 13:2). Fasting is not commanded, but are allowed as a devotional service to God, and can be connected to ministering to the Lord (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:15). The same is true of private alms-giving (Matthew 6:2-4).

On still another but equal level¹, there is also the worship of a committed life. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Romans 12:1).

1. All sacrifice offered to God is worship.
2. Christians are to continually offer their bodies as a sacrifice to God.
3. Therefore there is a sense in which worship is continual.

The saved of the earth are an "elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (I Peter 2:9). As kingly priests the saints are to offer their very souls upon the altar of this life to God. The offering presented, is a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and is spiritual service. Such spiritual service is sacrifice and is therefore worship. There is no moment in our life when we should cease to offer our body to God.

When the Jewish priest offered a spotless lamb upon the altar, it was worship. When the Christian, as a royal priest, offers his body as a holy, living sacrifice, that too, is worship. It is a priestly presentation of a holy sacrifice.

Paul said, "I am already being offered" (I Timothy 4:6). The word "offered" in this text translates a Greek word that means (according to Henry Thayer) "to pour out

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as a drink offering, to make a libation; in the New Testament to be offered as a libation.”

Libation means “the pouring of an offering as a religious ritual.” Paul thought of his death as worship—as an offering—a libation—a ceremonial act.

We are also told,

Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own, for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The body of the blood-bought child of God is a temple of the Holy Spirit who lives in him as the word dwells in him richly in all wisdom, which is to be continuous. In the temple of his body, he is to glorify God. He is not his own. He belongs to God. The word *glorify*, in this passage means “to praise, to extol to magnify, to celebrate, to honor, to make glorious, to adorn with lustre, to clothe with splendor, to render something excellent” (Thayer). What is that but worship? It may not be observing any of the five acts of our one-day-in-seven prescribed worship, but it is still worship.

“Whatever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17, see also I Corinthians 10:31). In doing all things in the name of the Lord, we are to make an offering of thanks to Jehovah through Jesus. Everyone knows that prayer directed to the father through the son is worship. Paul says this should be ongoing.

Such devoted service to God is clearly worship. It involves *all* that we do. Whether we are earning a living for our family, or seeking lawful entertainment and recreation, it is to be done in the name of the Lord. As holy, royal priests we make an offering to the father through the son in everything we do. This does not require the intense concentration of formal assembly-worship, though at times it may provoke a deeply felt and profound emotion, but at other times is less ardent. It is an exercise that may be done while involved in other activities and we may not always have it uppermost in our conscious thought. Still, it is something we are told to do without let up.

Paul tells us to **“pray without ceasing”** (I Thessalonians 5:17). If prayer is worship and if we are to pray without ceasing, then we are to worship in some sense without ceasing. It will not do for us to think that we cannot obey what Paul plainly tells us to do. If prayer is worship and we should pray unceasingly, then we should continuously worship. We must not turn unbeliever and say, “O, well, we cannot always be praying and so the Bible does not mean what it says.”

We should, instead, consider what unceasing prayer may mean. Philippians 4:6 says, **“in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”** There is a prayer that is not supplication, thanksgiving, nor requests. Could this kind of prayer be the devotion of a heart fully consecrated to its creator? Is it possible this is what is involved in praying without ceasing?

We may not always go about speaking or thinking words in sending to the everlasting throne conscious expressions of honor, thanks, and requests, but it is possible for us to live our lives with God, the judgment, and eternity always in mind. That may be praying without ceasing. If it is, then our worship ought to be unintermittent—unfailing.

Christians are to pray without ceasing. There should never be a time when we dismiss the thought of God. We should live with a reference to God remembering the judgment in all that we do, including recreation and common duties of life. This sanctifies human life and makes it holy and fit for the sight of God. As members of a holy, royal priesthood we **“offer our bodies a living sacrifice, which is our spiritual service.”**

Still, we fail. We do not always have God in mind because of sin. If the saint denies sin in his life, he is a liar, God’s word is not in him, and he makes God a liar (I John 1:6-10). You cannot sin when you are thinking about God’s present and future judgments. You have to cease praying to gain the consent of your mind to do some sinful thing.

Elkanah went to Shiloh yearly to **“worship and sacrifice unto Jehovah of hosts”** (I Samuel 1:3). It does not follow that sacrifice was not worship simply because it is mentioned in conjunction with the word worship.

Hezekiah **“and all that were present with him bowed themselves and worshipped”** (II Chronicles 29:29). Because two things are mentioned, bowing down and worshipping, it does not follow that the bowing down was not worship. When the Bible speaks of worship and service, it does not follow that the service cannot be worship just because it is mentioned in the same breath with the word worship.

Besides, if we take the view that “worship and serve” must mean that the service is not worship, we deny the scripture that tells us to **“offer our bodies a living sacrifice,”** which is the service of continuing worship.

Still another objection is that if all of life should be worship and if it is acceptable to pick a guitar and sing Home, Home on the Range, then it is all right to bring the instrument into the assembly—worship of the church. This does not follow for reasons already given. Furthermore, the reasoning is sophistry because the Bible does tell us to offer **“our bodies a living sacrifice”** (Romans 12:1), and to do all things in the name of the Lord as we worship him in prayer (Colossians 3:17). Any attempt to reason that way is “a plausible but misleading or fallacious argument,” which is the dictionary definition of sophistry.

“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

¹Incidentally, the dictionary says the word “level” may mean, “(1) Being at the same height or position as another; (2) even, or (3) being at the same degree of rank, standing, or advantage as another; equal.”

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HAMAN, PRIDE, AND A ROPE

Lynn Parker

The Bible account of courageous Esther reminds us of responsibility in times of challenge, adversity, and great opposition. The darker side of human behavior is seen in the evil Haman. While the deeds of Esther remind us of her noble and virtuous qualities, Haman's character serves as a stern warning of the folly of letting pride rule in one's life. Wisdom cautions every generation, "**Pride goeth before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall**" (Proverbs 16:18), yet every generation is marked by well-publicized examples of proud men brought low.

In an ancient setting, Haman had advanced in the government, so that he was the subject of homage and recognition. Everyone bowed down to Haman—everyone that is except Mordecai. Haman, consumed with anger, sets out to kill Mordecai and every Jew throughout the land. Haman even had a gallows prepared for the subject of his hatred (Esther 5:14). The plot was made known to Esther, and she revealed Haman's sinister designs to the King. As a result, the Jews are eventually delivered but "**they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai...**" (Esther 7:10).

Haman must have been kin to Diotrophes, who loved to "**have the preeminence**" (III John 9). Bereft of humility, Haman let a proud spirit blind him to wholesome actions and cause him to grow bitter with seething hatred. Here is what pride did for Haman.

PRIDE CAUSED HAMAN TO SEE AN ENEMY WHERE THERE WAS NONE

Mordecai wanted no quarrel with Haman and certainly was not trying to pick a fight. But Haman **demand**ed respect (even adoration and worship), failing to realize that it is humility—not pride—that earns respect. Mordecai was like Paul when the apostle wrote, "**But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me**" (Galatians 2:6). Pride in the church

causes some to see personal enemies when, in fact, others are simply trying to uphold truth without respect of persons. *Pride does that, you know.* Paul asked, "**So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?**" (Galatians 4:16). An honest answer from some would be, "Yes, you are indeed my enemy for telling me the truth!"

PRIDE BUILT GALLOWS WHEN NONE WAS DEMANDED

Had Mordecai done some heinous deed, then get a rope! Here we see pride and retaliation as roommates. Standing on equal footing before God, we all deserve correction when we err. Maybe some think they have risen so far "**above all the princes**" (Esther 3:1) that they can no longer be reproved. *Pride does that, you know.* Had Haman spent half as much effort on correcting his warped view of Mordecai as he did in plotting Mordecai's demise, we might have seen a different account! The fact that Mordecai was alive caused Haman's world to take on a gloomy, green pallor. Even after rehearsing with his wife his riches, promotion, and position, Haman still gave an overcast summary of his life: "**Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate**" (Esther 5:13). Haman's answer was to kill Mordecai and all the Jews. Pride, like an atomic weapon, has tremendous fallout. The innocent suffer when the proud have been offended. *Pride does that, you know.*

PRIDE BROUGHT AN END THAT HAMAN NEVER EXPECTED

But he should have! Haman learned a lesson from pride when, with covered face, he was led away—a man now condemned to die by a means he had designed for another (Esther 7:8). We do indeed reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7) and the consequences may well be on the magnitude of a whirlwind! "**By pride cometh only contention...**" (Proverbs 13:10). "**A man's pride shall bring him low; But he that is of a lowly spirit shall obtain honor**" (Proverbs 29:23). Nebuchadnezzar fell far as a result of pride (Daniel 5:20). Pride is so deceiving that entire nations have faced God's wrath after being warned to repent (Obadiah 1:3; Jeremiah 49:16). *Pride does that, you know.*

From the youngest to the oldest, "**all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time**" (I Peter 5:5-6). The alternative? "**So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified**" (Esther 7:10). *Pride does that, you know.*

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Fleetwood CHURCH of CHRIST

ELDERS:
L.S. BROWN
NORMAN HUGHES
JOHNNIE LAMAN

EVANGELISTS:
JIM DEARMAN
H.A. "BUSTER" DOBBS

A STATEMENT FROM THE FLEETWOOD ELDERS (November 22, 1998)

In view of recent developments concerning the subject of "worship," the Fleetwood elders have deemed it necessary to publicly state their convictions concerning a specific question: "Is all life worship?"

We believe the Bible answers the question in this way: "No, all life is not worship." We believe the Scriptures make a distinction between worship and service. When we assemble as the Lord's church, we do so in response to specific commands in the New Testament, and we worship at those times in accordance with the specific pattern revealed in the New Testament, which includes specific acts. On the Lord's Day, which is Sunday, those acts include: singing, praying, partaking of the Lord's Supper, giving, and Bible study, or preaching.

We recognize that at other times, when the whole church comes together, other than on the Lord's Day, we also worship as we sing praises, study God's Word, and offer prayer. We also believe the Scriptures allow for families and individuals to have private periods of devotion in which they worship God. However, these private occasions cannot substitute for the public assemblies in which the whole church is to come together.

Our lives are to be devoted to God. We are to have an attitude of reverence in our lives that grows out of our relationship to God. However, these private occasions cannot substitute for the public assemblies in which the whole church is to come together.

Our lives are to be devoted to God. We are to have an attitude of reverence in our lives that grows out of our relationship to God. However, we understand that worship involves both an attitude and actions. Therefore, a reverential attitude must be accompanied by appropriate actions in order to worship God.

The attitude of the Fleetwood elders, as overseers of the flock here, may be best summarized by the admonition given by God to Joshua long ago in Joshua 1:7,8: **"Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This book of the Law shall not depart from you mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."**

It is our desire to be courageous in leading the flock to follow the Scriptures, to be compassionate in our treatment of every soul under our charge, but to never compromise with error. May God Bless us with spiritual success He promised Joshua, as we do His Will.

Preaching the Gospel of Christ in all the world

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ALL LIFE IS NOT WORSHIP TO GOD

Jim Dearman

[EDITORIAL NOTE: The author of the following article is the preacher for the Fleetwood Church of Christ, Houston, Texas. This was his morning sermon for November 22, 1998. He did an excellent job in refuting the error that, "except for sin, all life is worship." Some things are not easy or pleasant to do. Nevertheless, Jim did a tremendous job in dealing with the subject. We commend him for his good work. In putting the material of the sermon into article form the only alterations made to it pertained to grammar, style, and CFTF's form for articles. Since some of his introductory remarks and the invitation portion of his sermon were not germane to his treatment of the subject, to save space I omitted them. However, if anyone desires an audio copy of the sermon, I would be glad to supply it at cost.—David P. Brown, Associate Editor]

My purpose is to show from the scriptures that all life is not worship to God. We will study the matter in the following manner: Definition of worship in the scriptures; Distinction between worship and service in the scriptures; and Disputed passages of scripture on this subject. From these areas we hope to make a scriptural determination that all life is not worship according to the scriptures.

WORSHIP DEFINED

First of all a definition of worship—certainly man's ideas of worship vary—we would expect that perhaps. The English word worship comes from the Anglo-Saxon word, the root of which indicates worthiness, or honor. Worship in the dictionary is defined in the following way: in its noun form, worship is defined as "reverence or devotion for a deity, religious homage or veneration, a church service or other rites showing this." In the intransitive verb form of worship, the definition is: "to engage in worship, or perform an act of religious devotion specifically to offer prayers, to attend church services, etc." Both of those definitions come from *Webster's New World Dictionary*. They are man's definition. Of course, as we said, man's definition may vary. We might expect that, but we would like to think that we could all think alike on the subject. Surely, if we go to the scriptures we can make specific determinations. The following statements are from two of our brethren, one of whom is deceased, **Guy N. Woods**; one who is still living, **Gary Workman**. Their statements indicate how brethren generally understood worship in scripture. Woods wrote, It should be noted that worship consists of acts of reverence not merely reverence. Thus, emphasizing that it involves vastly more than a disposition of heart and mind. It is not enough simply to be worshipful in spirit; we must allow this disposition to find expression in acts of reverence—acts, of course, approved of God (*Questions and Answers*, Volume I, page 336).

Workman, in a 1986 article in the *Firm Foundation* in which he refuted the idea that all life is worship, wrote the following concerning worship.

Worship has always been an overt act rather than a continued attitude or relationship. It is giving reverence or homage to God by either thoughts or words or deeds or a combination of all three. It requires specific actions. It has

a starting place and a stopping place. It is not an ongoing state (Firm Foundation, January 28, 1986).

As I said these two statements from these brethren also reflect the view of many brethren over the years in general. I believe these two statements also reflect the view that was just expressed in the statement from the Fleetwood elders regarding worship. I believe these statements are in agreement with Bible teaching on worship.

THE PRIMARY GREEK WORD FOR WORSHIP

There are several Greek words translated "worship" in the New Testament. Of course, Greek is the language in which the New Testament was originally written. There is a primary word for worship, the Greek word *proskuneo*. Literally it means to "kiss toward, or to kiss the hand toward." Again, Woods, who was an outstanding student of the Hebrew and the Greek, said this about *proskuneo*, the primary Greek word for worship. Its first occurrence in the New Testament is in Matthew 2:2, and very often thereafter. In the *American Standard Version*, there is a footnote to Matthew 2:2 which contains an excellent definition of the word. The Greek word denotes (and this is quoting that footnote—J.D.) "an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature or the creator." Woods then adds, "In as much as worship consists of acts, it follows that such acts are as much involved in worship and are essential to it as the attitude which prompts them." I believe these thoughts are supported scripturally. Especially in a passage that is very familiar to all of us, and that is John 4:24. You probably know it by heart. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." I believe that is a divinely given definition of what worship is. "God is spirit; those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." The word worship in John 4:24 is this primary word in the New Testament for worship. That is the Greek word *proskuneo*. What the verse teaches obviously is that the worship here, (that is the acts of reverence that are paid to our creator), *paid to our creator*, must be in spirit. That is with the proper attitude of mind. They must be in truth, which means with the appropriate or authorized actions. We have long taught, and rightfully so, in the Lord's church that one cannot eliminate either of these elements from worship and still be worshipping God as God directs. I believe that to be the case. This is why we have long con-

tended that one could be present in this worship assembly, for example, but could fail miserably in his effort to worship God. How? By not having his mind on the worship. By not having the proper attitude of mind. Thus, failing to worship God in spirit. By the same token, one could be very sincere. His mind completely focused on what he is doing in religious assembly, but if in that assembly he is seeking to worship through an unauthorized action such as with a mechanical instrument of music, then his worship is not in truth. It fails from that standpoint. It is not worship according to truth. Scriptural worship must be directed toward God with proper attitude (spirit) and in authorized acts (truth). I believe that is what John 4:24 clearly teaches. So we see from this familiar text that worship does involve both attitude and authorized action. Thus, the definition scripturally of what worship involves.

DO THE SCRIPTURES DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WORSHIP AND SERVICE?

The second point of our study deals with the distinction between worship and service in the scriptures. Is there a distinction? Do the scriptures make a distinction between worship and service? They do. First of all the Old Testament makes a distinction between worship to God and service to God. In his excellent article in the *Firm Foundation* of January 28, 1986, Workman lists 20 verses from the Old Testament which make such a distinction. I will not read all 20 of them, but a few of them. Deuteronomy 4:19 reads:

And take heed lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the hosts of heaven, you feel driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as an heritage.

This is a prohibition against both worshipping and serving the creation rather than the creator. In Deuteronomy 8:19 these words are found, **“And it shall be, if you by any means forget the Lord your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.”** Worship and serve, two distinct words. Deuteronomy 17:3 reads, **“Who has gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the hosts of heaven, in which I have not commanded.”** Again, “worshipped” and “served” are two distinct Hebrew words. I Kings 9:6 reads: **“But if you or your sons had altered in following from me, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes in which I have set before you, but go serve other Gods and worship them.”** Then finally Jeremiah 25:6 reads, **“Do not go after other Gods to serve them, and worship them, and do not provoke me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.”** In these Old Testament passages (more could be cited as we said) different Hebrew words are used for worship and service. This shows a distinction between worship and service in the Old Testament.

This same distinction also exists or is seen in the New Testament—the distinction between worship and service. In response to Satan’s temptation to worship him, Jesus

said to Satan, **“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only you shall serve.”** Notice, he said, **“You shall worship only the Lord your God and him only you shall serve.”** In this passage Jesus used just one word for worship. That word is, *proskuneo*, that primary Greek word that we have already discussed.

“DIVINE SERVICE”

When he used the word “serve,” he used another Greek word altogether, the word *latreuo*. Now we have noticed what Woods said about the word for worship (*proskuneo*) in this verse, but he also wrote about the word that Jesus used for “serve” in Matthew 4:10. Of the word *latreuo* he wrote,

It is worthy of note than another Greek word, *latreuo*, whence our English word liturgy comes, means divine service, and is often applied to the duties of the Jewish priests in their work under the old order. They were typical of Christians today who are engaged in divine service to Jehovah.

Then he mentions I Peter 2:9 and says compare Romans 12:1. Romans 12:1 is a critical passage we will examine in just a minute. Please note that he gives this as a passage supporting the divine service concept that he is writing about here. Again, that is from his *Questions and Answers*.

Why did Jesus use two distinct words “worship” and “serve” in Matthew 4:10? When I ask that question, I have to answer that there has to be a distinction between our worship to God and our service to God. This is because the Greek language is very specific. The Lord used two very specific and very different words in that passage. Thus, if there is no distinction between our worship and our service, why did he use those two distinct words? So we have seen that both the Old Testament and the New Testament make a distinction between worship and service.

DISPUTED PASSAGES

Thirdly, let us examine some disputed passages regarding this question of all life is worship. Romans 12:1 is perhaps the most talked about or discussed passage along this line. Romans 12:1 reads **“I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God you present your bodies as living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God which is your reasonable service.”** Controversy arises over the translation of the word service, the last word of the verse. It is the word *latreuo*, which we have talked about. It has as its general meaning service, but admittedly lexicographers also list worship as a meaning of this word. The *New International Version* translates the word as “worship” in Romans 12:1, **“which is your spiritual act of worship.”** There is a marginal reference in the *American Standard*, which mentions worship. [Keep in mind that it is a marginal reference. It is a footnote. It is not in the text. The *New International Version* puts the word worship in the text.] Do I believe that is the accurate translation? No, I do not, nor do I recommend the *New International Version* for that matter and for other reasons. I think serious reasons, but that is not the subject of our lesson today. I do not believe that worship would be the preferred translation.

Some contend that it should be worship. They further argue that this means that our whole lives are presented to God as worship. From that day forward, and thereafter, after we have made the presentation of our lives to God, every single thing we do in our lives is worship to God—*everything*! I do not believe that is the case. I do not believe the scriptures support that concept. Are we to have a reverential attitude in our lives? Yes. Are we to have an attitude that reflects that we are children of God in our lives? Yes. But there is a vast difference between that and saying everything that we do, everything, is worship to God. So, I do not believe worship is the best translation.

I believe that the scriptural evidence supports service as the proper translation in Romans 12:1. In keeping with the general meaning of the Greek word and also in keeping with the context of the book of Romans, especially this first section of Romans, I want to look at that for just a moment. The context of this section of Romans leading up to Romans 12:1 needs to be considered. Again, I quote from Workman's article in *The Firm Foundation* because I believe that it is an excellent summary of the context here in Romans in this part of the book. He says:

Paul tells his readers to present their bodies a living sacrifice, Romans 12:1. This does not speak of living a life of constant continual worship as some are inclined to believe. Paul is urging sanctification on his hearers. The thought is simply an expansion on Romans 6:13, and we will read Romans 6:13 in a moment. Some had not turned themselves over to the Lord in the conversion process, they were inclined to continue in sin, Romans 6:1. Paul, therefore, urged them to present themselves once and for all to the Lord, Romans 6:13.

(He mentions twelve too. He mentions then the verbs are aorist in both cases.—J.D.) We will talk about that very briefly in just a moment.

THE GREEK AORIST TENSE

Now let's review some important points about the word "present" first of all. When Paul says, "**I beseech you, therefore, brethren by the mercies of God that you present....**" What is involved in the word "present"? Well, first of all it is in the aorist tense in the Greek, as Workman points out. The aorist tense versus the present active tense basically indicates punctiliar action rather than progressive action. It is like a period. It is basically a one-time action. In other words, make this presentation of yourselves once and for all. Do it once and for all. You really have not done it to this point. You have not fully given yourselves over to the Lord. You are in affect halting between two opinions. Now, determine once and for all that you are going to present (punctiliar action—the aorist tense in the Greek) yourselves once and for all to the Lord. Now, I believe that is an important concept for us to keep in mind.

Also, something else about the word "present;" it has a meaning in this context that I think is significant. According to the *New Analytical Greek Lexicon*, it means "to present to God, dedicate, consecrate, devote"—*consecrate and devote*. Then, the Lexicon adds some scriptural references to illustrate this use of the word in this context, and Luke

2:22 is mentioned. That is where they brought Jesus to present him to the Lord. Romans 6:13, 19 are mentioned. Now it does not mention Romans 12:1, but the same idea of consecration or devotion would also be in this word "present" in Romans 12:1. This is because it is in the same general context. So what does the word "present" mean? First of all, it is in specific one time action and it means to consecrate or to dedicate once and for all your lives to God. This is the idea expressed in Romans 12:1. It is the idea of complete consecration of one's self once and for all. Paul was calling upon these brethren in Rome to once and for all separate themselves and to become slaves—*literally to become slaves*. Not a half-hearted commitment, but a full commitment where you become slaves of the Lord. That is something we all need to appreciate and it is something we all need to emulate in becoming slaves of the Lord, and devoting our entire lives to God. In Romans 6:13 he told them (leading up to this statement in Romans 12:1),

And do not present (there is that word again—J. D.) your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead and your members as being instruments of righteousness to God.

Then, in Romans 6:19 he says,

I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh, for just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

Present yourselves as what? Slaves. These brethren had obeyed the gospel yes, but they had not fully, once for all, truly presented themselves as slaves of the son of God in their daily living. Some were having some problems. The emphasis here is on consecrating one's life as a slave. What does a slave do? He serves primarily. Well should he ever worship? Well certainly, as a part of our service we are going to worship, aren't we? But the emphasis here is on becoming the slave, the slave of the son of God. Now given the primary meaning in the original language of *latreuo*, which means primarily and generally to serve. Given the context in which this passage Romans 12:1 is seen, I see no basis for translating it worship, but rather divine service. This is because we are to become slaves once and for all, and to make that total and complete commitment. What a wonderful, beautiful thought that is.

There may be some right here this morning who have yet failed in doing that. You have become Christians. You have been obedient to the gospel, but have you once and for all made the kind of commitment that Paul was enjoining here upon the Roman brethren. It is something to think about. And so, I don't believe Romans 12:1 supports the idea that all life is worship, and that everything we do is worship.

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"

Now I want to notice two other passages. One, is the passage in I Thessalonians 5:17, which says, "**Pray without ceasing.**" Does this verse teach that we are literally to pray 24 hours a day and, therefore, it implies that we are al-

ways worshipping God 24 hours a day? Can you pray 24 hours a day? Well, certainly you cannot pray 24 hours a day. What is this verse teaching? This verse simply admonishes us to maintain a strong and regular pray life. It teaches us to pray consistently, not continually, but to pray consistently. In other words, don't cease to give up your prayer life. Do not cease to neglect your prayer life. Keep it strong, keep it regular, keep it consistent, but it cannot be literally continuous. It is not even within the realm of possibility.

A reading of other verses where Paul used this same expression, the very same expression, will clearly prove that we are not to pray literally without ceasing 24 hours a day. Listen to Romans 1:9. Paul writes, **"For God is my witness, whom I serve with the spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers."** The very same expression, **"without ceasing, I make mention of you always in my prayers."** Did Paul say I am praying always? No, he said I am mentioning you when I do and I am not ceasing to do that. A beautiful thought. In I Thessalonians 1:3 he wrote to the Thessalonians saying, **"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of God, or our God and father."** Remembering without ceasing — 24 hours a days remembering? Certainly not. Regular remembrance? Certainly so. In I Thessalonians 2:13 we read,

For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

We thank God he says without ceasing. Consistently? Yes. Continually? Certainly not. Prayer is never to be neglected. We are to pray without ceasing, yes, but not literally in a continuous way, but regularly and constantly. This verse in no way teaches that all life is worship.

DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

Finally, notice Colossians 3:17. And, I appreciate the songs that we have sung on this beautiful theme of Christ because this is what this verse speaks of. Colossians 3:17 **"In whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him."** This passage does not teach that all life is worship. The larger context (I mean by that, verses 16-25 of Colossians 3) will reveal to us what Paul had in mind. I invite you to turn to Colossians three and read with me from verse 16 forward down through the end of the chapter.

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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, and whatever you do in word or in deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives submit to your own husbands as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands love yours wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged. Bond servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service as men pleasers, but in sincerity of heart fearing God, and whatever you do, do it hardily as to the Lord and not to men knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance for you serve the Lord Christ, but he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done and there is no partiality.

Now think about Colossians 3:17 in this larger context. Notice verses 22 and 23 tell us that as the Christian works at his job, he gives his best effort. Why? Because of this relationship to God and Christ. He serves not as a man pleaser but as pleasing the Lord because he sustains that relationship to God. He is a Christian; he is going to do his best. Then, verse 24 **"knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance: for you serve the Lord Christ."** Verse 24 reminds us that we will receive our reward from the Lord as what? As servants. There is the emphasis here, as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. What are you doing when you are doing the best at your job? You are serving. The emphasis is not on worship. You are serving. You are serving out of a reverential respect and attitude for your Lord and for the relationship that you sustain. But, to say that everything you do on your job is worship is to go beyond the biblical principle or concept of what Paul is teaching here and what the scriptures in general teach. Certainly it is good to maintain at all times to the best of our ability a kind of attitude that will never allow us to slacken in our labors, in anything and everything that we do. This verse, does not teach that everything we do in our lives is worship to God. There is a distinction between the service we render and the worship we offer to God.

David Lipscomb in his commentary (*The Gospel Advocate Series on Colossians*) wrote this about Colossians 3:17. [I thought it was an excellent summary of what is enjoined upon us here by the Apostle Paul.]. Lipscomb said:

We should associate Christ with everything we do. Doing all as his servants and under his eye, and in such a way that every part of our work he may be glorified in us, and this will be a safeguard to the Christian. If he is to do everything in Christ's name, he must do nothing unworthy of that name. Nothing with which he cannot associate it. Nowhere in any company or in any business must he forget whatsoever ye do in word or deed. That this worthy name is the name, which he bares and whose honor is in his keeping.

I think that is a beautiful statement. But it is not a statement that says everything we do is worship. It is saying that eve-

rything we do, we do keeping in mind the relationship that we sustain to our Lord. We are Christians. We should never forget that as Christians we are to glorify God in our lives. However, that does not imply or suggest that we worship God in everything we do. It simply means that in all we do, we must consider God in Christ and make sure that our thoughts, our words, our actions would be approved rather than condemned by them.

When a Christian, for example, is playing golf and he makes a bad swing (I have done that a few times. Many times—most often.) When a Christian does that, he does not curse, does he? Why not? Not because he is worshipping God as he plays golf, but because he is a servant of the

Lord who knows that such actions would reflect shamefully upon his Christian vocation and that is the difference. Golf is not worship, but when I play golf, I am still a servant of the Lord therefore I will play golf without cursing.

In our study today we have looked at the definition of worship, the distinction between worship and service and the disputed passages on the subject. Our conclusion is: *All life is not worship to God.*

—Post Office Box 218511
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PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

Eddie Whitten

The Apostle Paul gave an important principle when he wrote to the churches in Thessalonica to “**pray without ceasing**” (I Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer is a blessing effectively opened only to those to whom the blessing has been given. Prayer is a spiritual blessing and Paul tells us that “**all spiritual blessings are in Christ Jesus**” (Ephesians 1:3). One “gets into Christ” through the medium of baptism (Galatians 3:27). In that passage Paul wrote: “**For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.**” The Apostle Peter declared that all who are baptized are added to the church (Acts 2:38-47). The logical conclusion, then, is that all who are baptized for the right purpose and upon the right premises are added to the church which is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23). Peter also stated that in the act of scriptural baptism we become saved (I Peter 3:21). We become disciples of Christ, children of God begotten by the gospel (I Corinthians 4:15), justified by faith (Romans 5:1), heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29). We also read what Luke recorded in Acts 11:26, “**The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.**”

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING—WHAT DID PAUL MEAN

With this background we are able to discern prayer is a spiritual blessing reserved for Christians. Christians are those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ (Hebrews 5:9; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). The admonition of Paul in our text is that Christians are to pray without ceasing. What did Paul mean by that? Is this a literal command that every Christian is to go about every minute in prayer? It would be a physical impossibility for every Christian to pray constantly, without interruption, and be able to do anything else like eat, sleep, work, play, rest, or worship. Also, the fact that this is a command makes it something we have no choice but to do. Not to obey a command of God causes one to sin. If God has given a command that we could keep, and if not keeping the command constitutes sin, then God, through this command, causes us to sin. We know by other teaching of the Bible that this cannot be. James says, “**Let no man**

say when he is tempted. ‘I am tempted of God’; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man” (James 1:13).

FALSE INTERPRETATION

To falsely assign constant uninterrupted, continuous prayer to the Christian raises other false interpretations. Colossians 3:16-17 addresses the subject of acceptable music in worship and the authority for such. Paul recorded by inspiration:

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 heart to the Lord. And whatsoever you do in word or in deed do all in the name of the Lord, giving thanks to God and the Father, by him.

“**In the name of**” always suggests “by the authority of.” Paul is saying that whatever we do, we do only because Jesus has granted the authority to do it. Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are sung by the authority of Jesus, and this authority is given to the church. The “**giving of thanks**” is an expression of worship as we offer thanksgiving unto God for whatever he has authorized us to do.

Another false interpretation arises in connection with Philippians 4:6. Here Paul says; “**Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**” With the erroneous supposition that prayer is continuous without interruption, the false assumption is made that our lifestyle becomes one of prayer. Let us notice that Paul mentions “prayer,” “supplication,” “thanksgiving,” and “requests” in this passage. It is assumed that “prayer” is something different from “supplication,” “thanksgiving,” and “requests.” Since “supplication,” “thanksgiving,” and “requests” are things expressed, then prayer must be something else. That something else is “lifestyle,” it is said. Nothing could be farther from the truth. “Supplications,” “thanksgiving,” and “requests” are “differenti-

ated parts of prayer," according to Dr. J.E. Choate, an imminent authority on the English language, a retired professor from David Lipscomb University, and a beloved author of many sound, biblical and beneficial articles in our brotherhood publications. When one is trying to prove a text taken out of context he runs the risk of generating a gigantic pretext.

BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT PRAYER

Psalms 72:20: "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended."

Matthew 6:6: "But thou *when thou prayest*, (emphasis mine, E.W.) enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father which is in secret..."

Matthew 6:7: "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions..."

Acts 9:9: "On the morrow as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour."

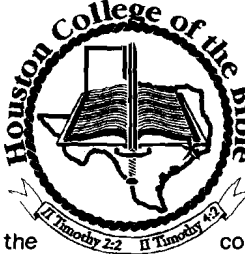
These are only a few of the passages of the Bible that clearly teach that prayer is an activity in which the Christian is engaged at particular times. Teaching in the Bible about a certain subject must be in harmony with all the other teaching in the Bible on the same subject. Therefore,

all passages that refer to prayer or praying must be considered in view of having a beginning and an ending. When James said "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16), he had to mean that prayer had to have a beginning and an end. When Paul said "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, withal praying also for us,..." (Colossians 4:2-3), it could not mean constant, uninterrupted prayer and remain in harmony with the above illustrations of prayer.

Prayer is a blessing precious beyond description. For anyone to adulterate God's grace to man to approach his majestic throne, just to prove an unjustifiable position is tragic to say the least.

We should cherish every opportunity we have to approach our heavenly father in prayer. We can never repay the price paid for our salvation. The sacrifice Jesus made on the cross of Calvary made us a kingdom of priests, and as priests, we have the signal honor of approaching God's throne. *Let us be satisfied with truth and reject error.*

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DO WE WORSHIP GOD 24 HOURS A DAY?

Don Tarbet

If a Texas rancher owns 58 head of Black Angus steers, and uses five dogs to look after them, would it be logical to assume that the rancher makes his living off of the watch dogs, or the steers? The steers obviously make him his living, but the watchdogs serve him by guarding the ranch and helping to herd the steers. One would err greatly to say, "The rancher makes his living from the watchdogs."

To Satan, Jesus said, "Thou shalt **WORSHIP** the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou **SERVE**" (Matthew 4:16; emphasis mine-D.T.). Paul spoke of some who "**WORSHIPPED** and **SERVED** the creature more than the Creator" (Romans 1:25; emphasis mine-D.T.). The emphasis from these verses is that *worshipping* and *servicing* are two different things, just as the rancher's *steers* and *watchdogs* are two different things. Both are important, but they are different. If *worship* and *servicing* are not the same, why did the Lord use both words?

WORSHIP

The principle word for "worship" is *proskuneo*, which is found 58 times in the New Testament. According to *Thayer* it means:

pros, to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence...hence among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence...: Hence in the N.T. by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make

obesiance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication. (*Thayer*, page 548).

Proskuneo is the word used with reference to corporate, assembly, or prescribed worship (or devotion expressed to God), or any kind of praise or special adoration that is given to God according to his instructions—such as singing, praying, communion, giving and edification by the word of God—whether if be worship form one person or plurality of persons. God *seeks* our worship, and requires that IT be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:31).

SERVE

God also wants us to *serve* him. As a matter of fact, ALL that we do is to give glory and honor to him, but this is something different than expressed worship (whether in or out of the assembly), Paul wrote, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). Yet, there are those among us who say that when we *serve* God we are *worshipping* him, and that everything we do in life, 24 hours a day, is "worship." *Such is simply not true!* Everything we do is to the glory of God, but everything we do is not necessarily *worship* to God. In Romans 12:1, Paul wrote that the presenting of our bodies as living sacrifices is a "reasonable service" (KJV). *The New International Version* (NIV) has rendered the Greek word *latreia* as "worship." So, some of our "Would be different brethren" look at the rendering

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7:00 PM	Jesus Christ—The Fulness Of The Godhead Bodily	B.J. Clarke
8:00 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ Because Judgement Day Is Coming	Lindell Mitchell

Sunday, February 14, 1999

9:30 AM	Jesus Exalted In The Book Of John	Johnny Ramsey
10:30 AM	The Cross Of Christ	Johnny Ramsey
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2:30 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ When Life Doesn't Go Our Way	Kevin Rhodes
3:30 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ By Bearing Much Fruit	Rob Whitacre
3:30 PM	LADIES' ONLY — Personal Christ-Likeness	Iris Ramsey
7:00 PM	He Hath Done All Things Well	Don Walker
8:00 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ By Worshipping In Spirit And Truth	Mike Vestal

Monday, February 15, 1999

9:00 AM	Jesus Christ—The Preeminent One	Richard Melson
10:00 AM	Jesus Christ—A Man Of History	Joseph Meador
11:00 AM	Exalting Jesus Christ Because He Is Worthy	Paul Sain
1:30 PM	Jesus Christ—The Master Teacher	Carl Garner
2:30 PM	Jesus Christ—Born Of A Virgin	James Meadows
3:30 PM	Jesus—Christ, Savior And Lord	Robert Johnson
7:00 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ As A Deacon	B. Moseley
8:00 PM	Exalting Jesus Christ As An Elder	Dub McClish

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from the NIV and say, "That's it—everything we do in serving God is worship." This is the text they have been searching for to justify their new-found opinion.

This word *latreia* is found only five times in the New testament, while *proskuneo* (worship) is found 58 times. Some look at *latreia* (service), found five times, and conclude that *latreia* is the way to worship God. Granted, it has been rendered "worship" in the NIV, but it is *not* to be construed as worship in the sense that *proskuneo* is worship. The word technically *can* be translated "worship" *only because* and *when it describes* action toward God. However, this action is *not* the kind of action the *proskuneo* describes (showing reverent adoration and praise).

THE GENERAL RULE

The *general* rule is that *latreia* describes service, and not worship. *Why look for the exception to the rule when the general meaning is clear?* Some so look for the exception to gain support for a previous formed concept. Even the NIV is inconsistent in its translation of *latreia*. It is translated "service" in John 16:2, and "ministry" in Hebrews 9:6, where it *clearly* does not describe "worship" to God. *Vine* states (concerning the word *latreia*):

...primarily hired service, is used (a) of the service of God in connection with the tabernacle, Romans 9:4; Hebrews 9:16, (b) of the intelligent service of believers in presenting their bodies to God a living sacrifice, Romans 12:1, (c) of imagined service to God by persecutors of Christ's followers, John 16:2. (Vol. II, p. 349).

So, according to scholarship, *latreia* is NOT the word that describes our praise to God. Yet, those who delight in finding and telling some new thing (Acts 17:21) say what a Bible Chair director once wrote, "The word which is translated 'worship' in the NIV or 'service' in the KJV is '*latreia*.'" Which he said describes the "New Testament worship that is pleasing and acceptable to God; a holy lifestyle lived out on the altar of our daily life." He implies that the daily life is ALL that we need to do to please God, and that *latreia* is "the word" used to describe New testament worship. By picking *latreia* (used five times, meaning *service*) and overlooking *proskuneo* (meaning "worship," found 58 times) AS *worship* is like saying the Texas rancher with 58 steer and five watchdogs actually makes his living "from the watchdogs" (which may have cost him nothing and they are not for sale for a profit). We should not forget to serve God, but at the time we should not say service is worship, any more than we would say that watchdogs ARE steer. Surely the rancher knows better, and should we when it comes to understanding the scripture.

WHY IS THIS VIEW ADVOCATED?

We understand why the Christian Church preachers are making such statements (to show that when we are playing the piano for pleasure at home that we are worshipping God, and if we can worship God with an instrument at home, why not in the church assembly?), but why brethren in the church of Christ are advocating such a view is difficult to understand. Is it because they delight in "discovering" something that brethren have overlooked for 1900 years, or do they want to be known for telling something different?

In Hebrews 10:24, 25, the writer states that IN our assembling together (worship), God's people are to "provoke unto love and to good works." this can be done *later* as separate action. *In worship* we are provoked to action, that *can* and *must* be done later. We know that we can continue to love (even while in the worship), but it is joined to "good work" in I Timothy 5:10. Have we been wrong in opposing those who wanted to bring "footwashing" into the worship service? If it is worship *outside* the assembly, why would it not be worship *inside the assembly*. Does prescribed worship exclude other scriptural acts of worship *from the assembly*? Talk about "foot in mouth" disease!

Many other passages teach that *worship* and *service* are not the same, but this should suffice. Let it be remembered, that if this new-found dogma be carried out to its ultimate end, it would not only give encouragement to the wayward who might think that they are worshipping God by what they *do* in life rather than attending the assembly, but would destroy the significance of the worship assembly and thereby destroy the church as a body. It seems that almost everywhere we turn, someone is advocating this "new dogma" (especially since the NIV came out), and we feel compelled to speak out against it.

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"ALL LIFE IS WORSHIP"

(Continued From Page 1)

der the figure of speech known as synecdoche, with the more narrow and specific denotative sense. While one might use the word "worship" in a form of synecdoche where the part stands for the whole, it is false to conclude from such that the part is indeed the whole!

The danger of the Woods' position and the comparable views of other faithful brethren on the use of the word "worship" lies in the tendency of the liberal element among us *to observe only what they wish and ignore the rest*. Woods and others, thus, become standard bearers for a position that they neither do nor did in truth espouse, that "all life is worship" in the primary and proper sense of the word. The abuse of authority has always been a common fallacy of liberalism. What will only matter to the liberals is that good brethren have held to some form of the notion "all life is worship." It matters not that these same brethren would spurn the wild speculations and abusive practices of the liberals on the matter. It matters not that these same brethren have believed and upheld the fact that there are five, and only five, authorized acts or avenues for corporate New Testament worship.

The fallacy of equivocation is another problem with the liberal element. They flit and float from one meaning to the next as it suits their perceived needs and purposes. It matters not whether the definition they give to a term is based upon the denotative force or by contextual constraints; its use is determined by the "need" of the moment. It becomes a matter of what "is" means, et al., at the specific *existential* moment in question! Words are tossed around for desired effect, not for the furtherance of truth. If one desires to plunk the piano in "worship" to God just call all service to God "worship," and then proceed to bring the bawling calf of Brashan into the assembly! Let one arbitrarily define his terms as he sees fit, then he can establish any proposition beyond dispute.

THE USE OF WORDS

No one denies, and certainly not I, that one may employ the word "worship," or words of similar meaning, under certain conditions and within certain contexts in a broad or pregnant sense, such as is done in common parlance with the query, "Whom do you worship God or Satan." Such technically constitutes a synecdoche, and is not to be understood in its primary and proper sense. *The truth is that*

technically all worship is Christian service, but not all forms or expressions of service are worship! Liberal brethren however, transpose the pregnant sense upon virtually every text employing words that primarily and properly mean "service," and so on. The effect of this practice is exegetically flawed and dangerous, and upon the life and genuine worship of those who adopt it, its effect is tragic! The foundation is set for innovationism in the assemblies, and even for the total dissolution of the assemblies and subsequently the congregations.

As Woods demonstrates on pages 365-367 the Greek word (*proskuneo*) for worship "denotes an act of reverence" that is expressed to God. Hence, to seek to apply the broader meaning or ideas that some try to do to John 4:24 and other such texts employing the word is not in accord with the *denotative* meaning of the word. In fact, the liberals tend to ignore the denotative meaning of words in this matter altogether.

The denotative meaning of "worship" in John 4:24 involves the presence and exercise of specific acts, and these in turn *imply* in our world order both time and place. The "All Life Is Worship" folk make the blunder of concluding from the linguistic vehicle of synecdoche, which is a figure of speech, that "the part" is in fact the whole. The conclusion is an absurdity. Just as a symbol cannot by proper definition stand in the place of and symbolize itself, even so an accommodative and figurative use of the word "worship" cannot be construed as the actual and real meaning of the word. How could it be *figurative*, and thus not correspond to the facts of reality, and yet be the actual and real meaning? By definition this is impossible! But of such does the new hermeneutics consist!

"LOGICAL AND INESCAPABLE DILEMMA'S"

The "All Life Is Worship" doctrine is faced with a logical and inescapable dilemma. If all we do be worship, then this must include even sin. If worship is a static condition or state of being from whence we are never dismissed, as Lindsey Garmon and others have maintained then when one sins he is also worshipping God. Every act of murder, every lie told, every act of fornication, and every impure and immoral thing, regardless of how odious or abhorrent, done by the Christian would thus constitute worship to God.

Some will counter that "all life is worship" except for the sins that we may commit. However, this forfeits the idea that worship is a state of being from whence one is never dismissed. It necessarily limits the use of the term now to specific actions, a conclusion that most adherents to the doctrine would implicitly reject.

Another logical problem lies in trying to equate actions that are mundane with the obligations involved in the traditional forms of worship. If bass fishing is as much worship as singing with the saints in the assembly, then why not just go bass fishing? If one quibbles that one has a special obligation to assemble with the saints at the appropriate time, and so on, then he implicitly forfeits his equation. It cannot then be the case that every good act is equally worship in the same sense and to the same degree at least at certain times! Also involved in the idea is the inevitable dissolu-

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tion of the assembly if everyone practiced bass fishing to the exclusion of the actions involved in our assemblies, then no assemblies could occur.

Yet another dilemma posed for this error lies in the fact that many of the terms that they use try to prove that acts of service constitute worship are employed of service rendered to mere mortals. If all service be worship, then any service directed "to" someone would constitute worship directed to him? If not, why not? Paul speaks of the "service" (*leitourgia*) that was to be shown to him (note the use of *pros me*) by the Philippians in Philippians 2:30. Was Paul advocating the establishment of Pauline Cultus? In II Corinthians 4:5 Paul calls himself the "bondservant" or slave of the Corinthians for Jesus sake. If it is the case that all service is worship, then would it not follow that Paul worshipped the Corinthians? If not, why not?

"THE SUGAR-STICK"

Romans 12:1 has been frequently appropriated as proof that all life is worship. The apostle Paul employs the word *latrei*, which is rendered in the King James Version, as well as in the American Standard Version as "service." Paul writes, **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

The Revised Standard Version which was the first major version to do so, translates *latreia* here as "worship." I believe this rendering to be both unwarranted and misleading! The fact that both the translators of the highly reliable King James and American Standard Versions utilized the word's more general term "service" rather than the more specific "worship" is significant. The liberal tendencies of the translators of the Revised Standard Version hardly call for confidence in their assessments of the matter.

A ONE TIME PRESENTATION

The presentation of which Paul speaks is set forth in the verb infinitive first aorist tense. The *principal idea* involved in the Greek tenses is *kind* of action, and then secondarily follows the *time* of action. The primary force of the Greek aorist tenses is *that* of punctiliar action, i.e. point action as opposed to linear or continuous action (cf. Ray Summers, *Essentials of New Testament Greek*, pg. 11, 66). "The important element of tense in Greek is kind of action. This is its fundamental significance" (Dana and Mantey, *A Manual in Grammar of the Greek New Testament* p.178). The verb *infinitum* here is *parastesai*, which is from *paristemi*, which is a compound word. It is from *paristemi*, meaning "alongside" and *steridzo*, "to stand fast." The idea is that of bringing or setting something "alongside or beside" as in presenting something, such as a gift (Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, page 489). That which is presented is presented one time and is to remain standing or there in the possession of the one to whom it is presented. Thus, Paul is speaking of a one-time act, a one time offering, a one time gift, and not an offering that is being made daily. He refers to a presentation that is made but one time, and then that which is presented is left in the full possession of the receiver! The word *somata*, rendered "bodies," identifies the gift or the offering to be made. The

phrase "unto God" identifies the receiver of these bodies" to be presented. They are to be given as "living sacrifices" to Jehovah.

A FAMILIAR CONCEPT

The *imagery* of "living sacrifices" strikes, at first a seemingly contradictory note, as it draws upon the concept of offering sacrifices (primarily of dead animals or inanimate things) as exemplified in the rites of ancient Israel. This latter concept would be well familiar to Paul's readers, many of whom were without doubt Jewish Christians familiar with the Judaic rites of sacrifice, and many others would have been from pagan backgrounds familiar as well with the similar rituals of their own respective peoples. These past experiences of his readers would give added force and vitality to the imagery that Paul here employs. The image draws its significance from the visible and discernible realities of their lives! Otherwise the concept embodied in it could not have been grasped nor appreciated. It is the reality of things that lends to figures of speech their color, substance, emphasis, and meaning. The idea of a "living sacrifice" poses an "apparent dilemma," one which is quickly resolved by the realization of the *peculiar sense* that is placed upon the word "sacrifice," a sense that is *figurative* in nature. To construe it literally would have been contrary to reality, the quality of being "true to life" as to one's experiences, contemplative knowledge, and so on. Therefore, a figurative meaning is to be attached to the word "sacrifice" here. The *scope* of the image is circumscribed by the words "holy acceptable unto God." These form the basis of Paul's comparison. Just as the sacrifices of Judaism were to be of such a nature that God would be pleased with and would approve of them, even so the bodies of his people must be offered in his service. They are to be "living sacrifices" in that they do live unto him.

The noun *latreia* is modified by the word *logikon*, which alters or describes the meaning of the noun. This modifier is translated as "reasonable" in the King James Version and as "spiritual" in the American Standard Version. The word concerns that which pertains to the mind (Albert Barnes, Romans, page 270). It is defined by G. Abbott-Smith as "reasonable, rational" (*Greek-English Lexicon*, page 273). Its root is from *logos*, which not only means "word," but frequently is used in the sense of "reason" in the classical *logikon* (or *logikos*) is the term from whence is derived our English word "to logic" which is endowed pretty much with the same ideas as its Greek ancestor bears! The word *logikon* in Romans 12:1 describes the sphere in which the presentation of the "bodies" of the followers of Christ is to be made. It is an offering made in the mind and volition of the offerer. It concerns the spiritual, not the carnal. It will logically affect all that he does and is, but the act of presenting itself is concerned foremost with the determination in heart and mind to serve.

The phrase "spiritual service" relates directly to the "sacrifice" to be offered. So this "service" involves a "sacrifice," but not just of any kind. It must be a living, holy, well-pleasing unto God" sacrifice! It consists of a giving of the "bodies" of Christians to God's care and keeping. It is the same thing as that of which Paul wrote concerning the

Macedonian brethren in II Corinthians 8:1-5, who "first gave themselves" to the Lord and then to the great work of benevolence. Their benevolence was the consequential follow-through of their offering to serve the Lord.

ONE TIME FOR ALL OFFERING

The offering of which Paul writes in Romans 12:1 is an offering made one time for all time! It is a solemn dedication of one's life to the living God, "a laying of one's life, as it were, on the altar" of the Christian faith! The sacrifice takes place in the mind, which affects the actions of the whole individual (Proverbs 16:9: 23:7). It is an active decision to follow, obey, and serve God. By that decision Christians are thus pledged in heart and mind to live godly, upright lives filled with and guided by a trusting, obedient faith. It principally then is an act of will, a sacrifice or offering that transpires in the mind and will, but which in turn effects a life created unto holiness and prepared to carry out the privileges of Christianity. Paul in Romans 12:2 through Romans 16:27 sets forth the practical particulars of the offering made in Romans 12:1! The "service" itself in Romans 12:1 is confined to the act of the will, the decision to give one's body to God, and does not contemplate "the totality of life." Certainly, the effect of that decision is to be lifelong, but, it is the offering itself transpiring in the rational mind, that Paul explicitly terms "**your reasonable service.**"

By what stretch of the imagination are we to contend that a one time act whose sphere of occurrence is the mind of the Christian is in reality proof that "all life is worship?" How do we leap from the premise of Romans 12:1 to the conclusion, "therefore, all life is now *literally* worship for the Christian?" By what shred of logic do we conclude that sewing baby clothes, watching television, fishing on the creek bank, and bowling are considered to be worship in the same sense and to the same degree as the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? Are we to believe that what Paul and the Holy Spirit who inspired him actually had in mind is that the changing of dirty diapers, "shooting free throws" at a basket, taking a nap, going to a movie, and a myriad of other mundane activities, are all worship to the exact, same extent the Lord's Supper is worship? How do we justify taking an obviously figurative use of language and manufacturing a literalistic use of the imagery? Some of the "all life is worship" advocates have maintained that even defecating and having sexual relations with one's wife are worship! How silly and asinine!

The expression "**...present your bodies a living sacrifice...**" does not have reference to that foolishness any more than did the Psalmist's proclamation in the Old Testament "**that the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise**" (Psalms 51:17). This modified and figurative use of the word "sacrifice" does not preclude a more liberal application in the terms of formal worship. It did not in the Old Testament, even as the "All Life Is Worship" crowd admit, nor does it in New Testament use. The use of the word "sacrifice" to describe "The broken and contrite heart" in Psalm 51 did not preclude the present use, and obligation of the physical acts or rites of worship enjoined and regulated under the law of Moses! How then does one reason

that such use of similar language in the New Testament necessary precludes the prescribed acts of worship therein?

One should also note that the verb *latreuo* (from whence *latreia* is derived) is contrasted with the verb *proskuneo*, the word most commonly used to describe formal worship, in Deuteronomy 6:13 and Matthew 4:10. Whatever the term meant under the Mosaic economy (Deuteronomy 6), it evidently is to mean today (Matthew 4). *Latreuo* primarily means "to serve."

In his mishandling of the word *latreuo*, Lindsey Garmon contends that this word proves that all of life is worship, but does not ever refer to the assembly. The conclusion that follows from that would have to be that all of life be worship *except what transpires in the assembly*. Do we have any brethren courageous enough to affirm that openly?

CONCLUSION

How far will these folk go? The ultimate design of this doctrine is to convert the worship services among our brethren into a backslapping, hand-clapping hootenanny a la Third Wave Neo-Pentecostalism. If all we do be worship, and especially in the same sense and to the same degree, then eating biscuits smothered in honey is as valid and scriptural a practice to worship God with as eating unleavened bread, and playing, "O Susanna" on the piano is as scriptural for worship as singing acappella "How Great Thou Art!" if not, then why not?

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LEST WE DEVOUR OURSELVES

Kenneth E. Ratcliff

On several occasions the Bible speaks of armies facing one another with the anticipation of battle. However, one of the armies turned their swords against themselves to their own destruction (Judges 7:22). In recent years this has been the picture of the church of our Lord. When we should be united in the fight against the forces of Satan, we are fighting among ourselves. Much of this internal strife has come from those who would rob the church of the truth of the gospel and leave it spiritually bare.

From this division has come the falling away of many congregations that once were considered faithful. As in all times of difficulty, some good may occur. Christians may study their Bibles with new vigor as they examine the issues and faithful congregations brought closer together. However, something else can also happen. Instead of just holding fast to the truth, there often is a tendency for other movement to take place within the ranks. Such is happening now.

"CONDUITS FOR INTERNAL STRIFE"

New issues are arising from within the ranks of those opposing the liberal movement. They may be over beliefs that have been held for years (but remained dormant), the result of study growing out of existing issues, and so forth. The differences are being reflected in debates, publications, lectureships and conversations. As a result, rather than being strengthened, one is likely to be faced with new issues, the latest status of an existing one or find brethren embroiled in discussions. Even those who talk of not making the differences a test of faith are fanning the sparks into flames by pressing issues at every opportunity. One cannot afford to stick their head in the sand by not reading material published by brethren, attending lectureships, and so on. However, these may be showing signs of failing to serve as a source for strength and encouragement. Instead, they can easily become conduits for further internal strife.

Gone are the days when the church was in open combat with the denominational world. The thrust was to convert others to the truth of God's word. You could be confident you would hear the proclamation of the gospel when you visited another congregation of the Lord. Possibly (more often than not), the sermons were on the simple plan of salvation, the church and the life of a Christian. Today, many apparently feel they have outgrown the simple messages and look for something more entertaining and acceptable to the world while others seek a higher form of knowledge. The end result is souls are not hearing the gospel and congregations are moving away from the Lord. Weak elders are not holding the line, preachers are stirring the brotherhood with a variety of issues and many Christians are completely unaware there are problems. We are not being destroyed or weakened from without but are in the process of devouring ourselves at a rapid pace.

A HOUSE DIVIDED CANNOT STAND

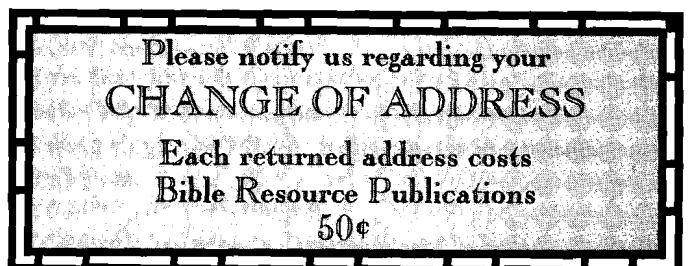
Surely none of this would have happened if we had all been busy trying to reach the lost. Men locked in mortal combat do not have time to be concerned with other mat-

ters. Those who get into mischief are the troops who are not on the firing line. Paul told the Christians at Corinth that the reason they were engulfed in division and strife was because they still thought and acted as the world (I Corinthians 3:1-4). The Jews required a sign and the Greeks sought after wisdom (I Corinthians 1:22). Does this not remain true today? Although we cannot question the honesty and sincerity of those with differences, we cannot accept that they all speak God's will. Our reliance on authorities and logic may not suggest we are getting closer to God but further away. How many of the issues today have moved into the realm of scholarly differences? What is the likelihood they would be raised in teaching someone what they must do to become a Christian or in encouraging or edifying one who is already a Christian? *Pity the poor individual with a limited education or intelligence.* He will neither grasp nor care about much of what is being said. If understanding and resolving all of these issues is essential to his salvation, he is likely to just give up. Of course error must be fought. However, we must be realistic and recognize that we cannot effectively proclaim the gospel until we put an end to the internal conflict. Have we failed to understand even the most basic of principles that a house or kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (Matthew 12:25).

THE DEVIL IS PLEASED

How much of the internal struggles of the church would vanish if every individual was seriously involved in trying to live a Christian life and every congregation directed its efforts at saving souls with the simple message of the Lord? What if elders worked at watching and feeding the flock and preachers hammered home the plan of salvation, nature of the church, worship and what it means to be a Christian? If the entire effort of every Christian were directed at strengthening each other and reaching the lost, would we not have unity? At this point it is much easier said than done. Possibly we are somewhat like the Jews in the days of Nehemiah who had trouble within and without while they sought to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Ultimately, half worked while the other half held their weapons ready to fight. However, we may be forgetting about building as we give our attention to fighting among ourselves. All the while our spiritual house falls into greater decay. Surely, the devil is extremely pleased. May the Lord grant us that the church will unite to fight the foe that is without.

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10:30 A.M. "The Design and End of Miracles" David P. Brown
4:00 P.M. "The United Pentecostal Church" Lynn Parker
5:00 P.M. "Romanticism—the Philosophy Behind Pentecostalism" Joseph Meador
6:00 P.M. "What is the Meaning of 'that which is perfect'?" Bobby Liddell

Monday, March 1

- 9:00 A.M. "What is the 'Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, Inc.'" Roddy Covington
10:00 A.M. "Water Baptism—Not Holy Spirit Baptism—Is the One Baptism" David Baker
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1:30 P.M. "Where is the Evidence For Miracles Today?" Pat McIntosh
2:30 P.M. "What Does I Corinthians 1:6-8 Teach?" Charles Collette
3:30 P.M. "Pentecostalism and the Godhead" Clifford Newell
DINNER BREAK
7:00 P.M. "Contradictions in the Various Doctrines of Pentecostals" B. J. Clarke
8:00 P.M. "The Doctrine of Direct Divine Illumination" Jesse Whitlock

Tuesday, March 2

- 9:00 A.M. "Miracles of Christ" Tom Hicks
10:00 A.M. "A Review of 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ Today'" Eddie Whitten
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11:00 A.M. "Nashville Jubilee' and Pentecostalism" Gary Grizzell
1:30 P.M. "Experiences are not Authoritative" Billy Bland
2:30 P.M. "Miracles of the Apostles" David Jones
**** 2:30 P.M. Ladies' Class—"The Godly Woman, or True Spirituality—Part 2" Irene Taylor**
3:30 P.M. "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" Noah Hackworth
DINNER BREAK
7:00 P.M. "A Review of the Woods-Hicks Debate on Holy Spirit Baptism and Miracles" Robert Taylor, Jr.
8:00 P.M. "You Can't Have the Tongues Without the Snakes" Ronnie Hayes

Wednesday, March 3

- 9:00 A.M. "Biblical Spirituality Versus Emotionalism" Toney Smith
10:00 A.M. "Atheists and Pagans Can Speak Gibberish" Gary Summers
11:00 A.M. "What Do I Corinthians 13:9-13, Ephesians 4:8-14 and Romans 12:6-8 Have in Common?" Daniel Denham
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Even now, after all that has happened, since Rice tried to sound out the warning—first with his three-volume set of **AXE ON THE ROOT**, starting in 1966, then with the fighting paper called **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**, which began in 1970—he lives in a state of constant shock at how relatively few elders, preachers and rank-in-file members were willing to listen until it already was TOO LATE! Moreover, he could not under-

stand why so few of those who were supposed to be committed to the New Testament Christianity would not join hands in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, while there was still time.

Be all that as it may, the Editor of *Contending for the Faith* was determined that at least one accurate, well-documented, written record would be in existence. It would detail the great and growing apostasy as it developed and pin-point the departures from sound doctrine. It would dare to tell it like it really was!

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—David P. Brown, Associate Editor

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